Side-Lights on Scripture Texts

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SIDE-LIGHTS ON SCRIPTURE TEXTS.

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ON

SCRIPTURE TEXTS.

BY

FRANCIS JACOX, B.A., CANTAB.

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SIDE-LIGHTS ON SCRIPTURE TEXTS.

I.

THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE TREE OF LIFE.

GENESIS ii. 9, 17.

EASTWARD in Eden lay the garden; and out of the garden ground there grew every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Of every tree of the garden but that might its privileged pair of tenants freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil might they not eat; for to eat thereof was all too surely to die.

> "All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
> And all amid them stood the tree of life,
> High, eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
> Of vegetable gold; and next to life,
> Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by.
> Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill."

So near grows death to life. For, as Milton has it in the *Areopagitica*, good and evil in the field of this world grow up together almost inseparably; and the knowledge of good is so involved and interwoven with the knowledge of evil, and in so many cunning resemblances hardly to be discerned, that "those confused seeds which were imposed upon Psyche as an incessant labour to cull out, and sort asunder, were not more intermixed. It was from out the rind of one apple tasted that the knowledge of good and evil, as two twins cleaving

together, leaped forth into the world." And perhaps, surmises in his prose the poet of *Paradise Lost*, this is the doom which Adam fell into of knowing good and evil, that is to say, of knowing good by evil.* Jeremy Taylor makes it observable that in the mentions of Paradise in the Apocalypse, twice is the tree of life spoken of, but never once the tree of knowledge of good and evil, because this was the symbol of secular knowledge, of prudence and skill of doing things of this world, which we can naturally use: we may smell and taste them, but not feed upon them. Of that forbidden tree, however, the smell alone of the fruit must, by its fascination, have been perilous, and the taste of it was death.

> "Whereof whoso did eat, eftsoones did know
> Both good and ill: O mournfull memory!
> That tree through one man's fault hath doon us all to dy!"

In the thirty-second canto of his vision of purgatory, Dante hears a throng with one voice murmuring "Adam," and sees them circling a tree despoiled of leafage, and takes note of a benediction on

> "Gryphon,† whose beak hath never pluck'd that tree
> Pleasant to taste; for hence the appetite
> Was warp'd to evil."

And in the next canto the subject is renewed, and mystically expounded in warning words and tones. Dr. Spiegel, in his elaborate comparison of Genesis with the Zend-avesta, is of course mindful of the two trees in the midst of the garden,—the acquaintance of the Iranians with two trees (one of them

* Treating the Biblical narrative of the fall as an allegorical representation of the development of the consciousness of our first parents, Blasche affirms their life in Paradise, their state of innocence, to have been, like the state of earliest infancy in general, an unconscious life of instinct; for all mental development begins with the consciousness of man: the higher spiritual creation, the culture of the mind, commences with consciousness.

† The coincidence may be worth noting of the alleged identity of *griffin* with the *cherub* that had charge of the Tree of Life,—Delitzch, for instance, deriving the name from *charab*, "grab, grapple, grasp, gripe," Sanscr. *gribh*, Pers. *giriften*, Goth. *griffan*: comp. Greek γρύψ, as a being that holds fast, and makes what it holds unapproachable. Dr. Thomas Burnet

called the Painless) being shown by Dr. Windischmann; but English scholars, however favourably predisposed to the results of comparative mythology, and familiar with its details, have demurred to the comparison of the painless tree with the tree of knowledge, though admitting that the white Haoma tree might remind us of the tree of life, considering that Haoma as well as the Indian Soma, was supposed to give immortality to those who drank its juice. Kalisch recognizes analogies to the tree of life in the "king of trees" which the Persians believed to grow at the spring Ardechsur, issuing from the throne of Ormuzd, and in the tall *Pilpel* of the Indians, to which was also ascribed the power of securing immortality and every other blessing; but the tree of knowledge he compares rather with the "well of wisdom" in northern mythology, from which even the great god Odin drinks, and which gives knowledge even to the wise Mimer. But the confusion of trees may only bring us into confusion worse confounded, and we may end by mistaking one of the two in Eden for the other, as Mr. Thackeray, by a presumed slip of the pen, has done, when tellingus of the experiences of Pendennis since he first "tasted of the fruit of that awful Tree of Life which, from the beginning, has tempted all mankind." German scholarship tells us that the Iranian *two* trees are the same as the *one* fig tree out of which the Indians believed (but did they?) the world to have been created. In dealing with our old-fashioned English Bible it is better, upon the whole, to treat the distinction between the two trees in the midst of the garden, as a distinction not without a difference.

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refers to the dragons said by the poets to have guarded the apples of the Hesperides. Kuenen refers to the corresponding mythology of the Babylonians and Assyrians, whose cherubim guard precious stones and gold. and drive away any one who would approach these treasures. In Robert Lord Lytton's poem of *The Apple of Life* we have mention near together of

> "The fruit of the Tree that in Paradise God hideth under the wing
> Of the Cherub that chased away Adam,"

and of flowers and fruitage that are

> "guarded by dragons to brighten the gardens of kings."

Chamfort, no Bibliolater or even Bibliophile, pronounces the tree of knowledge of good and evil which produces death, to be *une belle allegorie.* This emblem he takes to signify, that when we have penetrated to the bottom of things, the loss of illusions induces the death of the soul, that is to say, an absolute indifference to all that touches and occupies others. Voltaire, in his time, and after his sort, had given another turn and tone to the sacred narrative:

> "Dans les bosquets d'Eden l'arbre de la science
> Portait un fruit de mort et de corruption ;
> Notre bon père en eut un indigestion.
> Pour lui bien conserver sa fragile innocence
> Il eût fallu planter l'arbre de l'ignorance."

Innocence? Ignorance? Among the *pensées* of Sainte-Beuve this one occurs: that by a profound signification, the word "innocence," the literal usage of which denotes the not *doing* of evil, really imports the not *knowing* it. To know what is wrong, unless careful watch be kept, is to do it. F. W. Robertson describes innocence as apprehending the approach of evil, by the instinctive tact of contrast; and guilt, by the instinctive consciousness of similarity. "This dreadful burden the Scriptures call the knowledge of good and evil: can we not all remember the salient sense of happiness which we had when all was innocent?" Victor Hugo says of Faust and of Don Juan that both have plucked at the tree of knowledge; the one as a sensualist, the other as a spiritualist. The one has indulged an appetite for every kind of material pleasure, forbidden pleasures most of all; the other, for the entire range of sciences, and for more than may be known by mortal man. The one has stolen the fruit, the other has rummaged at the roots. "Don Juan, c'est le corps; Faust, c'est l'esprit." "Le premier se damne pour jouir, le second pour connaître." And so the two dramas are treated as coefficients, and complementary the one of the other. "The desire of knowledge in excess caused man to fall," says Bacon in his essays. Bishop Berkeley's belief and contention that God is too bountiful not to have placed knowledge within our reach, of which He has

given us the desire, moves Mr. Lewes to remark, that the good bishop here "forgets the lesson man was taught in Paradise, where the Tree of Knowledge was placed within his reach, but the fruits thereof forbidden him." Butler calls it

> "the cider-tree* in Eden,
> Which only grew, to be fordidden."

Sorrow is knowledge, mourns Byron's Manfred; and they

* What fruit the forbidden tree bore, doctors have differed and disputed about, with characteristic dulness or audacity of speculation. Thibaut the Troubadour, King of Navarre (1201—53) started a theory that the law of God is ripe and wholesome fruit, and that Adam sinned by eating unripe fruit; but he does not appear to have been wise beyond what is written by specifying the fruit in question. That it was an apple is a tradition perpetuated, as Sir Thomas Browne says, by writings, verses, pictures; "and some have been so bad prosodians as from thence to derive the Latin word *malum*, because that fruit was the first occasion of evil." Others have declared for a vine; or are peremptory for the Indian fig-tree. The "forbidden fruit" of the London markets is a small sort of shaddock. What Matthiolus meant by Pomum Adami, Professor Lindley deems it impossible to ascertain, except that it was a *citrus* of some kind: the common Italian *Pomo d'Adamo* is a variety of *citrus limetta*—that of Paris is a thick-skinned orange; and at least three other things, the Professor tells us, have been so called. *Pomum* is a conveniently comprehensive name: the goddess of gardens is Pomona; and besides the great variety of apples—again to cite the old expositor of Vulgar Errors, "the word in Greek comprehendeth oranges [so in Latin], lemons, citrons, quinces; and as Ruellius defineth, such fruits as have no stone within, and a soft covering without, excepting the pomegranate." Spigelius would, however, include all round fruits under the name of apples—nuts and plums among the rest. Does the reader need reminding of Elia's persuasion in favour of the peach? His essay, "The Last Peach," records his experiences as a child in a magnificent fruit-garden, whose lordly owner left him free to pull the currants and gooseberries, but straitly interdicted him from touching the wall-fruit. Indeed, of the latter there was little left: only on the south wall (could the boy ever forget the hot feel of the brickwork?) there lingered the one last peach. Now, peaches he abominated: to his palate there was something singularly harsh and repulsive in the flavour of them. Yet, inspired by some demon of contradiction, he found himself on this occasion haunted with an irresistible desire to pluck that solitary peach. Tear himself as often as he would from the spot, he found himself still returning to it; till maddening with desire—no, not desire; with wilfulness, rather—in an evil

who know the most will mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth, "The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life." The theme was an attractive one to Byron; and in his *Cain* he dilates upon it, and recurs to it with bitter earnestness despite seeming levity. The ungodliness of their first-born is matter of grief and sombre forebodings to our first parents. Eve utters an Alas!

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hour he reached out his hand, and plucked the peach. "Some few rain-drops just then fell: the sky (from a bright day) became overcast: and I was a type of our first parents, after the eating of that fatal fruit. I felt myself naked and ashamed, stripped of my virtue, spiritless. The downy fruit, whose look rather than savour had tempted me, dropped from my hand never to be tasted." All the commentators in the world could not persuade Elia, from that time forth, but that the Hebrew word translated "apple" (as he by mistake alleges), should be rendered "peach." Only in that way, he says, could he reconcile that mysterious story; about which we can well fancy him to have had many a free talk, first and last, with that confessedly inquiring spirit, S. T. C.

We may, and indeed cannot but, suppose that Lamb was put in mind of this old experience of his, by a passage in one of Crabbe's Tales, which he, the gentle Charles, adapted for the stage, or rather turned into a play for the closet. The passage is in a tale within a tale, just as in *Hamlet* there is a play within a play; and it tells how among the attendants and favourites of Haroun Alraschid there

"was a lively boy,
Eager in search of every trifling joy;
His feelings vivid, and his fancy strong,
He sigh'd for pleasure while he shrunk from wrong:
When by the Caliph in the garden placed,
He saw the treasures which he long'd to taste;
And oft alone he ventured to behold
Rich hanging fruits with rind of glowing gold;
Too long he stay'd forbidden bliss to view,
His virtue failing as his longings grew;
Athirst and wearied with the noontide heat,
Fate to the garden led his luckless feet;
With eager eyes and open mouth he stood,
Smelt the sweet breath, and touch'd the fragrant food;
The tempting beauty sparkling in the sun
Charm'd his young sense—he ate, and was undone."

What pains and penalties ensued, and how the young transgressor found even his young life become a burden to him, one couplet from the sequel will sufficiently indicate; one in which he vents the bitter cry,

"Oh! had that stolen fruit the power possess'd
To war with life, I now had been at rest."

"The fruit of our forbidden tree begins
To fall.

Adam. And we must gather it again.
Oh, God! why didst thou plant the tree of knowledge?

Cain. And wherefore pluck'd ye not the tree of life?
Ye might have then defied Him.

Adam. Oh! my son,
Blaspheme not: these are serpent's words.

Cain. Why not?
The snake spoke truth; it *was* the tree of knowledge;
It *was* the tree of life:—knowledge is good.
And life is good; and how can both be evil?"

Lucifer is Cain's interlocutor in a later act; and to him the reprobate uses quite opposite language:

"It was a lying tree—for we know nothing.
At least it promised knowledge at the price
Of death—but knowledge still: but what knows man?

Lucifer. It may be death leads to the highest knowledge;
And being of all things the sole thing certain,
At least leads to the surest science: therefore
The tree was true, though deadly."

Where there is an obscurity too deep for our reason, the *Religio Medici* would have a "haggard and unreclaimed reason to stoop unto the lure of faith;" and Sir Thomas Browne accordingly is free to profess, for his part, "I believe there was already a tree, whose fruit our unhappy parents tasted, though in the same chapter where God forbids it, 'tis positively said, the plants of the field were not yet grown; for God had not caused it to rain upon the earth." Asgill, renowned for his Argument against the necessity of dying, in one part of that curious performance exclaims, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder! Wonder to see Paradise lost, with the Tree of Life in the midst of it! Wonder and curse at Adam for an original fool, who in the length of one day never so much as thought to put forth his hand, for him and us, and pull and eat and live for ever!" Van Helmont opined that no metallic preparation, such as Paracelsus hoped to discover as the Elixir of Life, could contain in itself the blessing of the Tree of Life, but he sought for the true secret in the Cedar, induced, as it seems, by the

frequent mention of that tree in the Old Testament; and asserting that when all other plants were destroyed by the Flood, and their kinds preserved only in their seeds, the Cedars of Lebanon remained uninjured under the waters. A wild legend of the Rabbis tells of a branch of the Tree of Life that was planted on Adam's grave,* and a wilder fiction of Christian fancy has traced to the wood which that branch produced, the centre cross of Calvary's three.

Whately accepts and expounds with characteristic literalness the divine endowment of the Tree (whether its fruits or its leaves) with some property of warding off death; ascribing to it the medicinal virtue, when applied from time to time, of preventing, or curing, the decay of old age; and he assumes our first parents to have been in the habit of using it—"as doubtless they had, since there was nothing to prevent them"—and so argues that could they have continued the use of such a medicine, they would have continued exempt from decay and death; but ceasing to do so, they would die at last, though their constitution had been so far fortified, as to ensure for them, and for their nearest descendants, by transmission, a life much longer than *our* natural term—this vital force of longevity, by hypothesis due to the medicinal virtue of the Tree of Life, only wearing out gradually, in many successive generations. Jeremy Taylor's argument is, that as everything with a beginning can have also an ending, and shall die, unless it be "daily watered with the purls flowing from the fountain of life,"—therefore God provided a tree in Paradise to have supported Adam in his artificial immortality—immortality not being in his nature; for man was always the same mixture of heat and cold, of dryness and moisture; "ever the same weak thing, apt to feel rebellion in the humours, and to suffer the evils of a civil war in his body natural: and, therefore, health and life was to descend upon him from heaven, and he

* Another legend tells how to King Solomon was offered

"an apple yet bright from the Tree
In whose stem springs the Life never-failing which Sin lost to Adam when he
Tasting knowledge forbidden, found death in the fruit of it."

was to suck life from a tree on earth; himself being but ingrafted into a tree of life, and adopted into the condition of an immortal nature." It may be compared in its effects and elevating power to the mythological tree commemorated in Southey's Paraguay poem,

> "A wondrous Tree there grew,
> By which the adventurer might with foot and hand
> From branch to branch his upward course pursue;
> An easy path, if what were said be true,
> Albeit the ascent was long; and when the height
> Was gain'd, that blissful region was in view."

Milton exalts the height of the Tree of Life above all the trees of the Garden—"the middle tree and highest there that grew"—on which account, seemingly, the arch-fiend and arch-felon selects it for his seat aloft, and there he

> "Sat like a cormorant: yet not true life
> Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
> To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought
> Of that life-giving plant, but only used
> For prospect what, well used, had been the pledge
> Of immortality."

Spenser had anticipated Milton in strains that live, touching the Tree of Life,—that goodly tree "loaden with fruit and apples rosy redd, as they in pure vermilion had been dide;" and

> "happy life to all to which thereon fedd
> And life eke everlasting did befall:
> Great God it planted in that blessed stedd
> With His Almighty hand, and did it call
> The Tree of Life;"

and from it flowed, as from a well, a trickling stream of balm, "most soveraine and dainty deare:" "life and long health that gracious ointment gave, and deadly wounds could heale" —though of the leaves of that tree of life, of power for the healing of the nations, Spenser takes no account, comparable though they be, in comparative mythology, with that Indian blooming bower

> "Whose every amaranthine flower
> Its deathless blossom interweaves
> With bright and undecaying leaves."

Both trees being eventually forbidden, we are sometimes uncertain which of the two the poets refer to, or whether confusedly to both at once, in such lines as those of Longfellow on "the hunger and thirst of the heart, the frenzy and fire of the brain,

"That grasps at the fruitage forbidden,
The golden pomegranates of Eden,
To quiet its fever and pain."

Such fever and pain the suffering author of *Small Books on Great Subjects* endured, in wistful speculations on high matters metaphysico-theological, from which, in that sick-room, there was no escape for that restlessly inquiring spirit, as there might have been in active life. "But in utter loneliness the mind turns inward to search into its own nature and prospects; and this research shakes the mortal case shrewdly. Few can comprehend this, and I who feel it can hardly describe; but I certainly feel that those who eat largely of the tree of knowledge will surely die, and that soon." Here was a pained recognition of the Miltonic maxim that to be weak is miserable; with a painful failure to recognize the maxim ascribed to Bacon, though not to be found in his works, unless indirectly, that knowledge is power. Rather, such knowledge intensified and aggravated the sense of weakness.

The mysterious vendor of *la peau de chagrin*, in Balzac, instructs the purchaser in what he calls "un grand mystère de la vie humaine,"—to wit, that man exhausts himself by acting out the verbs VOULOIR and POUVOIR, whereas SAVOIR leaves his feeble organization in a perpetual state of calm. Nor is the calm a mere stagnation. Knowledge is power. What a world of essay-writing has been lavished on that apophthegm, first and last. *Quanti est sapere!* had Terence exclaimed of old. Man is finite and crippled on all sides, says Newman, and frailty in one kind causes frailty in another: "Deficient power causes deficient knowledge, deficient knowledge betrays him into false opinion, and entangles him in false positions." There is an apologue by one of our old friends in council which is designed to show the exceeding

misery of man, and how much too small he is for his place, that he should go on suffering all this misery (in one particular instance) for thousands of years when a little knowledge would have raised him above it. Many such evils, it is contended, moral, intellectual, and physical, a little more knowledge would dispel. Mr. Carlyle has said, "Power is the one thing needful, and that Knowledge which is Power: thus also Intellect becomes the grand faculty, in which all the others are well-nigh absorbed." A man, says Bacon, is but what he knoweth. The diffused knowledge of an age of school boards may not rank very high as a motive power; and indeed we are told that knowledge has become, in its lower forms, so common, and is spread so widely, that it is no longer looked on as something precious—at least for his own sake. It is easy, Mr. Stuart Mill replied, to scoff at the kind of intelligence which is thus diffusing itself; but it is intelligence still. "The knowledge which is power, is not the highest description of knowledge only: any knowledge which gives the habit of forming an opinion, and the capacity of expressing that opinion, constitutes a political power." Mr. Lister's Conservative parson quotes against his Whig peer the "approved axiom" that knowledge is power, and objects that surely you give a dangerous power to the people, if you augment their knowledge. And Arlington grants that by giving them knowledge we augment their power; but not that we render it more dangerous. "You say true—'Knowledge *is* power;' it is and ought to be power, and God forbid that it should ever cease to be so!—Are there no dangers to be apprehended from ignorance? The uneducated may equally be led by the mischievous." Parson Dale, of Caxtonian celebrity, is more vivacious in his opposition to the aphorism in dispute: to his thinking, it either says a great deal too much, or just nothing at all. Grant that it is undeniable: does it prove much in favour of knowledge? is not ignorance power too? All evil is power, and does its power make it any the better? Fanaticism is power—and a power that has often swept away knowledge like a whirlwind; as where the Mussulman burns the library of a

world. "Hunger is power. The barbarians, starved out of their forests by their own swarming populations, swept into Italy and annihilated letters. The Romans, however degraded, had more knowledge, at least, than the Gaul and the Visigoth." The theme is pursued through many variations; one of its moral aspects being, that a man of very moderate intelligence, who believes in God, and suffers his heart to beat with human sympathies, will probably gain in ordinary life a vast deal more power than knowledge ever gives to a rogue. Randal Leslie is the accomplished advocate and persevering actor-out of the maxim that knowledge is power; and it is only for a time that Randal Leslie is successful. All too soon in his course he has to argue with himself,—"If power is only to be won" by sinister use of knowledge, (and of what use is knowledge if it be not power?) "does not success in life justify all things? and who prizes the wise man if he fails?" He has entered life with no patrimony but knowledge. He has to turn knowledge from books to men; for books may give fame after death, but men give us power in life. He finds himself at last standing very near to fortune and to power; and "I owe it but to knowledge," he muses,—"knowledge of men—life—of all that books can teach us." Despising literature, save as means to some end of power, Randal Leslie is presented to us as "the incarnation of thought, hatched out of the corruption of will." His "arid self-seeking looked to knowledge for no object but power." Satan has been defined Intellect without God; and there is more of the satanic than the divine in this representative young man.

But however much abused or perverted may be the maxim, the truth it enforces is a vital one; and the saying of Imlac the sage holds good, that knowledge will always predominate over ignorance, as man governs the lower animals. When the Abyssinian prince asks him what he has found to be the effect of knowledge, and whether European culture makes its favoured nations happier than African ignorance can, Imlac is cautious and hesitating in his reply; but he can at least allege that knowledge is certainly one of the means of pleasure—a fact

inferred from the natural desire which every mind feels of increasing its ideas; ignorance being mere privation, by which nothing can be produced—a vacuity, in which the soul sits motionless and torpid for want of attraction. "Riches are Power," says the economist;—and is not Intellect? asks Mr. Disraeli's philosopher, who yet is impelled to inquire how it is that, while the influence of the millionaire is instantly felt in all classes of society, "noble mind" so often leaves its possessor unknown and unhonoured. Is it because he has thought only of himself, and, a constant and laborious student of his own exalted nature, has forgotten or disdained the study of all others? It is, observes Mr. Hamilton Aïde, the use we make of knowledge, in maturing our judgment and reflection, that is power, and not knowledge itself, if we cannot turn it to account; for many learned men have been but poor thinkers and reasoners. So Hartley Coleridge agrees that knowledge is power where in the possession of a powerful mind; for with such, truths old as the creation are original: but it is no compliment to a man to be called a walking encyclopædia. Far too little considered in the present day, urges Dr. John Brown, is the means of turning knowledge to action, "making it what Bacon meant when he said it was power," invigorating the thinking substance—giving tone, and what he would call muscle and nerve, blood and bone, to the mind; a firm gripe, and a keen and sure eye.—But a farther examination of the disputed maxim would take us too far—in a direction not indeed altogether away from our starting-point, yet sufficiently apart from it to give us pause.

Backing then, from that by-path to the main road whence we started, we come again upon, and take a parting glance accordingly at, the Tree of Knowledge and its fatal fruit—this time through a medium of French verse, that of France's most classical poet, satirist, and critic. Boileau versifies in sonorous rhythm the temptation of Adam "par l'éclat trompeur d'une funeste pomme," and stigmatizes the tempter who

> "fit croire au premier homme
> Qu'il allait, en goûtant de ce morceau fatal,

Comblé de tout savoir, à Dieu se rendre égal.
Il en fit sur-le-champ la folle expérience.
Mais tout ce qu'il acquit de nouvelle science
Fut que, triste et honteux de voir sa nudité,
Il sut qu'il n'était plus, grâce à sa vanité,
Qu'un chétif animal pétri d'un peu de terre,
A qui la faim, la soif, partout faisaient la guerre,
Et qui, courant toujours de malheur en malheur,
A la mort arrivait enfin par la douleur."

II.

THE DOVE'S FLIGHT FROM THE ARK; SEEKING REST AND FINDING NONE.

GENESIS viii. 9.

THE dove that Noah put forth from the ark at the end of forty days, took flight, we may be sure, with entire willingness to leave her prison-refuge, and with gladsome longing to find in a new world fresh woods and pastures new. "But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him in the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth." Another week, and the dove might find a green leaf on a topmost bough, if not a bough itself to rest on.* Yet another week, and the dove might find lasting rest for the sole of her foot, and so be seen no more by her still floating friends. But our present concern is (unless in the footnotes) with the first and fruitless flight from the ark, when

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* Bellarmine and the Rabbis say that the dove plucked the leaf which she brought to Noah from the Garden of Eden, which was too loftily situated to be reached by the flood. To this tradition Jean Paul Richter alludes, in one of his novellets, where he likens our internal joy to an olive-leaf, brought to us by a dove over the foaming deluge that is spread around us, and gathered by her in the far sunny Paradise high above the flood.

One in whom Wordsworth hailed an "ingenuous poet," of "true sensibility," little known to most of us by name, John Edwards, compares the blue-eyed Spring, that met him with her blossoms, to "the Dove of old,

she beat about on that waste of waters, seeking rest and finding none.

> "Of rest was Noah's dove bereft
> When with impatient wings she left
> That safe retreat, the ark ;

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returned with olive leaf, to cheer the Patriarch mourning o'er a world destroy'd." And Wordsworth has himself a sonnet beginning

> "Near Anio's stream I spied a gentle Dove
> Perch'd on an olive-branch, and heard her cooing
> 'Mid new-born blossoms that soft airs were wooing,
> While all things present told of joy and love.
> But restless fancy left that olive grove
> To hail the exploratory bird renewing
> Hope for the few, who, at the world's undoing,
> On the great flood were spared to live and move.
> O bounteous Heaven ! signs true as dove and bough
> Brought to the ark are coming evermore,
> Given though we seek them not, but, while we plough
> This sea of life without a visible shore,
> Do neither promise ask nor grace implore
> In what alone is ours, the living Now."

In a lighter vein, yet sad-hearted *au fond*, writes Arthur Clough's Claude to Eustace about Luther bringing back Theology once again in a flood upon Europe ; and the dove and the leaf are made to do service in the description,—which things are an allegory :

> "Lo you, for forty days from the windows of heaven it fell, the
> Waters prevail on the earth yet more for a hundred and fifty ;
> Are they abating at last? the doves that are sent to explore are
> Wearily fain to return, at the best with a leaflet of promise,—
> Fain to return, as they went, to the wandering wave-tost vessel,—
> Fain to re-enter the roof of which covers the clean and the unclean."

Theology was here to A. H. Clough what Dogma is to his old Oxford friend and contemporary ; and what the former thus hinted many years since in his hexametrical *Amours de Voyage*, the latter has expanded and elaborated into a treatise that may be said to have made a mark, as well as a noise,—the book, namely, known and read by almost all men that read at all, or think even, and called *Literature and Dogma*.

One of *Les Contemplations* of France's most romantic poet of the romantic school compliments a brother penman on certain presentation volumes with this Biblical conceit :

> "Et voilà qu'à travers ces brumes et ces eaux,
> Tes volumes exquis m'arrivent, blancs oiseaux,
> M'apportant le rameau qu'apportent les colombes
> Aux arches."

Béranger made the Raven and the Dove his theme for a copy of verses that might be called the Two Voices; the Dove all hope and faith and

Giving her vain excursions o'er,
The disappointed bird once more
Explored the sacred bark."

So writes either Cowper or Cotton (*suum cuique*) in a fireside poem designed to show that the jewel of solid happiness lies within a man's own bosom, "and they are fools who roam:

"This world has nothing to bestow;
From our own selves our bliss must flow,
And that dear hut our home."

There is quoted in Mr. Davies' *Pilgrimage of the Tiber* a

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charity, his black companion all cynicism and unbelief. And *La Colombe et le Corbeau du Déluge* ends with the dove's avowal,

"Je vais aux mortels malheureux
De l'olivier porter la branche
Que Dieu m'a fait cueillir pour eux."

Whereat, as usual, the biped in black has a wicked laugh, *l'oiseau noir se prend à rire*, and assures his innocent companion that the *mortels* he is about to rejoin will cook her with the wood of the olive-branch she is carrying to them.

How characteristically different the tone of Hartley Coleridge's application of the story, in his verses entitled *Religious Differences*, where even the raven comes in for a good word, a kind one, at least, of compassionate sympathy—as though not, of necessity, so black as he is painted:

"'Tis little that we know, and if befall
That faith do wander, like the restless raven,
That rather chose without an aim to roam
O'er the blank world of waters, than to seek
In the one sacred ark a duteous home,
May good be with it! Yet the bird so meek,
The missive dove, that ne'er begrudged her pain,
But duly to the ark return'd again,
And brought at last the promise and the pledge
Of peace, hath won a dearer privilege," etc.

It might be permissible to put some such meaning on Victor Hugo's lines:

"Dieu, qui tient dans sa main tous les oiseaux perdus,
Parfois au même nid rend la même colombe."

It is noteworthy among Mexican antiquities that tradition reports the boat in which Tezpi escaped the deluge to have been filled with various kinds of quadrupeds and birds; and that after some time a vulture was sent out of it, which remained feeding on the dead bodies of the giants, as the waters subsided; but a little humming-bird (*huitzit-zilin*), being sent forth, returned with a twig in its mouth.

versicle which critics have cited from his pages to show how living a thing poetry still is in Italy, for it is one of those charming "canti" an Italian peasant-girl thinks it nothing wonderful to produce; and putting our own interpretation upon it, for present purposes, we may imagine the patriarch addressing it to his dove:

> "Vola, palomba, quanto pusi volare,
> Salisei in alto quanto pusi salire,
> Gira lo mondo quanto pusi girare,
> Un giorno alle miei mani hai da venire!" *

Mr. Watts' picture of the Return of the Dove has been admired for that suggestion of thought which shows what power is obtained over the imagination even by materials the most scanty: the eye rests on the solitary dove (that rests not), weary of wing, wending her way across the waste of waters to the far-off home in the ark, her only refuge; the artist awakens interest in the fate of the poor bird, for the gazer thinks of her long search from early morn to close of day; the dove is ready to drop into the sea that covers the earth, and there is no help in the silence and solitude.

> "So, when the soul finds here no true content,
> And, like Noah's dove, can no sure footing take,
> She doth return from whence she first was sent,
> And flies to him that first her wings did make."

The lines are by Sir John Davies, Shakspeare's contemporary, and noted for his long philosophical poem *On the Soul of Man and the Immortality thereof.* The soul's seeking rest and finding none, the wide world over, is like Spenser's knight bound on a bootless quest: "He through the endless world did wander wide, It seeking evermore, yet nowhere it descride;" not to compare it with the more terrible experience of a station or standing-point in Milton: *Such resting found the sole of unblest feet.*

* "Fly, dove, as far as you can fly; mount as high as you can mount; wheel round the wide world as far as you can wheel; one day you will have to come to my hands."

O that I had the wings of a dove! for then would I flee away, and be at rest. But it is one thing to flee away, another to find rest. The wings of a dove, it is on record, may carry her away, without her being at rest, without her finding any hold for the sole of her foot. It is possible by flying, to fly away from home and shelter, to be lost in landless space. It is possible by going further to fare worse. It is more than possible to do worse than bear those ills we have, by flying to others that we know not of. Seeking rest, and finding none,—if the quest is common, so is the failure to find. Evil spirit, or not, then saith he, I will return unto my house from whence I came out; even as the dove—symbol of a holy spirit—perforce returned to its asylum within the ark. Seeking rest, and finding none,—the tale is older even than that of Iô, stung by Hêrê's gadfly, and goaded by that fiery sting over hill and valley, across sea and river, to torment her if she lay down to rest, and madden her with pain when she sought to sleep. On and still on she went, resting not by night or day, through the Dorian and Thessalian plains, to the wild Thracian land *—her feet bleeding on the sharp stones, her body torn by the thorns and brambles, as well as tortured by the stings of the fearful gadfly. We might apply what one of the most energetic of Shakspeare's characters is made to say of himself:

> "And I,—like one lost in a thorny wood,
> That rends the thorns, and is rent with the thorns;
> Seeking a way, and straying from the way;
> Not knowing how to find the open air,
> But toiling desperately to find it out." . . .

So a voice is heard in the *Harmonies religieuses* to give a *pourquoi* for the complainer's tossings to and fro of heart and hope, *comme un malade dans son lit:*

> "Pourquoi mon errante pensée,
> Comme une colombe blessée,
> Ne se repose en aucun lieu."

* See Mr. G. W. Cox's rendering (from Æschylus) of the tale of Iô and Prometheus.

The Edward Shore of Crabbe's *Tales* is one who, "unfix'd, unfixing, look'd around, and no employment but in seeking found." He loved not labour, though he could not rest, "Nor firmly fix the vacillating mind, that, ever working, could no centre find." For such as him was meant the moral embodied in, and openly attached to, one of Wordsworth's *Inscriptions* (On the banks of a rocky stream):

> "Behold an emblem of our human mind
> Crowded with thoughts that need a settled home,
> Yet, like to eddying balls of foam
> Within this whirlpool, they each other chase
> Round and round, and neither find
> An outlet nor a resting-place!
> Stranger, if such disquietude be thine,
> Fall on thy knees and sue for help divine."

In Edward Shore's case, although "faith, with his virtue, he indeed profess'd," there were "doubts that deprived his ardent mind of rest;" and, not adopting the counsel of the bard of Rydal,

> "Still the same scruples haunted Edward's mind.
> Who found no rest, nor took the means to find."

A companion picture, like in unlikeness, is to be seen in one of the later tales,—that of Rachel, who lived in sorrow and in solitude:

> "Religious neighbours, kindly calling, found
> Her thoughts unsettled, anxious, and unsound:
> Low, superstitious, querulous, and weak,
> She sought for rest but knew not how to seek:
> And their instructions, though in kindness meant,
> Were far from yielding the desired content."

Like neither of these is that seeker in Shelley, who "sought, for his lost heart was tender, things to love, but found them not"—"a spirit that strove for truth, and like the Preacher found it not." "Ah me," sighs the Licinius of *Chronicles and Characters*,

> "What goal to us remains, whose course some Fate
> Impels unwilling where no prize can wait
> The weary runner?"

And something such is the strain of the Lotos-eaters, weighed upon with heaviness while all things else have rest from weariness. All things have rest: why should *they* toil alone, and make perpetual moan, still from one sorrow to another thrown,

"Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
Nor harken what the spirit sings,
'There is no joy but calm'?"

For is there "any peace in ever climbing up the climbing wave?" Sheer misery is that described in the legend of Rabbi Ben Ephraim's Treasure, where we read how

"a fever-famisht human hope
That is doom'd from grief to grief to grope
On darkness blind to a doubtful goal, . . .
Consumes the substance of the soul
In wavering ways about the world."

Nor so very far behind it is the trouble of him that wrought upon his shield, for his device, a fountain springing ever to reach a star, with the legend subscribed, "I shall attain,"—though, to mock his eyes, his heart replied, "In vain!"—for where that fountain seemed to rise highest, back again was it straightway consigned to earth, and fell in void despair, like the worn knight's "sad seven-years' hope to find Fair Yoland with the yellow hair." Within those seven years, how many lands and climes had he ransacked, and yet he seemed to be, indeed,

"No nearer to the endless quest.
Neither by night nor day I rest;
My heart burns in me like a fire:
My soul is parch'd with long desire:
Ghostlike I grow, and where I go
I hear men mock and mutter low,
And feel men's finger point behind—
'The moonstruck knight that talks to air!
Lord help the fool who hopes to find
Fair Yoland with the yellow hair.'
* * * *
This grieving after unknown good,
Though but a sickness in the blood,

Cries from the dust. And God is just.
No rock denies the raven food.
For who would torture, night by night,
Some starving creature with the sight
Of banquets fair with plenty spread,
Then mock, 'Crawl empty thou to bed,
And dream of viands not for thee!'
Yet night by night, dear God, to me,
In wake or sleep, such visions creep
To gnaw my heart with hunger deep.
How can I meet dull death, resign'd
To die the fool of dreams so fair?
Nay, love hath seen, and love shall find
Fair Yoland with the yellow hair!"

No observant reader of these rhymes but must have been struck with the rhymer's recurrence to this order of themes, in lingering longing strains, diversified enough in manner and accident, but nearly identical in import. Thus, in a later work, we often light on such passages as this:

" For I know what it is to wander, alas!
It is only to fall from bad to worse,
And find no rest in the universe."

Elsewhere the same poet begins another poem with the reflection,—

"The rest that man runs after lures the wretch
From every place where he at rest may be,
So that his legs are ever on the stretch,
And not one moment of repose hath he."

So again where the Tree tells the Man, in the last poem of the series,—

"Vainly the world, wherein no root thou hast,
Thou wanderest seeking what, when found, is fled.
And think'st thou I am solitary? Thou
It is who art a wandering solitude.
For from thy life away thy life doth flow,
And, self-pursuing, thou art self-pursued.

* * * *

The Tree stands steadfast . . . by the root he hath.
For whoso hath no root, no life hath he.
No path leads to him. And by every path
He from himself must needs a wanderer be."

But in yet another poem from the same source we may find a passage that, by way of conclusion, may serve to bring us round nearer to our starting-point:

> "My heart is a storm-beaten ark, wildly hurl'd
> O'er the whirlpools of time, with the wrecks of a world.
> The dove from my bosom hath flown far away:
> It is flown, and returns not, though many a day
> Have I watch'd from the windows of life for its coming.
> Friend, I sigh for repose, I am weary of roaming.
> I know not what Ararat rises for me,
> Far away, o'er the waves of the wandering sea."

III.

THE TOWER OF BABEL.

GENESIS xi. 1—9.

ARCHBISHOP WHATELY is the alleged author of a Latin tractate, anonymously published in 1849, which freely recognizes as very considerable the difficulties under which this short narrative labours. He asks how the precaution against being scattered abroad was to be secured by building a very high tower; and again how the purpose of it was to be frustrated by a confusion of tongues; and why it was necessary that they should all be dispersed through far-apart regions? His notion of the matter, upon the whole, seems to be that some leading men had determined to found a world-wide empire, with a temple, dedicated to some idol, for world-wide worship; and that since it was not in their power, as dwellers on a plain, to erect that building on a mountain, (as one of the "high places" afterwards so notorious in holy writ,) they resolved on building a very lofty tower, a sort of artificial mountain. Whereupon their counsels were baffled by divine interposition, which moved the founders to discord, causing them to quarrel about religious worship—and thus "much more effectively vitiating their attempt than by a diversity of tongues." "Thus it came to pass at Babel,

that the strongest of the factions kept possession of the city and tower, only dropping the magnitude of the tower and that height which they had at first designed, while the other factions went off in different directions, and settled themselves, some in one locality, some in another." There is a celebrated imaginary conversation between the two Isaacs, Newton and Barrow, in which the Jews are roundly charged with "inventing" the story, because themselves ignorant of the sciences and envious of the scientific. "Astronomy, among the rest, was odious to them; and hence the fables stuck against the Tower of Babel, the observatory of a better and a wiser people, their enemy, their conqueror." Coleridge, on the other hand, descries in the cosmotheism, or identification of God with the universe, the first apostacy of mankind after the flood, when they "combined to raise a temple to the heavens, and which is still the favoured religion of the Chinese." Glancing in another direction for varieties of view, we come upon Mr. Charles Kingsley's plea for the builders of Babel, as to some extent right and well-meaning. From the Babel society, argues one of his spokesmen, sprung our architecture, our astronomy, politics, and colonization: no doubt the old Hebrew scheiks thought them impious enough, for daring to build brick walls instead of keeping to the good old-fashioned tents, and gathering themselves into a nation instead of remaining a mere family horde. And no doubt the same adverse critics "gave their own account of the myth, just as the antediluvian savages gave theirs of that strange Eden scene, by the common interpretation of which the devil is made the first inventor of modesty. Men are all conservatives; everything new is impious, till we get accustomed to it; and if it fails, the mob piously discover a divine vengeance in the mischance, from Babel to Catholic Emancipation." From another standpoint Mr. Carlyle took his survey of the Shinar structure, when he uttered one of his seer-like denunciations of "this our new Tower-of-Babel era" and its "soul-confusing Babylonish hubbub." For now, as in that old time, he complains, had men said to themselves, Come, let us build a tower which shall

reach to heaven; and by our steam-engines, and logic-engines, and skilful mechanism and manipulation, vanquish not only physical nature, but the divine Spirit of Nature, and scale the empyrean itself. "Wherefore they must needs again be stricken with confusion of tongues (or of printing-presses); and *dispersed*—to other work; wherein also, let us hope, their hammers and trowels shall better avail them." *Cœlum ipsum petimus stultitia*, says Horace; for, *nil mortalibus arduum est.* Another ode of his might remind us of Babel, in the line "Molem propinquam nubibus arduis,"—and again, in yet another, "Regalique situ pyramidum altius." Dante saw Nimrod in Purgatory:

> "At foot of the stupendous work he stood,
> As if bewilder'd, looking on the crowd
> Leagued in his proud attempt on Sennaar's plain."

One recalls the strain of the Hebrew prophet, Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet from heaven should spoilers come upon her. "For her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies." Or as it is written in another place, "Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that . . . holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord." An apostrophe from the Essay on Man is here not inapplicable:

> "Oh, sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise,
> By mountains piled on mountains, to the skies?
> Heaven still with laughter the vain toil surveys,
> And buries madmen in the heaps they raise."

Pope has a more direct allusion to the story of Shinar in his modernization, or as he called it versification, of Donne's satire; in one passage of which, the rugged elder poet is fain to tell a pretentious prig,

> "If you had lived, sir,
> Time enough to have been interpreter
> To Babel's bricklayers, sure the Tower had stood:"

and this in Pope's version becomes,

"You prove yourself so able,
Pity you were not druggerman at Babel;
For had they found a linguist half so good,
I make no question but the Tower had stood."

Dr. Cumming got a rap on the knuckles for his halting scholarship, when he implied in one of his books that Greek might already have been heard at Babel in advance of the age of Cadmus: "Then, when one asked for something in Hebrew, another asked him what he meant in another language; and when another asked for something in Greek, he was replied to in some dialect of the Hebrew." The confusion of tongues at Babel, Mr. Farrar can cite many competent authorities for regarding rather as a "sublime emblem than a material verity." But the subject is a dangerously favourite one with sciolists as well as scholars; and one of the former was not long since derided by one of the latter for deriving Babel from Bab-bel—"the palace of the star of Good Fortune;" for which reading he was advised to substitute Bab-ble, as that would be quite as scholarlike, with the advantage of expressing much more definitely the phenomenon with which the Tower of Babel is familiarly associated.

Worthy and inquiring Mr. John Evelyn records in his Diary how he "had some discourse with certain strangers not unlearned, who had been born not far from old Nineveh; they assured me of the ruines being still extant, and vast and wonderfull were the buildings, vaults, pillars, and magnificent fragments; but they could say little of the Toure of Babel that satisfied me." Few can say much on that subject that *is* satisfactory, to this day.*

* In Mr. Pierson's *Traditions of Freemasonry*, of which several editions have been sold, there is a very noticeable "legend of the Tower of Babel recited in a degree called the Noachites or Prussian Chevaliers"—a title, by the way, concerning which Mr. Freeman, or one of his school, inquiringly observed that he had heard of Uhlans and of Teutonic knights, but did not know that either of these professed to be Noachites in any sense but that in which all mankind might be said to be Noachites. The story goes that Peleg, who suggested the plan of the tower, and who had been

The confusion of tongues on the plains of Shinar has led to strife of tongues on the part of commentators and expositors ever since. It is a relief to betake one's self to the poets, out of that strife of tongues. There is an old poem of Sir David Lyndesay's, in which the Lord Lyon King at Arms goes through the early part of the Old Testament at great length, and sometimes with considerable freedom; and here the Tower of Babel is uniformly styled a "dungeoun"—the same word as "donjon"; his account of what happened at the foot of the dungeon might not, as partial criticism admits, satisfy a comparative philologer, but it is at least comforting to find so early a date given to our own branch of the common speech:—

> "Affore that tyme all spak Ebrew;
> Than sum began for to speik Grew,
> Sum Duche, sum language Sarazyne,
> And sum began to speik Latyne."

It is a poet of our own day who recites his trials of travelling experience, as a confirmed wanderer about in the world, who from many strange mouths has heard many strange tongues and himself has in many a language groaned many a groan,—

> "And have often had reason to curse those wild fellows
> Who built the high house at which heaven turn'd jealous,
> Making human audacity stumble and stammer
> When seized by the throat in the hard gripe of Grammar."

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the Grand Architect during the construction, being struck with the force of conscience, condemned himself to most rigorous penance, and migrated with his followers to the North of Germany, suffering extreme miseries on the way. Settling in Prussia, he "built a triangular temple, where he enclosed himself that he might be able at leisure to worship God, and implore Him to pardon his transgression. In the course of excavation in the salt mines of Prussia, A.D. 553, there were discovered at the depth of fifteen cubits the foundations of a triangular edifice, in the centre of which was a small pillar of marble, on which the above history was inscribed in Hebrew characters, containing these words: 'Here were deposited the ashes of the Grand Architect of the Tower of Babel—God showed him mercy, because he humbled himself.' These monuments are said to be in the possession of the King [1870] of Prussia."—*Traditions of Freemasonry and its Coincidences with the Ancient Mysteries.* By A. T. C. Pierson, New York.

The castle wall up to which Alma led the knights in the *Faerie Queene*, was of towering height, and not built of brick, nor yet of stone and lime,

> " But of thing like to that Ægyptian slime
> Whereof king Nine whilome built Babel towre :
> But O great pity, that no longer time
> So goodly workmanship should not endure !
> Soone it must turne to earth : no earthly thing is sure."

Byron takes Babel tower as his text for a homily against big houses and big sepulchres :

> " Alas ! man makes that great which makes him little :
> I grant you in a church 'tis very well :
> What speaks of Heaven should be by no means brittle,
> But strong and lasting, till no tongue can tell
> Their names who rear'd it, but huge houses fit ill—
> And huge tombs worse—mankind, since Adam fell :
> Methinks the story of the Tower of Babel
> Might teach them this much better than I'm able."

Wordsworth was reminded of it by the procedure of certain leaders of party in the time of the first French Revolution :

> " Hence could I see how Babel-like their task,
> Who, by the recent deluge stupefied,
> With their whole souls went culling from the day
> Its petty promises, to build a tower
> For their own safety."

Elsewhere, in stately verse, he tells us how the Babylonian

> " from the plain, with toil immense, upreared
> Tower eight times planted on the top of tower,
> That Belus, nightly to his splendid couch
> Descending there might rest ; upon that height
> Pure and serene, diffused—to overlook
> Winding Euphrates, and the city vast
> Of his devoted worshippers, far-stretched,
> With grove and field and garden interspersed :
> Their town, and foodful region for support
> Against the pressure of beleaguering war."

Wordsworth's successor, as wearer of the bays, likens a clamour, in the *Princess*, to that of "a new-world Babel,

woman-built, and worse-confounded." And one may be pardoned for thinking of Shinar when reading what Sir Pelleas said, in the *Holy Grail*, when he saw

> "High up in heaven the hall that Merlin built
> Blackening against the dead green stripes of even,—
> 'Black nest of rats,' he groan'd, 'ye build too high.'"

The Duchess of Friedland's charge against her too ambitious husband, in the *Wallensteins Tod*, is that he is ever building, building to the clouds, still building higher, and still higher building, nor bears in mind that the poor narrow basis cannot sustain the giddy tottering structure. He builds too low who builds beneath the clouds. As in one of his poems Victor Hugo describes the structural imaginings of Piranese,

> "Où se mêlent l'arche et le ciel,
> L'escalier, la tour, la colonne ;
> Où croît, monte, s'enfle et bouillonne
> L'incommensurable Babel,"

so in another he moralizes his song, with an allegorized picture of Babel tower reversed :

> "O châtiment ! dédale aux spirales funèbres !
> Construction d'en bas qui cherche les ténèbres,
> Plonge au-dessous du monde et descend dans la nuit,
> Et, Babel renversée, au fond de l'ombre fuit !"

So, and yet hardly so, but otherwise, moralizes his song the author of *The New Timon*, when describing one

> "Intent, the Babel art has built, to trace,
> Here scan the height and there explore the base ;
> That structure called 'The Civilized,' as vain
> As its old symbol on the Shinar plain,
> Where Pride collects the bricks and slime, and then
> But builds the city to divide the men ;
> Swift comes the antique curse,—smites one from one,
> Rends the great bond, and leaves the pile undone."

IV.

SOCIABLE SILENCE.

JOB ii. 13.

ALREADY in an earlier volume of Biblical annotations has the above text been treated as a suggestive argument for Silent Sympathy.* We now propose to take it as also suggestive of what may be called Sociable Silence. Let us get what good we can out of such proverbially bad comforters as Job's three friends. He at any rate got some good out of them, until they began to talk.

For it was when they began to talk, and to talk as they did, that Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar became a trouble to the Man of Uz, and not a solace. Silent, they were sociable, and he was glad of their society. But when they broke that silence, they broke too the bonds of that good fellowship. Save me from my friends, he might say, when they became argumentative, disputatious, and dogmatical. It was with him then as with the vexed questionist in Crabbe:

> "Questions now vex'd his spirit, most from those
> Who are call'd friends, because they are not foes."

Most of what Job's friends said to him were veracious statements, remarks Robertson of Brighton, and much of what Job said for himself was unveracious and mistaken; and yet these veracities of theirs were so torn from all connexion with fact and truth, that they became falsehoods; and the speakers were nothing more than "orthodox liars" in the sight of God. Sir Thomas Browne calls "these oblique expostulations of Job's friends a deeper injury than the downright blows of the devil.' Cowper's couplets are pointed, and to the point:

> "Job felt it when he groan'd beneath the rod
> And the barb'd arrows of a frowning God;
> And such emollients as his friends could spare,
> Friends such as his for modern Jobs prepare."

* In *Secular Annotations on Scripture Texts*, First Series, pp. 6—10.

Somewhere comparing himself with Job, on the score of patience, and in regard of friends, Edmund Burke observes, with ingenious self-application, "I do not find him blamed for reprehending, and with a considerable degree of verbal asperity, those ill-natured neighbours of his who visited his dunghill to read moral, political, and economical lectures on his misery." A later philosopher argues that Job's comforters only failed because they tried to comfort Job; that their comfort was very fair businesslike comfort in its way, but it happened to be applied in a case where the capacity for feeling was great, and where the problems which great suffering awakes had seized hold of a reflective mind. Coleridge was arguing against the literalities of indiscriminate verbal inspiration, when he asked, by a sort of *reductio ad absurdum*, if we are to receive as alike dictated by an infallible Intelligence the pathetic appeals and the close and powerful reasoning of the poor sufferer, smarting at once from his wounds and from the oil of vitrol which the orthodox "liars for God" were dropping into them,—and the "hollow truisms, the unsufficing half-truths, the false assumptions and malignant insinuations of the supercilious bigots who corruptly defended the truth." Hard words, my masters! What Coleridge thus controversially wrote in the *Letters on Inspiration*, he had, long before, virtually affirmed in the *Friend*, where he calls attention to the sentence passed by the All-just on the friends of the sufferer, who had hoped, like venal advocates, to purchase the favour of God by uttering truths of which in their own hearts they had neither conviction nor comprehension: "the truth from the lips did not atone for the lie in the heart, while the rashness of agony in the searching and bewildered complainant was forgiven in consideration of his sincerity and integrity in not disguising the true dictates of his reason and conscience."

It has been propounded as a general rule, all comforters have been officious and disagreeable people since the days of Job: the difference between comforting a sufferer and triumphing over his misfortunes is occasionally imperceptible, and when the triumph takes the form of bombardment with moral

platitudes it is especially offensive.* Sir Mungo Malagrowther, "like one of the comforters of the Man of Uz," drew close up to impoverished and embarrassed young Nigel, to enlarge on the former grandeur of the Lords of Glenvarloch, and the regret with which he had heard that their representative was not likely to possess the domains of his ancestry. And later in the stages of the young nobleman's decline and fall, when his very head is in peril, the old knight afflicts him with positive assurances that he will not fail him on the scaffold itself; for, "I bear a heart," quoth Sir Mungo, "to stand by a friend in the worst of times"—and so saying, he bids Lord Glenvarloch farewell, who feels as heartily rejoiced at his departure, though it may be a bold word, as any person who had ever undergone Sir Mungo's society. It was scarcely that troublesome personage's privilege to enjoy the freedom from interruption apparently secured to Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, neither of whom, observe the commentators, is ever broken in upon while speaking—no matter how sarcastic his invectives, how torturing his reproaches, how unjust his assumptions, how one-sided his inferences.

But as exemplars, in the anti-controversial stage, of sociable and sympathetic silence, let us take leave of Job's friends with goodwill, in a Shakspearian similitude, referring to those who

> "Do glue themselves in sociable grief,
> Like true, inseparable, faithful loves,
> Sticking together in calamity."

There is a silence which is felt to be sociable, when the silent associates are tried and trusty friends. Wherever, in fact, there is implicit confidence, and an underlying sense of general

* George Eliot somewhere remarks that the harder problems of our life have changed less than our manners; we wrestle with the old sorrows, but more decorously: so that even the patriarch Job, if he had been a gentleman of the modern West (and especially if a gentleman of the modern West-end), would have avoided disorder and poetical laments; while the friends who called on him, though not less disposed than Bildad the Shuhite to hint that their unfortunate friend was in the wrong, would have sat on their chairs, and held their hats in their hands.

sympathy, it is often a relief to be able to hold one's peace without any risk of misapprehension. Whereas, with a comparative stranger, one puts on company manners, and has to keep up the shuttlecock of colloquial inanity with all one's battledoor might. Everybody who has friends must have felt this; and though—nay, because the feeling is a common one, it may be interesting to show by examples how it has been expressed in literature.

Horace Walpole tells a story of two old cronies, who, sitting together one evening till it was quite dark, without speaking, one called to the other, "Tom, Tom." "Well," said his friend, "what do you say?" "Oh," said the other, "are you there?" "Ay," said old Tom. "Why, then, don't you say *humph?*" demanded the first. So that there was but a felt presence, the silence was enjoyable between these twain. The mute companionship was scarcely the less companionable for being mute. Old friends, remarks Walpole in another of his letters, are the great blessing of one's later years—half a word conveys one's meaning.* He makes this remark in reference to the loss of his intimate friend Mr. Chute, whom he used to see oftener than any one, and to whom he had recourse in every difficulty. "And him I loved to have here, as our friendship was so entire, and we knew one another so entirely, that he alone was never the least constraint to me. We passed many hours together without saying a syllable to each other; for we were both above ceremony."

It is the concluding couplet in the following lines which best attests the confiding friendship that existed between Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Skene:

"To thee, perchance, this rambling strain
Recalls our summer walks again;
When doing nought—and, to speak true,
Not anxious to find aught to do,—

* Jean Ingelow, in her "first romance," takes notice of it as a remarkable thing, "and I have noticed it too often to think I can have been deceived, that moods of mind, and sometimes even thoughts, will occasionally pass from one person to another while both are silent, almost as distinctly as they can be conveyed by words."—*Off the Skelligs*, vol. ii., p. 17.

> The wild unbounded hills we ranged,
> While oft our talk its topic changed,
> And desultory. as our way,
> Ranged unconfined from grave to gay ;
> E'en when it flagged, as oft will chance,
> No effort made to break its trance,
> We could right pleasantly pursue
> Our sports in social silence too."

To the large power of silent sensibility shared alike by Wordsworth and his sister,—the tongue still, the eye and heart awake,—would Principal Shairp refer most of what is best in the Journal of Dorothy, as well as in the Poems of William. They were, during their tour in Scotland, as much in sympathy with each other as with nature. And therefore, says the author of *Culture and Religion*, as editor of Miss Wordsworth's *Recollections* of that tour, "I can well imagine that in a state of pure receptivity they may have dreamed away mile after mile without interchanging a word." This is incidentally remarked, by way of meeting the complaint of those readers who were disappointed at finding so few and meagre records of conversation in that delightful Journal.

Had Lavender, in *A Princess of Thule*, been asked if Sheila's silence had not a trifle of dulness in it, he would have replied, says his author, by asking if there is dulness in the stillness and the silence of the sea.

Wisely and well La Bruyère says that, merely to be with those we love is enough. To indulge in reverie the while; to talk to them; not to talk to them; to think about them; to think on matters indifferent and irrelevant to them,—but with themselves beside us,—all goes well on that single condition: *tout est égal.* The Abbé Barthélemy speaks happily of those happy moments between like-minded friends, when the very silence is a proof of the enjoyment each feels in the mere presence of the other; for it is a silence productive of neither weakness nor disgust.* They say nothing, but they are to-

* A suggestive passage occurs in one of Rowland Williams's letters, descriptive of a visit to Abergwili, in April 1852: "The Bishop [whose chaplain he was at that time] was exceedingly kind. We dined *tête-à-tête*

gether. *On ne dit rien, mais on est ensemble.* Rousseau is even rapturous in his eulogies of sympathetic silence; he dilates with enthusiasm on the quantity and quality of good things that are said without ever opening the mouth—on the ardent sentiments that are communicated without the frigid medium of speech. Fénélon expatiates on the charm of free communion, *sans cérémonie,* with a dear friend who don't tire you, and whom neither do you tire; you see one another; at times one talks; at others, listens; at others, both keep silence; for both are satisfied with being together, even with nothing to say. "*On ne se dit rien, on est content d'être ensemble sans se rien dire.*"

The great test, the only sure and abiding test, of love, Sir Arthur Helps takes to be this—that it has the victory over weariness, tiresomeness, and familiarity; for when you are with the person loved, you have no sense of being bored. "With the persons you do not love, you are never supremely at your ease. You have the sense of walking upon stilts. In conversation with them, however much you admire them and are interested in them, the horrid idea will cross your mind of 'What shall I say next?' Converse with them is not perfect association." On the other hand, with those you love, the satisfaction in their presence is likened to the relation of the heavenly bodies to one another, which, in their silent revolutions, lose none of their attractive power: the sun does not talk to the world; but it attracts it.

For those who have managed that things shall run smoothly over the domestic rug, says the author of *Orley Farm,* there is no happier time of life than the long candlelight hours of home and silence. "No spoken content or uttered satisfaction is necessary. The fact that is felt is enough for peace." This fact is touchingly exemplified in the American story of *The*

on Monday, and spent the evening subsequently in reading new books opposite one another, only varying the silence occasionally by a remark or a question one to the other; nothing could be really more sensible, though in the eyes of some people it might appear funny."—*Life and Letters of Rowland Williams, D.D.,* vol. i., p. 204.

Gayworthys, in the instance of stolid Jaazaniah Hoogs and his leal-hearted wife Wealthy. We see Jaazaniah in his chair, the three-legged chair tilted up, the man whittling a stick, and whistling. Wealthy is busy chopping, following her own solitary thoughts, but feeling a certain habitual comfort in having him at her elbow. Standing up for the poor soul, she maintains in one place that his thoughts come out in his whistling: he could never make such music as that out of nothing. "You never heard it, nor nobody else, as I have. Why, when we're sitting here, all alone . . . . he'll go on so [whistling], that I hold my breath for fear o' stopping him. It's like all the Psalms and Revelations to listen to it. There's something between us then that's more than talk."—Presently it is beside his death-bed that she sits, in the same expressive silence. "She sat by him for hours; sometimes laying her hand softly down upon the coverlet, and letting his seek it, as it always would; and the spring breath and music in the air spoke gently for them both, and there was something between them that was more than talk."

One thinks of Dr. Johnson in his last illness, visited by Malone, and proving so unusually silent that the visitor rose to leave, believing him to be in pain, or incommoded by company. "Pray, sir, be seated," Johnson said. "I cannot talk, but I like to see you there." Indeed, great talker in every sense as the doctor had been in his prime, he was never insensible to the value of sympathetic silence. During his tour to the Hebrides, his companion, Boswell, took the liberty one evening of remarking to Johnson, that he very often sat quite silent for a long time, even when in company with a single friend. "It is true, sir," replied Johnson. "Tom Tyers described me the best. He once said to me, 'Sir, you are like a ghost; you never speak till you are spoken to.'" Boswell was apparently incapable of seeing anything enjoyable in social silence. Not so his every way bigger friend.

A delightful essayist of the present time, discussing the companionship of books, accounts it no forced paradox to say that a man may sometimes be far more profitably employed in

surveying his bookshelves in meditative mood, than if he were to pull this or that volume down and take to reading it; "just as two friends may hold sweeter converse in perfect silence together, than if they were talking all the time." The note of exclamation is sounded by Miss Rhoda Broughton, "Oh, blessed state of intimacy, when you may sit by a person for hours and never utter to them!"* When Esther Craven is dilating on the blissfulness of her evenings at home all alone with her brother Jack, that darling of her heart, as yet fancy-free, "You find plenty to say to *him* always, I suppose?" quoth rueful Robert Brandon; and her answer is pat: "Not a word sometimes. We sit opposite or beside each other in sociable silence."

Henry Mackenzie's Montauban congratulates himself on the footing upon which already he stands with his new acquaintance, Monsieur de Roubigné: "He does not think himself under the necessity of eternally talking to entertain me; and we sometimes spend a morning together pleased with each other's society, though we do not utter a dozen sentences." It is of Julia de Roubigné, in the same epistolary novel, that another letter-writer declares, after adverting to the sprightliness of a Mademoiselle Dorville,—"Oh, Beauvaris! I have laid out more soul in sitting five minutes with Julia de Roubigné in silence, than I should in a year's conversation with this little Dorville." Silence is of different kinds, and breathes different meanings, writes the autobiographer of Villette: "no words could inspire a pleasanter content than did M. Paul's wordless presence." Miss Austen's William, in *Mansfield Park*, tells Fanny that he is worn-out with civility; he has been talking to people incessantly all night, and with nothing to say. "But with *you*, Fanny, there may be peace. You will not want to be talked to. Let us have the luxury of silence." We see Mrs. Gaskell's squire and his son Roger smoking together in prolonged silence: "But the voluntary companionship of his

* The "never utter to them" is a little loose in construction; but the authoress is at least consistent in pluralizing "a person," as readers of her books will have noticed more than once and again.

son was very soothing to the Squire, though not a word might be said." And in the same story we are told of Osborne's preference of Molly's society, that to her he needed not to talk if the mood was not on him—they were on those happy terms where silence is permissible, and where efforts to act against the prevailing mood of the mind are not required.

An observant writer assumes that his observant readers may, or must, have some time or other remarked a couple of persons pacing the deck of a ship—walking step for step, through half a day, turning with the same short jerk, to resume the same short path, and yet never interchanging a word; the rhythm of the footfall the only tie of companionship between them.* They halt occasionally, too, as he describes them, to look over the bulwarks, at some white sail far away, or some cloud-bank rising from the horizon; mayhap they linger to watch the rolling porpoises as they pass, or the swift nautilus, as he glides along; yet never a sound or a token of mutual intelligence escapes them:—it is enough that they live surrounded by the same influences, breathe the same air, and step in the same time; they have their separate thoughts—wide, perhaps, as the poles asunder, and yet by some strange magnetism they feel there is a kind of sociality in their speechless intercourse.

Most of us, with Kenelm Chillingly, have known the attraction that draws one human being to another, and makes it so exquisite a happiness to sit quiet and mute by another's side; which stills for the moment the busiest thoughts in our brain,

* There is a picture in Mr. Henry Kingsley's *Hetty* of two figures seated together on the deck of a steamboat—one of which, "sitting in a Cashmere shawl like a figure-head," from time to time said to the other, "Are you tired?" and the other, a sailor, said, "No. He was very happy. Why should he be tired?" "Because you are not talking to anybody," said Rebecca: "I don't wish to talk; and I am afraid that I am bad company." "You are very good and comfortable company," said Hartop; "the worst mate of all is a sulky mate, and the next worse is a jawing mate. I took you out for pleasure, not to talk to me." "Now that is like a friend, a real friend," gratefully exclaims Hardie to his adherent, in *Hard Cash*, "to sit by me, and not make a row. Thank you, thank you!"

the most turbulent desires in our heart, and renders us but conscious of a present ineffable bliss.

Elia accounts that to be but an imperfect solitude which a man enjoys by himself, and applauds the sense of the first hermits when they retired into Egyptian solitudes, not singly, but in shoals, "to enjoy one another's want of conversation. The Carthusian is bound to his brethren by this agreeing spirit of incommunicativeness." In secular occasions, Elia adds, what so pleasant as to be reading a book through a long winter evening, with a friend sitting by—say a wife—he, or she, too (if that be probable), reading another, without interruption, or oral communication. "Can there be no sympathy without the gabble of words? . . . Give me, Master Zimmermann, a sympathetic solitude."

Lamb's reference to the agreeing spirit of incommunicativeness cultivated in monastic retreats, may remind us of what is told of a celebrated meeting between St. Louis, king of France, in disguise, and Egidius of Assisi, a rich citizen, "famous for many graces," writes Sir James Stephen, "and for not a few miracles." At Perugia the two saints met, and long knelt together in silent embrace. On the departure of the king, Egidius was rebuked by his brethren for his rudeness in not having uttered a word to so great a sovereign. "Marvel not," he answered, "that we did not speak; a divine light laid bare to each of us the heart of the other. No words could have intelligibly expressed that language of the soul, or have imparted the same sacred consolation."

One of the most popular of French authors comments, in his autobiography, on the analogy he professes to have observed between the two races of sailors and forest-rangers, and tells, for instance, how the mariner or the woodman will remain by the side of his best friend, in the one case on the ocean, in the other deep in the forest, without exchanging a single word. But as the two entertain the same train of ideas—as their silence has been no more than a long tacit communion with nature, "You will be astonished to find that, at the proper moment, they have but to exchange a word, a gesture, or a

glance, and they will have communicated more to each other by this word, this gesture, or glance of the eye, than others could have done in a long discourse." As Scott and Skene with their sports, so can these

> "Right pleasantly pursue
> Their craft, in social silence too."

Sir Arthur Helps' three Friends in Council return home, after one of their outdoor colloquies, or peripatetic philosophisings, "not sorry to be mostly silent" as they go along, and glad that their friendship is so assured that they can be silent without the slightest danger of offence.

Uncle Sol and Mr. Toots, in *Dombey and Son*, wait patiently in the churchyard, sitting on the copingstone of the railings, until Captain Cuttle and Susan come back. Neither being at all desirous to speak, or to be spoken to, they are expressly described as excellent company, and quite satisfied. Glance again at the same author's picture of Mr. Willet and his companions, Mr. Cobb and long Phil Parkes, enjoying one another's society at the Maypole; and how enjoying it? "For two mortal hours and a half, none of the company had pronounced one word." Yet were they all firmly of opinion that they were very jolly companions—every one—rather choice spirits than otherwise; and their look at each other every now and then is said to have been as if there were a perpetual interchange of ideas going on—no man among them considering himself or his neighbour by any means silent; and each of them nodding occasionally when he caught the eye of another, as if to say, "You have expressed yourself extremely well, sir, in relation to that sentiment, and I quite agree with you." *

Mr. Shirley Brooks, in his last and best novel, says: "It is a happy time when a man and a woman can be long silent together, and love one another the better that neither speaks

* Applicable in its way is the story of the two famous coachmen who met each other daily on the Dover road, for four-and-twenty years, never exchanging any other greeting than a jerk of the wrist; and yet, when one died, the other pined away, and soon afterwards followed him.

of love. A few years later, and silence is perhaps thought to mean either sorrow or sulks." And if this reflection relate to fiction, here is a sketch from fact, which may go with it—a reminiscence by Mary Ann Schimmelpenninck of her early childhood, and of happy hours spent alone with her mother, for whom absolute quiet was indispensable during many hours of the day: "She was generally seated at her table with her books, her plans of landscape gardening, or ornamental needle-work, whilst I was allowed to sit in the room, but to be in perfect silence, unless when my mother called me to fetch anything, or addressed to me some little kind word, which seemed not so much to break the silence as to make it more complete and happy by an united flow of hearts." The lovers, in a modern poem on love, are taken to be a deal more eloquent in their silence than in their converse:

> "Which was most full—our silence or our speech?
> Ah, sure our silence! Though we talk'd high things
> Of life and death, and of the soul's great wings,
> And knowledge pure, which only Love can teach;
> And we have sat beside the lake's calm beach,
> Wordless and still, a long and summer day,
> As if we only watch'd the insect-play,
> Or rippling wave."

The young lover in Mr. Disraeli's Love Story, expressly so called, apologizes to Henrietta Temple for a long term of significant silence, with the candid avowal that he's afraid he's very stupid. "Because you are silent?" she asks. "Is not that a sufficient reason?" he submits. "Nay, I think not," replies Miss Temple; "I think I am rather fond of silent people myself; I cannot bear to live with a person who feels compelled to talk because he is my companion. The whole day passes sometimes without papa and myself exchanging fifty words; yet I am very happy; I do not feel that we are dull." So, when the tenant of Wildfell Hall is being courted by Markham, the latter plumes himself on possessing the faculty of enjoying the company of those he loves, as well in silence as in conversation. One feels sure that this faculty was possessed

in a marked degree by all the Brontë family, to the youngest of whom we owe the rather grim and very characteristic story last named.

There is a fragment in print of an unpublished play of Leigh Hunt's, picturing an ideal home—a heaven this side the stars (as happy husband tells his happy wife):

> "By men call'd home, when some blest pair are met
> As we are now; sometimes in happy talk,
> Sometimes in silence (also a sort of talk,
> Where friends are match'd), each at its gentle task
> Of book, or household need, or meditation."

To like effect, in all intents and purposes, writes the poet of the *Angel in the House*, a sufficiently cognate theme; where Frederick sends his mother this suggestive sketch of his wedded life:

> "For hours the clock upon the shelf
> Has all the talking to itself;
> But to and fro her needle runs
> Twice, while the clock is ticking once;
> And, where a wife is well in reach,
> Not silence separates, but speech;
> And I, contented, read or smoke,
> And idly think, or idly stroke
> The winking cat, or watch the fire,
> In social peace that does not tire."

With entire approbation Swift puts on record the notion, practically enforced, of the Houyhnhnms, that when people are met together, a short silence does much improve conversation: Lemuel Gulliver found this to be true; for during these intermissions of talk, new ideas would arise in their minds, which very much enlivened the discourse. Not the least attractive is the last clause in Lamartine's descriptive line,

> "Lectures, rêverie, entretiens, doux silences."

So again Coleridge pictures himself and a friend

> "Seated at ease, on some smooth mossy rock;
> In social silence now, and now to unlock
> The treasured heart; arm link'd in friendly arm."

And Shelley has his stanzas telling how

> "we sat in silence there,
> Beneath the golden stars of the clear azure air.
> In silence which doth follow talk that causes
> The baffled heart to speak with sighs and tears,
> When wildering passion swalloweth up the pauses
> Of inexpressive speech."

Joanna Baillie accounted this a special blessing in respect to her sisterly intercourse with Agnes, that, because they were sisters, and sisterly, she could sit by her

> "Silent if dull—O precious privilege!"

without having to "make talk," as for a less dear and familiar associate she might, or must. Only of a dear friend, with confidence between them, could Hawthorne have written in one of his note-books: "So there he sits in the sea breezes, and there I sit with him—not keeping up a continual flow of talk, but each speaking as any wisdom happens to come into his mind." Not that either of these experts in sociable silence was likely to emulate the *Anglais* described by a French traveller of the last century, "qui, toutes les fois qu'on veut le forcer à rompre le silence, a coutume de répondre, que parler c'est gâter la conversation." * Ducis says in one of his letters to Deleyre, that he is so glad to find their recent companionship is felt by the latter to have been *douce et agréable;* and then the successor to Voltaire in the French Academy remarks: "Il y a des façons d'être qui sont plus puissantes que les discours; on les gagne, on les respire. Le cœur jouit, la fête se repose; on ne définit plus, on goûte." Such an *épistolaire* was surely qualified, though a Frenchman, to *goûter le silence* itself, if only it was sociable.

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* *Lettres d'un Français,* ii., 108 (1745).

V.

'*I WOULD NOT LIVE ALWAY.*'

JOB vii. 16.

HE may have said it in his haste, certainly he said it in his depth of suffering, when life seemed least desirable, and death itself better than life; for if it came to choosing, Job would choose strangling rather than continue thus to suffer, and be a burden to himself; there it was, and thus it was, that he uttered the negative volition, positive in its pathos, if not despair, "I would not live alway." He loathed his life when he said that. Some who have suffered less may have said the same thing with deliberation, and thoroughly meaning what they more calmly said.

Philosophy assures us—at least a leader of the Scottish school of metaphysics does—that the very briefness of life, afflicting as it is in many cases, in many others is essential to comfort; these being situations in which hope, so litttle apt to desert the afflicted, scarcely arises, unless when it speaks of other scenes, and in which death, the opener of immortality, is hailed as that gracious comforter who receives the combatant when the warfare of life is over, and leads him to repose. And Poetry, Young's for instance and in particular, takes up the strain, and swells it with no uncertain sound; though the sceptical as to Young's sincerity (for some think the Doctor sang falsetto) may insist that with him the sound is *vox et prœterea nihil*:

> "And feel I, death! no joy from thought of thee? . . .
> Death, the deliverer, who rescues man . . .
> Death, that absolves my birth; a curse without it! . . .
> Death, of all pain the period, not of joy. . . .
> This king of terrors is the prince of peace."

Or take the utterance (somewhat hysterical) of a later minstrel, musing on the possible history of a star with its possible denizens:

> "Perchance they do not die that dwell in thee,
> Perchance theirs is a darker doom than ours;

> Unchanging woe and endless misery,
> And mourning that hath neither days nor hours.
> Horrible dream!—Oh, dark and dismal path,
> Where I now weeping walk, I will not leave thee;
> Earth has one boon for all her children—death:
> Open thy arms, oh mother! and receive me.
> Take off the bitter burthen from the slave,
> Give me my birthright! give—the grave, the grave!"

Successless proved all Calypso's blandishments and promises to Odysseus, though one promise was the gift of "immortal life, exempt from age and woe." Often would Haroun, strange oracle of a Strange Story, repeat, with mournful solemnity, that the soul is not meant to inhabit this earth, and in fleshy tabernacle, for more than the period usually assigned to mortals; and that when by art in repairing the walls of the body we so retain it, the soul repines, becomes inert or dejected. And he takes leave of his disciple with the words, "If thou hear that the death which, to my sorrow and in my foolishness, I have failed to recognize as the merciful minister of Heaven, has removed me at last from the earth, believe that the pale visitant was welcome, and that I humbly accept as a blessed release the lot of our common humanity." The hoary sage in Talfourd's *Ion* declines the congratulation of Cleon upon his immunity from disease, in a plague-stricken city: he would have his friends and well-wishers rather mourn that he is destined still to linger here, in strange unnatural strength, while death is all around him:

> "I chide these sinews that are framed so tough,
> Grief cannot palsy them; I chide the air
> Which round this citadel of nature breathes
> With sweetness not of this world; I would share
> The common grave of my dear countrymen,
> And sink to rest while all familiar things
> Old custom has endear'd are failing with me,
> Rather than shiver on in life behind them."

Crabbe's Richard meets the Squire's trite reflection, "Yes, doubtless, we must die," with an assent and an addendum:

> "'We must,' said Richard; 'and we would not live
> To feel what dotage and decay would give.'"

Dining one day with a party at Pucklechurch, the *Borough* poet heard mention of a professor of gastronomy who looked to the time when his art should get to such perfection as to keep people alive for ever. "God forbid!" exclaimed Crabbe, devoutly and emphatically; for he had begun to feel that old age, even without any severe disease, is not a state to be clung to with tenacity. His letters at this period abound with such avowals as, "I feel the heaviness and languor of time"—"grievous stupidity grows on me daily," though there was no symptom of mental decay. John Foster congratulated a correspondent and himself, in 1801, that for them life was passing fast away: "What a superlatively grand and consoling idea is that of Death!" Without it, life would, to his view, darken into midnight melancholy. "The expectation of living here, and living thus, always, would be indeed a prospect of overwhelming despair. But thanks to that fatal decree that dooms us to die!" To him, what he called the "sacred possibility" of making the shortness of life a felicity, was so much the more welcome that he neither had found, nor hoped to find, anything that could entitle long life to be so deemed. "O welcome hour whenever!" is the exclamation of the Miltonic Adam: "How gladly would I meet Mortality, my sentence, and be earth Insensible! how glad would lay me down, As in my mother's lap! there I should rest, And sleep secure." It is Blind Old Milton himself that is made by Aytoun to ask if he,

"Tithonus-like, must linger here,
And count each step along the rugged road,
A phantom tottering to a long-made grave,
And eager to lay down my weary load."

His Adam, of a lost Paradise, is again the speaker in the avowal, "Hencefore I fly not death, nor would prolong Life much: bent rather how I may be quit, Fairest and easiest, of this cumbrous charge." Hawthorne's Aylmer, self-persuaded of his attained skill to concoct a liquid that should prolong life for years, perhaps interminably, forbears to use a power that would produce a discord in nature, and which all the world, but chiefly the quaffer of the immortal nostrum, would find

cause to curse. When Nell—Miss Broughton's Nell, not Mr. Dickens's—wishes aloud there were no such word as dying in the dictionary, so little likes she her father's frequent use of it, "If there were not, it would be a terrible world, Nell," he replies, gravely; "every man with Cain's curse upon his brow." And when, on an after page, the young lady flippantly refers to Methuselah, her clerical papa sips his coffee reflectively, and rejoins with a "Poor Methuselah! nine hundred and sixty-six years he had of it, hadn't he? How sick he must have been of the eternal millround—seed-time and harvest, summer and winter coming back near a thousand times to find him hanging on still." Even the clerical side of the Le Strange family must have its allowance of slang. Item, the 966 years should be 969.

Giles Brandon argues that so far from death being dreaded by the race, however much feared by individuals, it is regarded as the great conclusion which we feel to be wanted; in fact, that, although death be an enemy, the human race instinctively feels that it could not do without it, so long as it has crime, or even imperfection. "And even as individuals—of course, none of us would like to die now, or soon, or at any specified time, and yet, if we were told to-day that we were all going to live for five hundred years, I don't think we should like it. We should get restless and fretful as children do if they pass the time when they should sleep."* *Longa Tithonum minuit senectus.* He saw, as the laureate words it, the woods decay and fall, the vapours weep their burthen to the ground, and man come and till the field and lie beneath, and after many a summer die the swan: *him* only, cruel immortality consumed—the immortality he had asked, and yet not it, nor anything like it, as he meant it, so far as he meant anything at all:

> "I ask'd thee, 'Give me immortality.'
> Then didst thou grant my asking with a smile,
> Like wealthy men who care not how they give.

* "But," objects Dorothea, "they scarcely ever like being put to bed." "Any more than we do," adds her brother; "that may be less because we fear to go to sleep, than because we know so little of the predicted waking."—*Off the Skelligs*, by Jean Ingelow, vol. ii., p. 82.

> But thy strong Hours indignant work'd their wills,
> And beat me down and marr'd and wasted me,"

the *minuit* of Horace. And now he would pray away that sort of immortality, and pray back his share of the common lot. "Take back thy gift. Why should a man desire in any way To vary from the kindly race of men, Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance Where all should pause, as is most meet for all?" And wistfully his dim eyes scan "those dim fields about the homes

> "Of happy men that have the power to die,
> And grassy barrows of the happier dead."

Byron's Manfred tells the chamois hunter that he has lived many years, many long years, but nothing to those he yet must number—ages—ages—space and eternity—and consciousness, with the fierce thirst of death, and still unslaked. He had affronted death; but in the war of elements the waters shrunk from him, and fatal things passed harmless. "What a blessing from God is death!" exclaims Chateaubriand in his *Mémoires d'outre-tombe.* Immortality on earth,—how muses Salathiel on that boon or bane, at the commencement of his wondrous story? "Immortality on earth!—I was still in the vigour of life; but must it be always so? Must not pain, feebleness, the loss of mind, the sad decay of all the resources of the human being, be the natural result of time?" Might not Salathiel the Immortal sink into the perpetual sick-bed, hopeless decrepitude, pain without relaxation, the extremities of famine, of disease, of madness?—Yet this was to be borne, for ages of ages. His was then to be the permanent compulsion of existence in a world made for change: he would have to feel thousands of years bending down his wretched head; alienated from all the hopes, enjoyments, and pursuits of man, to bear the heaviness of that existence which palls even with all the stimulants of the most vivid career; life passionless, exhausted, melancholy, old. He was to be a criminal bound to the floor of his dungeon for ever. He was to feel the keen misery of surviving all he loved, and to stand on the verge of the per-

petual grave, without the power to sink into its refuge. Nathaniel Hawthorne proposes as a curious subject for the imagination, what murmurings and discontents would be excited if any of the great so-called calamities of human beings were to be abolished,—as, for instance, death. How much of life we should lose if we lived perpetually! argues the metaphysical author of *Gravenhurst:* how stagnant would have been the condition of man! He shows the ever-recurring renewal of springs of youth, of love, of child and mother, to have dark death for its necessary condition. "Would you wish it otherwise? The same dry tree for ever," without buds breaking forth, or leaves falling; and the same eternal man, neither young nor old: no glad anticipations, and no cherished memories; both lost in the actual and eternal "repetition of a monotonous existence. I think, in our madness, we should wish the sun to fall out of heaven." Southey had a favourite story of a poor old woman, very old and very poor, who retained her senses long after the body had become a weary burthen, and who, when she heard the bell toll for a funeral used to weep, and say she was afraid God had forgotten her. She had not forgotten Him, however, and it was Southey's conviction that such impatience would not be accounted to her for a sin.

"Life is good; but not life in itself. Life eternal, eternally young,
That were life to be lived or desired. . . .
Life is sweet to the young that yet know not what life is. But life after youth,
The gay liar, leaves hold of the bauble, and Age, with his terrible truth,
Picks it up, and perceives it is broken, and knows it unfit to engage
The care it yet craves. . . . Life eternal, eternally wedded to Age,
What gain were in that? Why should any man seek what he loathes to prolong?
The twilight that darkens the eyeball, the dull ear that's deaf to the song."

The same is the strain of Spenser's query: "O! what availes it of immortall seed To beene ybredd and never borne to dye? Farre better I it deeme to dye with speed Than waste in woe and waylfull miserye." Such reasoning is easy to the sceptical

mind that has reasoned itself into the belief or negation of belief, of M. Ampère's Cæsar:

> "Dans le tombeau
> Nul tourment ne nous suit; de toutes nos misères
> C'est la fin; c'est, après nos peines passagères.
> Le repos et l'oubli; souffre-t-on quand on dort?
> Il n'est rien, ni douleur ni joie après la mort."

How heavily the fear of something after death weighed on the Gentile spirit, Hartley Coleridge infers from the "extravagant admiration of the Epicureans for their founder, who had lulled them with the horrid hope of annihilation." Henri Beyle (De Stendhal) is no unfair specimen of the modern Epicurean in this respect, when he writes to a friend, concerning an attack which proved fatal some months later, "Je me suis colleté avec le néant; c'est le passage qui est désagréable, et cette horreur provient de toutes les niaseries qu'on nous a mises dans la tête à trois ans." Byron says in one of his letters that "men, miserable as they are, cling so to anything like life, that they probably would prefer damnation to quiet." In his *Childe Harold* he puts the question,

> "Is't not enough, unhappy thing! to know
> Thou art? Is this a boon so kindly given
> That being, thou wouldst be again?"

And the last two stanzas of his *Euthanasia* resume the sombre strain:

> "'Ay, but to die, and go,' alas!
> Where all have gone, and all must go!
> To be the nothing that I was
> Ere born to life and living woe!
>
> Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
> Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
> And know, whatever thou hast been,
> 'Tis something better not to be."

Were it not better not to be? is the suggestion of the worse of Mr. Tennyson's Two Voices. Frederick the Great's favourite consolation in moments of difficulty and danger was (next, as Earl Stanhope parenthesizes, to writing verses of his own)

the perusal of Lucretius—of those passages, especially, which attempt to prove the annihilation of the soul.

> "There are, who waste their souls in working out
> Life's problem on these sands betwixt two tides,
> And end,—'Now give us the beast's part, in death.'" *

Referring to some such, and yet other, speculators and speculations, Wordsworth speaks of those who hope, or trust, that our existence winds her stately course beneath the sun, like Ganges, to make part of a living ocean; or, to sink engulfed, like Niger, in impenetrable sands and utter darkness: thought, he adds, "which may be faced, though comfortless."†

Arguing from the recognition by the Buddhist creed, of annihilation‡ as the blessing from heaven which it proposes as a reward, to be earned by perseverance in the highest order of virtuous life, Mr. Stuart Mill held it to be impossible to mistake in this religion the work of legislators and moralists endeavouring to supply supernatural motives for the conduct which they were most anxious to encourage—who yet could find nothing more transcendent to hold out as the capital prize to be won by the mightiest efforts of labour and self-denial, than what is by most of ourselves regarded as the terrible idea of annihilation. He takes this to be surely a proof that the idea is not really or naturally terrible; that not philosophers only, but the common order of mankind, can easily reconcile themselves to it, and even consider it as a good; and that it is no unnatural part of the idea of a happy life, that life itself be laid down, after the best that it can give has been fully enjoyed through

* E. B. Browning, *Aurora Leigh*, book vii.

† Buddhism regards man, we are told, as a being full of sorrow—a legacy of woe inherited from a series of previous existences, of which he is doomed to bear the burden; starting with which fatal adhesion to the popular doctrine of transmigration, Buddhism sets itself to find some way of escape from this intolerable anguish of changing modes of existence. Nirvâna is the goal. Annihilation is the desiderated blessing. "Une fois anéanti," writes M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, "l'homme est bien assuré de ne plus renaître sous quelque forme que ce soit, dans le cercle odieux des existences," etc.—*Le Bouddha et sa Religion*.

‡ The cessation, at least, of all conscious or separate existence.

a long lapse of time; when all its pleasures, even those of benevolence, are familiar, and nothing untasted and unknown is left to stimulate curiosity and keep up the desire of prolonged existence. "It seems to me not only possible but probable, that in a higher, and, above all, a happier condition of human life, not annihilation but immortality may be the burdensome idea; and that human nature, though pleased with the present, and by no means impatient to quit it, would find comfort, and not sadness, in the thought that it is not chained through eternity to a conscious existence which it cannot be assured that it will always wish to preserve." Historical students of the civilization of the Aztecs tell us that, like the nations of the old Continent, they sought relief from the "oppressive idea of eternity," by breaking it up into distinct cycles, or periods of time, each of several thousand years' duration. In a letter of John Foster's, written as late as 1839, may be read his avowal of *any* view of eternity being overwhelming to the thought: "Sometimes, even apart from the idea of retribution, it seems almost fearful. 'How can I sustain an endless existence? How can I prolong sentiment and action for ever and ever? What may or can become of me in so stupendous a predicament?'" So early as 1837 poor Blanco White had written, "I feel as if an eternal existence was already an insupportable burden laid upon my soul." And in 1840 he says again, "I feel oppressed by the notion of eternal existence, even when the absence of evil is made one of its conditions." As if in the spirit of Milton's Adam when confessing,

> "Yet one doubt
> Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;
> Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of Man
> Which God inspired, cannot together perish
> With this corporeal clod."

Addison's Cato finds in eternity, if a pleasing, yet also a dreadful thought. The Prometheus of Shelley plunges into that thought,

> "and the reluctant mind
> Flags, wearily, in its unending flight,
> Till it sink, dizzy, blind, lost, shelterless."

Even Charles Lamb, with all his constitutional horror of a change from this familiar life, could see and say that eternity must have its delights to be bearable: give him those delights, and then indeed

> "I'd drink of time's rich cup, and never surfeit:
> Fling in more days than went to make the gem
> That crown'd the white top of Methusalem:
> Yea, on my weak neck take, and never forfeit,
> Like Atlas bearing up the dainty sky,
> The heaven-sweet burthen of eternity."

But to the otherwise-minded, that burthen, instead of seeming heaven-sweet, is in idea a burthen too heavy to bear; and under the oppression of its crushing weight they are ready to cry with the prince in the *Golden Legend* for

> "Rest! rest! Oh, give me rest and peace!
> The thought of life that ne'er shall cease
> Has something in it like despair,
> A weight I am too weak to bear!
> Sweeter to this afflicted breast
> The thought of never-ending rest;
> Sweeter the undisturbed and deep
> Tranquillity of endless sleep."

How welcome to the wretched the dread hand of annihilation! exclaims Brackenburg in Goethe's *Egmont*. So De Montfort:

> "To be annihilated,
> What all men shrink from;* to be dust, be nothing,
> Were bliss to me compared to what I am!"

The free-spoken as well as free-thinking heroine of *Not Wisely but Too Well* is made to say, in envy of her dog, "Just think of being utterly freed from all responsibility—no remorse for what is gone, no fear for what is to come. I'd be annihilated this minute if I could!" That is fiction; but as a matter of fact we find Coleridge writing to Cottle in 1814, "The tempta-

* Mr. Thornbury tells us of Turner the painter that "the dreadful despairing fear of annihilation pressed upon" his heart at the last—in the absence of all religious hope to cheer him at that hour. See *Life* of J. M. W. Turner, vol. ii., p. 275.

tion which I have constantly to fight up against, is a fear that, if annihilation and the possibility of heaven were offered to my choice, I should choose the former." Yet was Hartley Coleridge his father's son when he, in one of his best essays, affirmed the idea of extinction to be not terrible, simply because man cannot form such an idea at all:—let him try as long as he will,—let him negative every conceived and conceivable form of future existence,—he is as far as ever, Hartley maintained, from having exhausted the infinitude of possibility: imagination will continually produce the line of consciousness through limitless darkness. But such transcendental philosophy transcends by far the comprehension of any one apt, in Churchill's phrase, to

> "curse his abject birth;
> Whose hope is, once return'd to earth,
> There to lie down, for worms a feast,
> To rot and perish like a beast."

It is the nature of the beast,—without hope, because without God in the world. For which base option, or irregular form of an optative mood, some show of precedent might be claimed in the diction of Milton's First Man, when he miserably argues, that as his will concurred not to his being, it were but right and equal to reduce him to his dust, desirous to resign and render back all he received.

In days long before she had given up belief in a future life, and when, as a writer of essays on life in a sick-room, she found certitude of the inextinguishable vitality of the spirit, supplied by the experience of material decay, Miss Martineau discarded as a fallacy the frequent remark that, with regard to a future existence, "the wish is father to the thought," always or generally. Long-suffering invalids can tell, she said, that there are seasons, neither few nor short, when the wishes are all the other way,—when life is so oppressive to the frame that the happiest news would be that we should soon be non-existent, —when, thankful as we are that our beloved friends, the departed and the remaining, are to live for evermore with God, and enjoy His universe and its intercourses, we should be glad

to decline it for ourselves, and to lie down in an eternal unbroken rest.*

Sainte-Beuve tells us, in one of his *Nouveaux Lundis*, that if there are souls ahungred for life, for living again and again, *sans cesse affamées de vivre et de renaître*, others there certainly are who, as they advance along the road, feel so worn-out and all weary, that fain would they sleep for long and for ever the sleep that has no awaking. Not only, he says, the wretched and the crushed who have of their own accord cast off the unbearable burden of life, but others, many others, who have borne it even to the bitter end—tender poets, of delicate feeling and fancy,—mournful and suffering spirits,—the timid and the affrighted, who have traversed the pathway with trembling, and been sorely wounded as they made their way along,—those again who, without being sorely wounded, have been fortunate enough to effect narrow escapes on peak and precipice, and to be let off the hardest part of the trial,—all these, and the like of these, are ready to echo the patriarch's deprecation, "I would not live alway." Charles Nodier is cited as one of those who are eager for the last long sleep, and averse to the thought of its being broken—"qui ont hâte de dormir et frayeur de se réveiller." A memorable line of his puts the remonstrant query,

"A quoi sert de mourir, si l'on ne se repose?"

Les Malheureux is the title of a remarkable poem† by one who,

* "At these seasons, when, though we *know* all that can be said of renewed powers and relish, and a more elevated and privileged life beyond the grave, we cannot *feel* it; and, while admitting all such consolations as truth, we cannot enjoy them, but, as a mere matter of inclination, had rather resign our privileges;—in these seasons, when the wish would be father to an opposite thought, the belief in our immortality is at the strongest; the truth of our inability to die becomes overwhelming, and the sleep of the grave appears too light to satisfy our need of rest. I believe it to be owing to this natural and unconquerable belief in our immortality, that suicide is not more common than it is among sufferers . . . . from a mere despair of getting rid of life—a sense of necessary immortality."—*Life in a Sick-room:* Essays by an Invalid, p. 108.

† In *Contes et Poésies*, Nice, 1862.

without sharing in the optative mood so vividly described in it, has given very forcible utterance to the piteous aspirations of these *miserrimi*, these *terque quaterque infelices.* By a daring flight of fancy, the last trump is supposed to have sounded, and they that are in their graves are awakened; but they do not all come forth. Some there are among them—and not the guiltiest, not even (we are to infer) the guilty—who persist in a deaf disregard of the trumpet of the archangel, and refuse to arise at that shrill summons: come forth they will not; arise, or show themselves, they will not; but their voices, and only their voices, are heard, and this is the strain of their strange reluctance:

> "Quoi! renaître, revoir le ciel et la lumière,
> Ces temoins d'un malheur qui n'est point oublié,
> Eux qui sur nos douleurs et sur notre misère
> Ont souri sans pitié!
>
> Non, non, plutôt la Nuit, la Nuit sombre, éternelle!
> Fille du vieux Chaos, garde-nous sous ton aile;
> Et toi, sœur du Sommeil, toi qui nous as bercés,
> Mort, ne nous livres pas; contre ton sein fidèle
> Tiens-nous bien embrassés.
>
> * * * *
>
> Nous arrivions à toi, venant d'un long voyage,
> Battus par tous les vents, haletants, harassés;
> L'Espérance elle-même, au plus fort de l'orage,
> Nous avait délaissés.
>
> * * * *
>
> Contre leur gré pourquoi ranimer nos poussières?
> . . . . Tu l'entends, tu le vois, la Souffrance a vaincu.
> Dans un sommeil sans fin, ô Puissance éternelle!
> Laisse-nous oublier que nous avons vécu."

Mrs. Jameson was free to own that while her soul, like Cato's, shrank back upon herself and startled at destruction, it was not of her own destruction she thought, but of that which she loved. "That I should cease to be is not very intolerable; but that what I love, and do now in my soul possess, should cease to be—there is the pang, the terror! I desire that which I love to be immortal, whether I be so myself or not." Jean Paul, in the *Kampaner Thal*, expatiates

with vehemence of fervid protest against the, to him, inexpressibly painful, monstrous, and horrible thought of an annihilating death, of an eternal grave,—and mainly for the sake of one beloved and departed, whom to have lost for ever was to be for ever most miserable. Let the believer in annihilation, said he, place before him, instead of a life of sixty years, one of sixty minutes; then let him look upon the face of a beloved being, or upon a noble and wise man, as upon an aimless hour-long appearance, apparition, phantasm; as a thin shadow that melts into light and leaves no trace; can he bear the thought of it? "No! The supposition of imperishableness is always with him. Else there would hang always before his soul, as before Mahomet's in the fairest sky, a black cloud; and as Cain upon the earth, an eternal fear would pursue him." "I can bear no annihilation but my own," one of Richter's characters, like Mrs. Jameson, is fain to own. As to Richter himself, we can fancy him ready to exclaim with John Sterling,

> "Oh, rather bear beyond the date of stars
> All torments heap'd that nerve and soul can feel,
> Than but one hour believe destruction mars
> Without a hope the life our breasts reveal."

If there be no future, and the aims of life with old age become shorter and shorter, well may there be no heart for effort and no eye for beauty, and well may love, as James Martineau has somewhere put it, "gather itself up to die." But open perfection to its veneration and immortality to its step, and "the proximity to death will quicken instead of withering the mind;" the eye will grow dim on the open page of knowledge; the hand will be found clasping in death the instruments of human good; the heart's last pulse will beat with some new emotion of benignity." So Jules Simon, again, in his treatise on *Le Devoir:* "L'inévitable mort ne change-t-elle pas pour nous de caractère quand, au lieu d'apporter avec elle le néant, elle ne paraît plus que le commencement d'une existence nouvelle? Qu'y a-t-il de si puissants dans ces pensées d'immortalité qui nous soutiennent dans l'agoine et nous consolent de mourir? . . . Ne sentons-nous pas l'immense bonheur de ne pas tomber dans le néant?

d'échapper à cette destruction de notre être, de sauver notre pensée notre conscience, notre cœur, tout ce moi qui nous est si cher, et d'entrer en possession de la vie réelle, après cet usufruit de la vie terrestre?" Reflecting on a certain type of morbid indifference to life, and professed longing for death, Charlotte Brontè muses that God surely did not create us, and cause us to live, with the sole end of wishing always to die: she believed, in her heart, we were intended to prize life and enjoy it, so long as we retain it. If we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, it is not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon,—ἵνα καταποθῇ τὸ θνητὸν ὑπὸ τῆς ζωῆς,—that death may be swallowed up of life.

> "Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
> No life that breathes with human breath
> Has ever truly long'd for death.
>
> 'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
> Oh life, not death, for which we pant;
> More life, and fuller, that I want."

VI.

MISERY BYGONE AND FORGOTTEN.

JOB xi. 16.

THERE should come a day for Job, so Zophar the Naamathite was fain to hope and believe, when his present misery, however complete and overwhelming, should have passed away, and be no more remembered. Not only should the pressure of it, but the very memory of it, be got rid of. Not only should the now downcast sufferer cease to suffer, but fail to recall what he once suffered. The blessedness of release should become twice blessed in the added boon of oblivion. His term of calamity over, it should be counted not merely among things that are not, but among those that have not been. "Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember

it as waters that pass away." If remembered at all, it should be to that extent only; as waters lost in the ocean, whither they are now passing, and now are past, away.

Coleridge has emphasized in a memorable line the "agony that cannot be remembered." A line in Byron's *Lara* runs, "It was an agony—but now forgot." It is in reference to another of his poems that he writes in his journal: "To describe the feelings of that situation were impossible—it is icy even to recollect them." In another occur the lines,

> "'Twere vain to paint to what his feelings grew—
> It even were doubtful if their victim knew.
> There is a war, a chaos of the mind,
> When all its elements convulsed—combined—
> Lie dark and jarring with perturbed force,"

and to recall which distressful chaos is happily impracticable. At the summit of fortune, because on the rampart of the walls of Bethhoron, was Salathiel at one moment: in the next he felt a sudden shock; darkness covered his eyes, and he plunged headlong: he awoke in a dungeon; in that dungeon he lay for two years. And "how I lived," he says, "or how I bore existence, I can now have no conception." As with Wordsworth's Solitary, in the depth of his bereavement, desolation, and despair,

> "What follow'd cannot be review'd in thought,
> Much less, retraced in words. . . . From toils abstruse
> Some trace am I enabled to retain
> Of time, else lost;—existing unto me
> Only by records in myself not found."

The same poet's Francis, in the *White Doe of Rylstone*, finds how stunning may be the effect of bewildering sorrows: we see him stand silent under dreary weight, "thus overwhelm'd, and desolate,

> There stood he, leaning on a lance
> Which he had grasp'd unswervingly,
> Had blindly grasp'd in that strong trance,
> That dimness of heart-agony"—

in some sort resembling the bereaved husband in Campbell's *Gertrude of Wyoming*, when, "mute, gazing, agonizing as he knelt, Of them that stood encircling his despair, He heard some friendly words;—but knew not what they were." The autobiographer of Lord Lytton's *Strange Story* tells us of one awful passage in his marvellous record, that he must hurry over it; that it tortured him to dwell on the details, and that indeed he had so sought to chase them from his remembrance, that they now came back to him only in hideous fragments, like the incoherent remains of a horrible dream. Elsewhere he deems it amazing to think how soon such incidents, though not actually forgotten, though they can be recalled—and recalled too vividly for health—at our will, are, nevertheless, thrust, as it were, out of our mind's sight, as we cast into lumber-rooms the crutches and splints that remind us of a broken limb which has recovered its strength and tone. A philosophic essayist, commenting on the accepted fact that the remembrance of calamities, however great, tends slowly but steadily to fade away, asks if it is not the case that often the very recollection of a great loss can only be recalled by some chance train of thought—a hasty word—an outward token or object associated with it; and he takes this to be nature's effort to heal a wound that would otherwise destroy our usefulness. But as it seems to savour of hardness of heart or fickleness, though he denies it to be anything of the kind, we often struggle against the tendency, are sorrowful over the gradual subsidence of our sorrow, and would fain bring back the very anguish from which, when the blow first fell, we ineffectually struggled for relief. "Dans les grandes circonstances de la vie," writes Balzac, "notre âme s'attache fortement aux lieux où les chagrins fondent sur nous . . . . éternellement mêlés à cette heure suprême, par une mnémotechnie particulière aux passions." But the tendency of nature is away from any such "damned spot." Well recognized is that felicitous peculiarity in our organization, in virtue of which, a bodily pain once past, very soon becomes erased from the memory—so very soon and invariably the mind refuses to linger over and recall it. "No man freed an hour from a

raging toothache, the rack of a neuralgia, seats himself in his armchair to recollect and ponder upon the anguish he has undergone."* It is the same, we are assured, with certain afflictions of the mind—not with those which strike on our affections, or blast our fortunes, overshadowing our whole future with a sense of loss; but where a trouble or calamity has been an accident, an episode in our wonted life, where it affects ourselves alone, where it is attended with a sense of shame and humiliation, where the pain of recalling it seems idle, and if indulged would almost madden us—agonies of that kind we do not brood over as we do over the death or falsehood of beloved friends, or the train of events by which we are reduced from wealth to penury. For instance, "no one who has escaped from a shipwreck, from the brink of a precipice, from the jaws of a tiger, spends his days and nights in reviving his terrors past, re-imagining dangers not to occur again, or, if they do occur, from which the experience undergone can suggest no additional safeguards." Hawthorne describes his Hilda as one of those persons whose delicate organization requires a peculiar protection, and who are endowed accordingly with an elastic faculty of throwing off such recollections as would be too painful for endurance: "Once enabled to relieve herself of this ponderous anguish, . . . she practised a subtle watchfulness in preventing its return." Dr. Wendell Holmes somewhere speaks of what he, professionally, terms "encysted" griefs

* It is a merciful thing, observes a medical reviewer of Mr. Hilton's treatise on Physiological Rest,—merciful, considering how sharp are the agonies endured, that memory seldom reproduces to us the whole severity of physical suffering—certainly not with that intense realization which often accompanies the recollection, even in dreams, of great mental anguish.

Miss Martineau, describing how when extreme pain seizes us, down go our spirits, fathoms deep, and the sickening question rises, "How *shall* I bear this for five minutes? What *will* become of me?" adds, not merely that the bystanders can never fully understand this suffering; no, though they may themselves have suffered to extremity; but that the patient himself, in any interval, when devoutly ready to endure again, cannot understand, nor believe in, his late emotion, or fancy that he can feel it again.

—griefs men never put into words, and, as much as may be, to be kept out of mind. It is with them as with Shelley's speechless sufferer:

> "I, who can feign no image in my mind
> Of that which has transform'd me; I, whose thought
> Is like a ghost shrouded and folded up
> In its own formless horror."

Lethierry is forcibly pictured in *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*, as in that cloudy and confused condition of intellect with which those are familiar who have undergone overwhelming afflictions: when he was in his hammock forgetfulness came to him a little, and he called that sleeping; but chimeras floated about him and within him, and a cloud of confused faces traversed his brain.

> "What I felt I can't remember; an oblivion which the gleam
> Of light which oft comes thro' it shows for blessedness extreme."

That is the experience of the *Yew-Berry* minstrel. But the blessedness in his case is incomplete, the oblivion is but partial:

> "I struggled to forget . . . but, forgetfulness too sweet!
> It startled with its sweetness, thus involved its own defeat;
> And every time this happen'd, aching memory would repeat
>
> The shock of that discovery: so at length I learn'd by heart,
> And never, save when sleeping, suffer'd thenceforth to depart
> The feeling of my sorrow: and in time this soothed the smart."

Remembering his affliction and his misery, the wormwood and the gall, the soul of the lamenting Hebrew had them still in remembrance, and was humbled within him. But rightly, to De Quincey's deeming, is it said of utter, utter misery, that it "cannot be remembered."* Itself, as a rememberable thing, is swallowed up in its own chaos. Mrs. Jameson deems it curious that the memory, most retentive of images, should yet

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* "I stood in unimaginable trance
And agony, which cannot be remembered."

The speaker is Alhadra, in Coleridge's tragedy of *Remorse*.

be much more retentive of feelings than of facts: for instance, we remember with such intense vividness a period of suffering, that it seems even yet to renew itself through the medium of thought; yet, at the same time, we perhaps find difficulty in recalling, with any distinctness, the causes of that pain. In her Diary narrative of her husband's last illness and death, Madame d'Arblay records of herself: "I suffered certainly a partial derangement, for I cannot to this moment recollect anything that now succeeded, with truth or consistency; my memory paints things that were necessarily real, joined to others that could not possibly have happened, yet so amalgamates the whole together as to render it impossible for me to separate truth from indefinable, unaccountable fiction."

Aurora Leigh can shudderingly recall a day, the bare remembrance of which will catch her breath like a nightmare. For,

> "There are fatal days, indeed,
> In which the fibrous years have taken root
> So deeply, that they quiver to their tops
> Whene'er you stir the dust of such a day."

In an earlier book she likens her recollection of one sad interval to a man, after fever, threading back the passage of delirium, missing the turn still, baffled by the door, "a weary, wormy darkness, spurred in the flank with flame, that it should eat itself, like some tormented scorpion." So Charles Kingsley describes his Lancelot's period of dull, stupefied misery, after the storm and stress of distressful excitement—a misery with no foreground, no distance, but only one dead, black, colour less present: just as victims on the rack have fallen, it is said, by length of torture, into insensibility, and even calm repose, his brain had been wrought until all feeling was benumbed. Or we might start the query put in the Laureate's *In Memoriam*,—

> "Or has the shock, so harshly given,
> Confused me like the unhappy bark
> That strikes by night a craggy shelf,
> And staggers blindly ere she sink?
> And stunn'd me from my power to think,
> And all my knowledge of myself?"

Or take the experience of him of the *Golden Legend:*

> "All this I can remember well;
> But of what afterwards befell
> I nothing further can recall
> Than a blind, desperate, headlong fall;
> The rest is blank and darkness all,"

just as in the case of Salathiel, already cited. So again the sweet singer of *Good-night in the Porch:* "Then I remember a numb mood . . . and nothing could I realize but the great fact of my own pain. . . . The world went on: my heart stood still." Or, again, one of the more passionate bits in generally unimpassioned Crabbe:

> "Oh, the strange distress
> Of these new feelings!—misery's excess;
> What can describe it? words will not express.
> When I look back upon that dreadful scene,
> I feel renew'd the anguish that has been,
> And reason trembles,"—

that way madness lies; and the thinker's effort must be not to think, not to recall; it must be to emulate Zophar's ideal of blessedness in oblivion, the miserable forgetting his misery, or, at worst, remembering it as waters that pass away. Indeed, we presently come upon the same narrator's avowal,

> "There was I left,—and I have now no thought
> Remains with me, how fear or fancy wrought,"—

dim fancy, or blind fear, he knew not, nor could tell: there was a blank from this he could not fill; it was a puzzle and a terror still. "I have but a confused remembrance of my feelings," says Henry Mackenzie's Montauban, in the now shelved epistolary novel *Julia de Roubigné;* "there was a bewildered pause of thought as if I had waked in another world." Scott's Henry Bertram tells the lawyer who would have him recall the details of his capture, "Though the terrible outlines of that day are strongly impressed upon my memory, yet somehow the very terror which fixed them there has in a great measure confounded and confused the details." In

another work Sir Walter remarks that so nearly does the mental portion of our feelings resemble those which are corporal, that the first severe blows we receive bring with them a stunning apathy, which renders us indifferent to those which follow. Thus said Mandrin, when he was undergoing the punishment of the wheel; and so have all felt, upon whom successive inflictions have descended with continuous and reiterated violence. "There are times," said Charles Kingsley, "when the very intensity of our misery is a boon, and kindly stuns us till we are unable to torture ourselves by thought." George Eliot recognizes something sustaining in the very agitation that accompanies the first shocks of trouble, just as an acute pain is often a stimulus, and produces an excitement which is transient strength; but no one can more forcibly suggest, if not fill up, "a hideous blank of something unremembered." Charles de Bernard observes that "dans certaines tortures morales, le même feu qui embrase de ses langues aiguës les fibres irritable du cœur, fait monter au cerveau une vapeur obscure; et plus le flamme dévore, plus la fumée étouffe; plus les sentiments sont poignants, plus les idées se troublent." With which may be compared a remark by Coleridge, that by a wise ordinance of nature our feelings have no abiding-place in our memory; nay, the more vivid they are in the moment of their existence, the more dim and difficult to be remembered do they make the thoughts which accompanied them. "Darkness comes over my eyes," retrospective of a great loss, writes David Copperfield; "and, for a time, all things are blotted out of my remembrance." Of the catastrophe in the closing book of his *Venetia*, Mr. Disraeli writes: "What ensued must neither be attempted to be described, nor even remembered. It was one of those tragedies of life which enfeeble the most faithful memories at a blow, shatter nerves beyond the faculty of revival, cloud the mind for ever." Often had been observed, before Gibbon repeated the observation, that the highest agitation of the mind is such as no language can describe, since language can only paint ideas, and not that "senti-

mental, silent, almost stupid* excess of rage or grief" which the soul feels with such energy, that it is not master of itself enough to have any distinct perceptions; such passion baffles all description; but when this storm subsides, passion is as fertile in ideas, as it was at first barren. "Les grandes plaies du corps et de l'âme ne saignent pas à l'instant qu'elles sont faites," said Rousseau in the *Emile;* "elles n'impriment pas si tôt leurs plus vives douleurs; la nature se recueille pour en soutenir toute la violence, et souvent le coup mortel est porté longtemps avant que la blessure se fasse sentir." But misery, after a certain point, "becomes its own anæsthetic:" happily for the sufferer, there is attendant upon all great mental anguish a kind of numbness, a stupefaction of the senses, which in some manner deadens the sharpness of the torture: "And all your efforts," Dr. Boyd asserts, "will not bring back the first sorrow, nor recall the thoughts of the atmosphere of that time."† Mrs. Schimmelpenninck testifies of a troublous experience of her own in early life: "Of the time which immediately followed I have no distinct recollection, but that it seemed a chaos of misery, and an eternal *now* of despair." There are some moments, it has been said, so painful in their endurance, we would

* The word "stupid" in this connection, reminds us of a passage in some in memoriam lines by Mr. Quillinan, Wordsworth's son-in-law:—

> "I felt at first too stupid to repine;
> But soon was roused to consciousness of pain
> By stormy thoughts and tumults of the brain."

† Yet will the remembrance of unrememberable agony seem ever vivid, and ever agonizing anew, to some minds and under certain conditions. Fifteen years old was Robert Story, of Rosneath, when an elder brother, to whom he was devotedly attached, was drowned one July afternoon. Robert refers to himself as then "young enough to suffer unutterable agony." And long afterwards he writes: "O! I cannot tell the agony of that hour which, after a long period of years and many vicissitudes, stands forth in my mind still like no other hour of grief, when I heard a voice echo through my father's garden, 'George is drowned!'" Of his mother's funeral Theodore Hook wrote in after-life: "That day will never be forgotten by me. . . . Years, years have rolled on, and yet that hour is still vividly fresh in my mind—the smell of the soldered coffin is still in my nostrils—the falling earth upon its lid still rings in my ears."

gladly forget that they belong to human existence—moments in which it would have been better to have been sleeping the sleep of death, than to have lived and suffered their anguish. "They don't last long, those horrible moments," Miss Thackeray observes; "they pass on, but they leave a burning taste; it comes back again and again with the troubles of life."* Dr. Beattie used to tell how an old survivor of Lord Anson's company, in the voyage of the Centurion, "durst not recollect or think" of the sufferings they endured between Cape Horn and Juan Fernandez. And De Quincey, in his stirring narrative of the Revolt of the Tartars, records of some of the survivors, after a storm of misery so fierce, that in the end (as happened also at Athens during the Peloponnesian war, from a different form of misery) very many lost their memory; all records of their past life were wiped away as with a sponge —utterly erased and cancelled.

VII.

PENT-UP, TONGUE-TIED GRIEF.

JOB xiii. 19.

WHOM might Job find to plead with him? "for now," said he, "if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost." Speech is sometimes the safety-valve of a great sorrow. To be tongue-tied is to have the very heart-strings tied too, and tightly tied, to heart-break point.

> "Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
> Whispers the o'erfraught heart, and bids it break."

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* In another of her books she describes the sensations of one whose trouble had been merged in a greater trouble, and so put out of mind:— the despair of a few hours before seemed like a remembrance of some old tune played out and come to an end abruptly in the midst of its most passionate cadence. The tunes of life, she adds, stop short just in the middle, and that is the most curious part of our history. ."Another music sounds, mighty, sudden, and unexpected, and we leave off our song to listen to it, and when it is over some of us have forgotten the song we were singing."—*Sola*, § x.

Then was the psalmist comforted when he could say, "I poured out my complaints before Him, and showed Him of my trouble." In that craving of the heart, said Frederick Robertson, which gives the system of the Confessional its dangerous power, there is something far more profound than any sneer can fathom. Besides the "yearning to be true," there is the desire of sympathy: the heart severed from God, feels severed from all other hearts; goes alone, as if it had neither part nor lot with other men; itself a shadow among shadows. And it wants some human heart to know what it feels.* Aurelio assures Malfato, in one of John Ford's plays, that to the sorely perplexed and distressed, a friend

> "Upon whose faith and confidence we may
> Vent with security our grief, becomes
> Ofttimes the best physician. . . . And believe,
> It is an ease, Malfato, to disburthen
> Our souls of secret clogs, where they may find
> A rest in pity, though not in redress."

It must be a Beatrice Cenci who can, and cannot but, say, "If I try to speak, I shall go mad," when implored by motherly affection not to hide from it her sufferings in proud, impenetrable grief: speak she cannot, "for there are deeds which have no form, sufferings which have no tongue." For almost any less exceptional grief, the safer rule is to abide by the counsel of the old man in Terence, when help is ready and practicable:

> "Ne retice: ne verere: crede inquam mihi:
> Aut consolando aut consilio aut re juvero."

Lonely, aged, an impoverished, an embarrassed man, wrote Sir Walter Scott of himself, the day after his wife died, "deprived of the sharer of my thoughts and counsels, who could always talk down my sense of the calamitous apprehensions which

* "Thousands upon thousands of laden hearts around us are crying, Come and bear my burden with me: and observe here, the apostle says, 'Bear ye *one another's* burdens.' Nor let the priest bear the burdens of all: that were most unjust. Why should the priest's heart be the common receptacle of all the crimes and wickedness of a congregation? 'Bear ye one another's burdens. —F. W. Robertson's *Sermons*, vol. ii., No. xi.

break the heart that must bear them alone." The very nature of all our emotions, as Dr. Thomas Brown says, will lead them to pour themselves out to some other breast; and the stronger the emotion, the more ardent is this propensity. So, again, Adam Smith exclaims, "How are the unfortunate relieved when they have found out a person to whom they can communicate the cause of their sorrow!" For upon his sympathy they seem to disburden themselves of a part of their distress; and he is not improperly said to share it with them. What though by relating their misfortunes they in some measure renew their grief? There is pleasure to them in the renewal; for the sweetness of the sympathy more than compensates the bitterness of the sorrow. The Horatian philosophy is sound:

> "Sunt verba et voces quibus hunc lenire dolorem
> Possis, et magnam morbi deponere partem."

So the Tennysonian Œnone, mournful Œnone, wandering forlorn of Paris, once her playmate on the hills, when her heart is breaking, and her eyes are dim, and she is all aweary of her life, resolves, and wisely, to give her sorrow speech,

> "for it may be
> That, while I speak of it, a little while
> My heart may wander from its deeper woe."

Even communication on paper, by means of pen and ink, is, to some at least, in whom perhaps the *cacoëthes scribendi* is ingrained, a sensible relief. When Lamennais, so frequently lugubrious and lamentation-given, one day talked to Béranger about certain natures being born with a wound in the heart, Béranger suggested that authors at least, *nous autres*, are born with a writing-desk in the brain. And as the ink in it is from a fountain that never fails, if the pen is allowed to rest the black liquid in question overflows even to the seat of the affections. Then, said he, we see everything *en noir*, men and things. But only let us blacken our paper with it, and anon our spirits revive, our imagination refines, and that open wound in the heart which Lamennais talked about, closes. As with the laid-by pen of the penman, so with the tied tongue of repining

reserve. After this sort does Martinus Scriblerus treat versification as a natural or morbid secretion from the brain; and as he would not suddenly stop a cold in the head, or dry up his neighbour's issue, as little would he hinder him from necessary writing. "I have known a man thoughtful, melancholy, and raving for divers days, who forthwith grew wonderfully easy, lightsome, and cheerful, upon a discharge of the peccant humour." Shrewd even in its simple tenderness is the counsel of Jeanie Deans to Butler with regard to her afflicted father: "And dinna ye say muckle to him, but set him on speaking himsel', for he'll bring himsel' mair comfort that way." Kotzebue's Stranger seems rather proud than otherwise of his heart being like a close-shut sepulchre: let what is within it moulder and decay; why open the wretched charnel-house, to spread pestilence around?—but for all that, his friend the Baron urges him to talk if he cannot weep, for both words and tears relieve the heart. So the knight urges the distressed lady in Spenser:

> "But, woefull lady, let me you intreate
> For to unfold the anguish of your hart:
> Mishaps are maistred by advice discrete,
> And counsell mitigates the greatest smart;
> Found never help, who never would his hurts impart."

When the heart is full, writes Thomas Carlyle, it seeks, for a thousand reasons, in a thousand ways, to impart itself. "How sweet, indispensable, in such cases, is fellowship; soul mystically strengthening soul!" *Rien ne lie tant les cœurs que la douceur de pleurer ensemble*, says Rousseau. A burden that will crush a single pair of shoulders, will, when equally divided, become light as a feather, Mr. Trollope puts it: "There is no folly so great as keeping one's sorrows hidden." Whether or not a man should have his private pleasures, he declines to say; but "it can never be worth his while to keep his sorrows private." Charlotte Brontë, in the depth of her desolation, tells the correspondent in whom she entirely confides, that she gives the sad details of her sufferings, "because it is absolutely necessary for me to have some relief." She is already better, "because I can speak about it, which I never can when grief

is at its worst." George Eliot tells us of Janet Dempster confiding her griefs to Mr. Tryan, that even while she was confessing, she felt half her burden removed: the act of confiding in human sympathy, the consciousness that a fellow-being was listening to her with patient pity, prepared her soul for that stronger leap by which faith grasps the idea of the Divine sympathy.

> "Yet hear my tale; thou wilt esteem me less;
> But Grief, the egoist, yearneth to confess."

One could almost think of Dr. South as siding with, and catching the style of, Job's three friends, in their most objurgatory mood, when he taxes Job with "filling heaven and earth with querulous outcries." "So long as his towering passion was upon the wing, it beat the air with loud and vain complaints; . . . but the same temper of mind which reduced him to submission, reduced him also to silence." "A lamb, we know, suffers with silence, and parts not only with its fleece, but even with its life also, without noise; but it is the unclean swine which roars and cries," etc. Rather hard measure upon Job, some may think; and, as we said, in the style and spirit of his friends. Save me from my friends! might Job, of all men, be privileged to say. But he must needs pour out his grief to them, all the same.

The Man of Uz was last, not least, in Lamartine's thoughts when he compared his own *âme triste* to a variety of things sombre and sad in nature and in holy writ,—among others to the psalmist's harp that hung from the willow while the harper wept; to Horeb veiled beneath a darksome cloud; to a starless sky, etc.,—and then to

> "ce vieillard qu'on ne put consoler,
> Qui, le cœur débordant d'une douleur farouche,
> Ne pouvait plus tarir la plainte sur sa bouche,
> Et disait: Laissez-moi parler!"

VIII.

CRAVING FOR PITY.

JOB xix. 21.

"HAVE pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me." And the afflicted petititioner had already reminded those whom he thus implored to be compassionate, that "to him that is afflicted pity should be showed from his friend." Well might the psalmist be full of heaviness, when he looked for some to have pity on him, but there was no man, neither found he any to comfort him.

Adam Smith says of sympathy with the afflicted that it alleviates affliction by insinuating into the heart almost the only agreeable sensation which it is at that time capable of receiving; and that the cruellest insult which can be offered to the unfortunate, is to appear to make light of their calamities.

> "Pity me, then, dear friend, and I assure ye
> Even that your pity is enough to cure me,"

exclaims Shakspeare in one of the Sonnets. His Moor of Venice, all whose life has been passed in camps and perils, himself every inch a soldier, and in all respects fitted bravely to endure as well as ably to command, was won to love Desdemona for the pity she lavished on his life of battle and trial: 'twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful, she vowed; and as she loved him for the dangers he had passed, so loved he her that she did pity them.

But another aspect of the question may be summarized in Southey's remark: "I cannot tell why men like to be pitied, for pity proceeds from superiority." Goldsmith alleged pity and friendship to be passions incompatible with each other; friendship being made up of esteem and pleasure, while pity is composed of sorrow and contempt: "the mind may for some time fluctuate between them, but it never can entertain both together." Sainte-Beuve writes of Bussy-Rabutin in

trouble, "Il craint qu'on ne le plaigne; sa vanité domine encore son malheur." Scott's unfortunate Nigel was the more interested in Martha Trapbois when he found how proud was the spirit of that unhappy woman, and that she seemed determined to owe as little as possible either to the humanity or the pity of others. The Master of Ravenswood checked the first advances of practical sympathy, by the assurance that the next mortification, after being unhappy, is the being loaded with undesired commiseration. The daughter of Roubigné, the wife of Montauban, will not bear to be pitied. The clerical Casaubon of *Middlemarch*, of all things, and in all things, shrinks from pity; to him there is sheer bitterness in the suspicion of being pitied for anything in his lot known or surmised in spite of himself. It is a pithy saying of Crabbe's, a rhyme with reason, however partial may be its legitimate application, that

> "but few
> Can bear their sorrows and our pity too."

Hence, he infers, the many small expedients used to conceal the evils they betray; "When, if our pity chances to be seen, The wounded pride retorts, with anger keen, And man's insulted grief takes refuge in his spleen." To others besides a very proud nature, envy is much better worth having than pity: Ἀλλ' ὅμως κρεῖσσον τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν φθόνος. Shelley's Prometheus cannot away with the proffered pity of Mercury:

> "Pity the self-despising slaves of heaven,
> Not me, within whose mind sits peace serene,
> As light in the sun, throned."

Ion's merest hint of pity stirs the lonely tyrant Adrastus to fury: "Pity! dare to speak that word again, and torture waits thee!" Balzac assures us that no feeling is nearly so hard to encounter as that of pity, especially when it is deserved. Hate is a tonic; it quickens, stimulates, animates; it inspires vengeance; but pity kills, pity makes our very weakness weaker. "C'est le mal devenu patelin, c'est le mépris dans la tendresse, ou la tendresse dans l'offense." Wordsworth's Oswald impatiently discards and rejects all semblance of compassion:

> "Compassion!—pity!—pride can do without them;
> And what if you should never know them more!—
> He is a puny soul who, feeling pain,
> Finds ease because another feels it too.
> If e'er I open out this heart of mine,
> It shall be for a nobler end—to teach,
> And not to purchase puling sympathy."

A very different character of Wordsworth's drawing, the despondent recluse of the mountains, deprecates by anticipation the expression of pity on his companions' part: "But spare your pity, if there be in me Aught that deserves respect, for I exist, Within myself, not comfortless." Jean Paul tells us of Siebenkäs that he would have indignantly disclaimed his author's compassion, could he have foreseen it. He demanded no compassion, but said, "If I am cheerful, why do you pity me?" Give him credit at least for consuming his own smoke, and licence to do so. *Qui se fait plaindre se fait mépriser*, was a maxim with the ill-starred French poet, George Farcy. Sainte-Beuve tells us of Mdlle. de Meulan, afterwards Madame Guizot, that in her days of hard work for the periodical press, those Job's friends, "ces amis qu'on a dans le malheur," were an offence to her by the pity they vouchsafed to express for her straits and constraints; and that, *ennuyée de cette compassion maligne*, she answered them as they deserved. The Czarina Catherine II., in *her* early days of adversity, bravely curbed every inclination to utter complaint or invoke compassion: "Je me serais crue avilie si on m'avait témoigné de l'amitié que j'aurais pu prendre pour de la pitié." The suffering spirit, as Mr. Trollope says of one of his characters, cannot descend from its dignity of reticence: it has a nobility of its own, made sacred by many tears, by the flowing of streams of blood from unseen wounds, which cannot descend from its daïs to receive pity and kindness. "A consciousness of undeserved woe produces a grandeur of its own, with which the high-souled sufferer will not easily part." On Gresset's showing,

> "Un esprit mâle et vraiment sage
> Dedaigne le triste avantage
> De se faire plaindre d'autrui."

With what he feels to be the unanswerable question, "And who to pity thee?" does Landor's Opas, in *Count Julian*, sum up the miseries of the Last of the Goths. "Behold my solace! none. I want no pity," is Roderigo's reply.* Sir Walter Scott, when things were with him at their very worst, recorded in his journal his sense of relief at the departure even of some the dearest to his heart of heart: "I *am* pleased to be left to my own regrets, without being melted by condolences, though of the most sincere and affectionate kind." "I never had an ambition to be pitied," wrote John O'Keeffe, when recording his loss of sight; "and, indeed, effort to be envied, rather than pitied, often proves a successful stimulus to the greatest actions of human life." A late divine remarked that were we to strip our sufferings of all the aggravations which our over-busy imaginations heap upon them, and of all that a morbid craving for sympathy induces us to display to others, they would shrink to less than half their bulk, and what remained would be comparatively easy to support. It was a maxim with Horace Walpole that nobody has a right to tax another for pity on what is past; and on this ground, he, as "martyr to gout,"

* Especially is the avowed pity of the vulgar intolerable to higher natures in their time of trouble. When Dockwrath, in *Orley Farm*, assures Peregrine Orme, "I feel for you, and I pity you," the latter feels it is not pleasant to be pitied by such a man as that, and says so. He declines pity on any terms, and from any quarter. "I require no pity from you or from any man."—Jane Eyre tells Rochester, "I pity you—I do earnestly pity you." And the discriminating reply, worthy of him and of her, is: "Pity, Jane, from some people is a noxious and insulting sort of tribute, which one is justified in hurling back in the teeth of those who offer it"—but that is the sort of pity native to callous, selfish hearts; it is what he calls a hybrid, egotistical pain at hearing of woes, crossed with ignorant contempt for those who have endured them. Hers, on the other hand, he hails and welcomes, as "the suffering mother of love." To get pity instead of love, after love is gone,—can anything be much more bitter than that? Yet in two at least of his best-known songs Burns makes a plaintive lover press the selfsame piteous plea. In *Lord Gregory* the forsaken one prays, "At least some pity on me shaw, if love it may na be;" and a male voice sings, "If love for love thou wilt na gie, At least be pity to me shown," in (and to) *Mary Morrison*.

courteously waived the advances of compassionate visitors or correspondents, whenever the attack was over. Complaint of what is over can only make the hearer glad you are in pain no longer, he argued. "Yes, yes, my dear madam," he tells Miss Hannah More, "you generally place your pity so profitably, that you shall not waste a drop upon me." And in a letter some ten months later, again: "One has no right to draw on the compassion of others for what one *has* suffered and is past. Some love to be pitied on that score; but forget that they only excite, in the best-natured, joy on their deliverance." Elia calls the convalescent "his own sympathiser"—instinctively feeling, as the poor man does, that none can so well perform that office for him: he keeps his sympathy, like some curious vintage, under trusty lock and key, for his own use only. "He lies pitying himself, honing and moaning to himself; he yearneth over himself; his bowels are even melted within him, to think what he suffers; he is not ashamed to weep over himself." And on the score of physical prostration, allowance would be made for him by Hartley Coleridge, who was thinking of a hale weeper when he said that a full-grown blubberer, with great greenish-grey goggles, swimming in his own pathos, like half-cold calf's-foot jelly, soaked in his own drizzling tenderness, makes one ashamed of humanity. Elia's convalescent has licence, or takes it, to compassionate himself all over; and his bed is a very discipline of humanity, and tender heart. *Il a pitié de soi-même.** To him might be

* *J'ai pitié de moi-même*:—the phrase is Corneille's. Pronounced experts or adepts in the art and practice of self-pity, might have a section to themselves. Not among those would we reckon such as Bertha in the lane, as Mrs. Browning interprets her, when she walked as if apart from herself, and pitied her own heart, as if she held it in her hand. Nor again such as the laureate's Earl in *Enid*, when

> "sweet self-pity, or the fancy of it,
> Made his eye moist."

But there would be perhaps a Martin Fruse, with his heart melting with tender compassion for himself, and nearly weeping at the "pitiful images he had called up of his own fate, in his own mind;" and a Susan Posey, in Dr. Holmes's *Guardian Angel*, when a "last touch of self-pity overcame

addressed the opening line of the confidante's harangue in Racine, "Ainsi, dans vos malheurs ne songeant qu'à vous plaindre." Montaigne says that whoso makes himself pitied without reason, is a man not to be pitied when there shall be real cause; by always craving pity, he comes to get none from any. Such too, in effect, the philosophy of that sufferer from neuralgia and other ills, the Mr. Christian of George Eliot's drawing, who, next to the pain itself, disliked that any one should know of it: defective health diminished a man's market value. "Poor Blake! one can't help calling him 'poor,'" we read in *Tom Brown at Oxford*, "although he himself would have winced at it more than at any other name you could have called him:" the object of his life was to raise such feelings towards him as admiration and envy, but pity was the last which he would have liked to excite. Miss Porter's Polish hero can put up with anything rather than the pity which seems to load him with a heavier sense of his calamities. If one chances, as in Mr. Trollope's simile, to slip into the gutter on a wet day, one finds the sympathy

her, as it is so apt to do those who indulge in that delightful misery;" and even that unhappily obstinate and obstinately unhappy man, the clerical Crawley, in the *Last Chronicle of Barset*, where he "pitied himself with a tenderness of commiseration which knew no bounds," as he sat on the gate at Hoggle End, while the rain came down heavily upon him—pitied himself with a commiseration that was sickly in spite of its truth.

> "This pity, which some people self-pity call,
> Is sure the most heart-piercing pity of all,"

sings Cowper's slave-trader, with the refrain, "which nobody can deny, deny, which nobody can deny." The Mr. Sheldon of one popular author, "if he pitied anybody, pitied himself"—a kind of compassion very common with that kind of character. The Mr. Amedroz of another, "pitied himself so much in his own misery, that he expected to live in an atmosphere of pity from others." The Parson Levincourt of a third, was apt to spend a good deal of his available store of compassion on himself; his author remarking, however, that there is no more effectual check to the indulgence of our own failings and weaknesses, than the exaggerated manifestation of the same defect in another:—that which in us is only a reasonable and well-grounded dissatisfaction, becomes mere selfish unjustifiable repining in our neighbours.

of bystanders to be by far the severest part of one's misfortune. "Did you not declare to yourself that all might yet be well, if the people would only walk on and not look at you?" It was so with Lily Dale, the wounded fawn: the people of Allingham could not regard her with their ordinary eyes: they would look at her tenderly, knowing that she was a wounded fawn, and thus they aggravated the soreness of her wound. So with Mrs. Oliphant's Madonna Mary, to whom "all this was very galling;" who "felt that she would rather die than come down" to be pitied by all these people; and who thought, in her disturbed and uneasy mind, that she could bear all the different tones in which they would say "Poor Mary!" The Honourable Miss Byron, in that prolix novel of Richardson's which Macaulay told Mr. Greville, in 1833, that he had read through fifteen times, has this to confess of her dealings with the peerless Sir Charles Grandison: "My pride made me want to find out pity for me in his looks and behaviour, on purpose to quarrel with him in my mind." Not that she aped the mood, any more than she emulated the morals, of Rowe's Fair Penitent:

> "No, Altamont; my heart, that scorn'd thy love,
> Shall never be indebted to thy pity,"—

a style as large as Sir Fleureant's in *Philip van Artevelde*, who fires up at the Regent's token of compassion, and bids him

> "Spare your pity,
> And use your power. You see before you one
> Who would more willingly confront the worst
> Unpitying power inflicts, than cry for mercy."

* * * * *

There is nothing, it has been said, more grim and repelling than an unbending refusal to acknowledge pain which nevertheless cannot be concealed; it can only make anxious friends feel that they are kept at arm's length. Granted that people who have much to endure are entitled to any alleviation which they can innocently obtain; but the suffering is often too obvious to be thus disposed of; and "nothing adds more

bitterness to the pain of seeing suffering than to be denied the right of offering even sympathy." Emily Brontë, in her last illness, made no complaint, would not endure questioning, and rejected sympathy and help. Many a time did her sisters drop their sewing, or cease from their writing, to listen with wrung hearts, as Charlotte's biographer tells us, to the failing step, the laboured breathing, the frequent pauses, with which the dying girl climbed the short staircase; yet they dared not take other notice of what they observed, with pangs of suffering deeper even than hers: they dared not notice it in words, far less by the caressing assistance of a helping arm or hand. But then, to be sure, "Ellis Bell's" was an exceptional, abnormal, anomalous nature altogether. She was an exception to what Mr. de Quincey, commenting on the dying Kant's appeal by signs to his attendant to stoop down and kiss his pallid lips, and on the similar but more memorable "Kiss me, Hardy," of the dying Nelson* on board the Victory, calls the "mighty power of death in its final agencies;" when the brave man has ceased to be in any exclusive sense a man, but has become an infant in his weakness—has become a woman in his craving for tenderness and pity.

IX.

MULTIPLIED WORDS.

JOB xxxv. 16.

WORDS, words, words,—the phrase is pregnant with import on the lips of the Prince of Denmark. And it is charged against the Man of Uz that he "multiplieth words without knowledge." "Job hath spoken without know-

* The mention of the "mighty admiral's" name may remind some of his impatient refusal to be "pitied" on account of the restraint once imposed upon him, as Southey tells the story. "Pity!" exclaimed Nelson: "Pity, did you say? I shall live, sir, to be envied; and to that point I shall always direct my course."—Southey's *Life of Nelson*, chap. iii.

ledge," said Elihu, "and his words were without wisdom. . . . Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain." And the Divine Voice that answered Job out of the whirlwind, began the answer by a crushing question: "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" The words, words, words might be multiplied till the air was filled as with a rushing mighty sound; but there is such a thing as sounding brass, sounding and resounding because so hollow. The words, words, words might be multiplied till the air seemed thick with them; but this was to darken it only, not to give light. Multiply zero as you will, you make nothing of it. The grand total of all the aggregated ciphers is but a hollow o.

Towards the commencement of the controversy with his friends, "How forcible are right words," had Job exclaimed; but what did arguing such as theirs reprove? Did they imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of a desperate man, that are as wind? "They are but vain words," as the Assyrian envoy himself vainly worded it.

Inanis torrens verbarum, is a familiar phrase of Quintilian's. Palingenius speaks of *verba* which *nullas medullas intus habent;* marrowless bones, innutritious and unprofitable. "Words, words, mere words, no matter from the heart," as Troilus says of Cressida. Lycurgus taught the Spartans that the worth of speech consists in paucity of words, but these pregnant with sense; that intemperance of the tongue is fatal to conversation; that Laconia should study to be laconic. Plutarch says of the speeches of Phocion that they were to be estimated like coins, not for the size, but for the intrinsic value. Phocion it was who snubbed the young orator Pytheas, with his torrent of words, by the demand, "Is it for a novice like thee to prate like that?" And Phocion it was who told Leosthenes that his speeches were like cypress trees, large and lofty, but without fruit. The secret of Hobbes' style is said to be this, that with a few simple direct words, he produces a greater impression than would all the swelling pomp of a passage bristling with notes of exclamation. So again of Locke's, Mr. Lewes remarks (though verboseness is held to be Locke's great fault), that his

plainness deceives the careless reader, who is led to suppose that what is there so plain must have been obvious, there being so many writers who cover their vanity (perhaps it might be written cover their nakedness) with a veil of words, and who seem profound because they are obscure. Locke had a just and incurable suspicion of all "great volumes swollen with ambiguous words,"—knowing how much jugglery goes on with words; some of it conscious, some of it unconscious, but all pernicious. *Sunt qui* "trouvent toujours L'art de ne vous rien dire avec de grands discours." Mephistopheles in Faust's long gown instructed his inquiring class that

> "over-anxious thought's of no avail;
> For there precisely where ideas fail,
> A word comes opportunely into play.
> Most admirable weapons words are found,
> On words a system we securely ground,
> In words we can conveniently believe,
> Nor can we of one jot a word bereave."

A more legitimate professor denounces the "verbal mysteries of the schools," where there is no refreshment of truth to the eye, wearied as it is with wandering only from shadow to shadow, and where there is all the fatigue of continual progress, without real advance of a single step. "Waste words addle questions," pithily said old Bishop Andrewes, to whom even David Hume would have seemed praiseworthy when, expressing a doubt whether the reader would readily apprehend his reasoning (on the idea of necessary connexion), he added, "I am afraid that, should I multiply words about it, it would only become more obscure and intricate." *Feuillu de paroles et stérile de fruits*, is but a *pauvre style*, after all. Vague phrases, ῥηματίσκια αἰνιγματώδη, help rather to obscure than to elucidate.

It has been said of Philip II. that he was prolix and verbose, not from affluence, but from paucity of ideas: he took refuge in a cloud of words, sometimes to conceal his meaning, oftener to conceal the absence of any meaning, thus mystifying, not only others, but himself. George the Third, once, with rather

savage irony, asked Mr. Pitt by letter whether he would not "prepare another essay, containing as many empty words and little information as the one" previously transmitted to His Majesty.* The extraordinary ecclesiastical Latin of Papal allocutions has been, probably with justice, pronounced, of all known forms of human expression, to contain the least meaning in proportion to the verbiage. State Papers which deal verbosely in platitudes and generalities, and affect to enunciate first principles, when the discussion is of matters temporary and practical, are not far behind; England, at any rate, may claim to be impatient of such platitudes, for she can claim, in politics, to have outlived the period of generalities. Mr. Dickens would seem, however, to charge his fellow-countrymen with a relish equal to Mr. Micawber's for a formal piling-up of words: in the taking of legal oaths, for instance, deponents seem to enjoy themselves mightily when they come to several good words in succession, for the expression of one idea; as, that they utterly detest, abominate, and abjure, and so forth; and the old anathemas were made relishing on the same principle. We talk about the tyranny of words, said he, but we like to tyrannize over them too; we are fond of having a large superfluous establishment of words to wait upon us on great occasions; we think it looks important, and sounds well. "As we are not particular about the meaning of our liveries on

* A later Prime Minister, of our own day, has often given scope, to even admiring critics, for satirical comments on the cloudy verbiage with which he so often foiled too eager an assailant in the House of Commons; airy shadows of ideas which seem to be thoughts till you come to examine them closely, but which, on a nearer scrutiny, turn out to be nothing but impalpable masses of verbal mist, wreathed into the most beautiful forms the English language can supply. Much the same kind of thing as what Coleridge calls "mere bubbles, flashes, and electrical apparitions, from the magic cauldron of a fervid and ebullient fancy, constantly fuelled by an unexampled opulence of language." Another veteran statesman, the reverse of a ready speaker, was said to debate as the cuttle-fish fights—leaving the waters behind him so impenetrably turbid as to blind his pursuer; but then the matter that issues from the sepia was declared to be clear and transparent compared with the explanations of this hazy official.

state occasions, if they be but fine and numerous enough, so, the meaning or necessity of our words is a secondary consideration, if there be but a great parade of them. And as individuals get into trouble by making too great a show of liveries, or as slaves when they are too numerous rise against their masters, so I think I could mention a nation that has got into many great difficulties, and will get into many greater, from maintaining too large a retinue of words." It was of "human laws" Dr. South was speaking when he said that you shall be sure to have words enough in them; but, for the most part, to discern the sense and reason of them, you had need read them with a microscope. He was here contrasting human with Divine: "Was not the work of all the six days transacted in so many words? There was no circumlocution, or amplification, in the case." And South holds it for certain, accordingly, that the greatest and wisest conceptions that ever issued from the mind of man, have been couched under, and delivered in, a few close, home, and significant words. He contends that the most excellent among books, in whatever art or science, have been still the smallest and most compendious; for the reason of things lies in a little compass, if the mind could at any time be so happy as to light upon it: it is the work of fancy to enlarge, but of judgment to shorten and contract; and "most of the writings and discourses in the world are but illustration and rhetoric." The Burgundian court of the fifteenth century, as described by Michelet, was "all rhetorical," but the towns imitated the court, and there were formed in every direction by the citizens fraternities of fine speakers and talkers, styled Chambers of Rhetoric; nor are English vestrymen of the nineteenth century universally aliens in that respect. What was said of French oratory a hundred years ago may still be said of others beside the French:

> "L'Eloquence aujourd'hui, prodigue en métaphores,
> Avec un air penseur enfle des riens sonores;
> Que d'orateurs guindés dans un discours savant,
> Se tourmentent sans fin pour enfanter du vent!"

The Chateaubriand school soon got a bad name for producing effects more by words than ideas,—adding to the stock of phrases without increasing that of thought. The Italian prose literature of modern times incurred the strictures of Madame de Staël on account of its declamatory diffuseness; the writers possessing in its highest degree the art of inflating an idea, or frothing up a sentiment; insomuch that she was tempted to ask them the sort of question put by negress to Frenchwoman, in the days of hoop-petticoats, "Pray, madame, is all *that* yourself?" Or as the very plain Englishman asked, after listening to a long speech in parliamentary and platitudinary English,—"And pray what might all that come to when it's peeled and biled?" Professor Lowell accredits a fellow-countryman of prosaic as well as poetical propensities, with having perfectly adapted his productions to the amplitude of the American soil, manufactured as they were on the theory of covering the largest surface with the least possible amount of meaning that would hold words together. Of all things to be scouted, by such practitioners, is the spirit as well as the letter of Horace's admonition,

> "Est brevitate opus, ut currat sententia, neu se
> Impediat verbis lassas onerantibus aures."

Swift ironically cautions a young poet not to gag his muse, or stint himself in words and epithets which cost him nothing; and warns him accordingly against the practice and example of some few out-of-the-way writers, who use a natural and concise expression. "They will not afford you a word more than is necessary to make them intelligible; which is as poor and niggardly as it would be to set down no more meat than your company will be sure to eat up. Words are but lackeys to sense, and will dance attendance without wages or compulsion." Quite out of the common way was the case of Niebuhr, one of whose strange peculiarities was the stammering, not over words, but sentences: he would repeat the same sentence more than half a dozen times in the most different ways; the reason alleged being, that from his wide range of imagination and immense

fund of information, language could not keep pace with his thoughts. Little had he in common with the French professor in Balzac, whom "un long professorat avait habitué" to a too fluent facility in "la verbeuse élégance et les éloquentes périphrases." But at least Niebuhr varied his repetitions and diversified his iterations; by such variety and diversity relieving himself of liability to the sort of complaint Dorio makes in Terence: *At enim tædet jam audire eadem millies;* even if his outflow of words, words, words, subjected him in the long-run to a subsequent sneer of Dorio's, *Verba isthæc sunt.* Nor would he come within range of Frederick the Great's shot at an elder Herr Professor, on the score of transgressions in what Old Fritz called the Chancery style, and which his English historian explains to be the solemn style of ceremonial and circumlocution, mainly wig and buckram. Lord Brougham was fairly chargeable with a habit of illustrating an idea, and putting it in new forms, till the original impression was wellnigh obliterated; or, as Sir Archibald Alison put it, "buried under the redundance of its own expression." Sir Archibald is himself the Mr. Wordy of Mr. Disraeli's sarcasm; and Mr. Disraeli, after he became Minister, was taunted with having thrown over his epigrammatic style in novel-writing, and as always speaking in the opposite style, rounding off and diluting his sentences, and beating out his statements with all the energy of a gold-beater, so that three minutes' worth of information should stretch over a quarter of an hour of speaking, lest at any time his oratory should stray into the unstatesmanlike vice of brevity. "For my part, I'm fond of the figure of amplification in discourse," avows the Sir Oliver Oldstock of a now forgotten comedy; and he is for "confounding" the laconic style in general, and monosyllables in particular. "Marvellous fine words, neighbour Happer," quoth Dame Glendining to the miller, at the close of one of the Euphuist's verbose flourishes. "Brave words—very exceedingly pyet words," answers the miller; "nevertheless, to speak my mind, a lippy of bran were worth a bushel o' them." Honest Happer would have been much of Boileau's mind:

> "A quoi bon mettre au jour tous ces discours frivoles,
> Et ces riens enfermés dans de grandes paroles?"

What time Samuel Taylor Coleridge fed the daily press with diatribes against the Minister whose policy he then abhorred—"letters four do form his name"—there one day appeared this bit of critical invective: "Our Minister's meaning generally bears an inverse proportion to the multitude of his words. If his declaration consist of fifty lines, it may be compressed into ten; if it extend to five hundred, it may be compressed into five. His style is infinitely porous: deprived of their vacuities, the *τὸ πᾶν*, the universe of his bills and speeches would take up less room than a nutshell." Hardly Despréaux could be more contemptuous on such a theme, though flying at much smaller game:

> "Tous ces pompeux amas d'expressions frivoles,
> Sont d'un declamateur amoureux des paroles."

But what English Minister of mark has not, perhaps, been marked out, sooner or later, for strictures of this sort? Even professed admirers of Sir Robert Peel complained that his conceptions, however clear, were clothed in such a nebulous mass of verbiage that one had to probe and disengage them to get at their substance: it was said to be like blowing the froth from a syllabub, or squeezing the liquor out of a sponge, or draining, drop by drop, the product of a jelly-bag. His language was called the "intricate envelope" of a statesman of great importance, who, for protection' sake, diffused or diluted his meaning, and dissolved rather than expressed it in parts of speech. But at the worst a hard-and-fast line may, and ought to be, drawn between the copious verbiage of a Peel or a Gladstone, and what Mr. Reade styles the "misty nothings of diplomatists" and the "gibberish and jargon" of political placemen. If Pope's couplet may be applied to both in kind, it must be differently in degree:

> "Words are like leaves; and where they most abound,
> Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found."

X.

JACOB'S DREAM.

GENESIS xxviii. 10—12.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE, in his tractate on Dreams, follows up his reflection that virtuous thoughts of the day lay up good treasures for the night, whereby the impressions of imaginary forms arise into sober similitudes, acceptable to our slumbering selves and preparatory to divine impressions, —by the example, "Thus prepared, Jacob might well dream of angels upon a pillow of stone." Equally characteristic of the old commentator is the after-allusion to interpreters and masters of oneiro-criticism, who, "while we read of a ladder in Jacob's dream, will tell us that ladders and scalary ascents signify preferment." But what can such oneiro-criticism signify?

A ladder, or scalary ascent, of obvious resemblance to Jacob's, figures in Dante's beatific vision:

> "I saw rear'd up,
> In colour like to sun-illumined gold,
> A ladder, which my ken pursued in vain,
> So lofty was the summit; down whose steps
> I saw the splendours in such multitude
> Descending, every light in heaven, methought,
> Was shed thence."

And in the next canto there is a direct reference to the dream at Bethel, which was called Luz at the first. The ladder seen by Dante, and explained by his celestial conductress, tops the highest sphere of all,

> "For space is none to bound; nor pole divides.
> Our ladder reaches even to that clime,
> And so, at giddy distance, mocks thy view.
> Thither the patriarch Jacob saw it stretch
> Its topmost round; when it appear'd to him
> With angels laden."

How little, muses Dr. Newman, did Jacob think there was anything very wonderful in that spot: it looked like any other

spot: it was a lone uncomfortable place; there was no house there; night was coming on; and he had to sleep on the bare rock. "Yet how different was the truth! He saw but the world that is seen; he saw not the world that is not seen; yet the world that is not seen was there." He saw it in his sleep. Angels were all about him, though he knew it not; and what Jacob saw in his sleep, that Elisha's servant saw as if with his eyes. And that Nathanael was told he should see hereafter. "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

* * * *

"Sick of my days,
I wished not life, but cried out, Let me die;
But at Luz God came to me; in my heart
He put a better mind, and showed me how,
While we discern it not, and least believe,
On stairs invisible betwixt His heaven
And our unholy, sinful, toilsome earth,
Celestial messengers of loftiest good
Upward and downward pass continually." *

The theme is a favourite one with Lamartine and his school, in their variations of *harmonies religieuses:*

"Ne t'étonne donc pas qu'un ange d'harmonie
Vienne d'en-haut te réveiller,
Souviens-toi de Jacob! Les songes du génie
Descendent sur des fronts qui n'ont dans l'insomnie
Qu'une pierre pur oreiller!"

All these French exercises close with a note of admiration—as if like Katerfelto with his hair on end at his own wonders. *La voici* again:

"Et la création toujours, toujours nouvelle,
Monte éternellement la symbolique échelle
Que Jacob rêva devant lui!"

And yet again:

"Et les peuples, troupeau qui dormait sous le glaive,
Ont vu, comme Jacob, dans un étrange rêve,
Des anges remonter aux cieux!"

* Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough: *Jacob.*

Victor Hugo, in the longest, least effective, and most extravagant of all his plays, introduces the Earl of Rochester, in the presence of Cromwell, discussing the gibbet as one means of ascending to the skies; and with characteristic irreverence comes the allusion—

> "Et Dieu fit voir en rêve a son berger fidèle
> Qu'on monte au ciel de même au moyen d'une échelle."

To pulpiteer as well as poet the allusion is ever serviceable; Young was both, and there is a flavour of both about his lines on the heavenly minded, all whose

> "thoughts, like angels, seen of old
> In Israel's dream, come from, and go to, heaven."

Others have taken the story as typifying that of every young man when he leaves his home, and goes out to shift for himself in this hard world: the vision came to the very point of the lonesome sleeper's necessities; he saw that there was a way between him and God, and that there were those above who did care for him, and who could come to him to help him. And analogies of allusion abound in miscellaneous literature—as where an American poet sings of forms of light that come to exalt the homely facts and features of common life, and of an ideal atmosphere "in which fair angels come and go;" and in another place describes a tranquil death-bed, of one who passed to peaceful slumber like a child,

> "The while attendant angels built the dream
> On which she rode to heaven."

So, in his old drama of *The Brothers*, Shirley speaks of one whose eyes had gained a victory o'er grief,

> "And with it many beams twisted themselves,
> Upon whose golden threads the angels walk
> To and again from heaven."

Coleridge has a simile, as though the spirits of all lovely flowers, inweaving each its wreath and dewy crown, or ere they sank to earth in vernal showers, "had built a bridge to tempt

the angels down." And Mrs. Browning's House of Clouds includes a spacious hall,

> "Branched with corridors sublime, flecked with winding stairs—
> Such as children wish to climb, following their own prayers."

Lamartine's Jocelyn is enraptured of the rainbow and its suggestive significance:

> "Est-ce un pont pour passer tes anges,
> O toi qui permets à nos yeux
> De voir ces merveilles étranges,
> Est-ce un pont qui mène à tes cieux?"

In Spenser's vision of the city of the Great King, the seer beholds "The blessed Angels to and fro descend from highest heven in gladsome companee." Milton's fallen archangel, wandering after he has alighted on the bare convex of this world's outermost globe, comes anon to the gate of heaven with an ascent by stairs; and

> "The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
> Angels ascending and descending, bands
> Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
> To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz
> Dreaming by night under the open sky,
> And waking cried, 'This is the gate of heaven.'"

And then again, reader, "Have you read in the Talmud of old, in the Legends the Rabbins have told of the limitless realms of the air,"—have you read it,—the marvellous story of Sandalphon, the Angel of Glory, Sandalphon, the Angel of Prayer,—told by the Rabbins aforesaid, and by Longfellow retold; with whose initial note of interrogation we are content to end:

> "How, erect, at the outermost gates
> Of the City Celestial he waits,
> With his feet on the ladder of light,
> That, crowded with angels unnumber'd,
> By Jacob was seen, as he slumber'd
> Alone in the desert at night"?

XI.

THE SEVEN YEARS' SERVICE THAT TO JACOB SEEMED BUT A FEW DAYS.

GENESIS xxix. 20.

SEVEN years served Jacob for Rachel, in her father Laban's service; "and they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had to her." *Omnes mihi labores, quos cepi, leves*, affirms an attached "labourer," in Terence,—for the labour we delight in physics pain. Fiction but follows fact when it pictures such a day-labourer, to whom, when he forged, his hammer felt a feather in his hand; the mountains in the way looked molehills, and life itself became a sweet delirium. There is in another work of fiction an aspirant who takes Jacob for his exemplar in working for his Rachel, all through the long years—long in the prospect, short in the retrospect; and who, with a changed mode of life, and with full purpose of heart, set himself to accomplish his allotted task, and had need even to exercise restraint over himself, lest, in his eagerness, he should overtask his strength—so anxious was he to push on upon the road "whose goal was so fair a temple," and so light seemed that labour of love which was performed that he might win his Rachel. Desire is the spring of diligence, says Dr. South, and the heart infallibly sets both head and hands and everything else to work. "Great desire is like a great fire, and all difficulties before it are like stubble, it will certainly make its way through them and devour them." Or like Hannibal in his march, it cuts through rocks and mountains, till it either finds or makes a way to its beloved object. "What made Jacob think those seven years of hard service for Rachel but a few days, but the extraordinary and invincible love which he bore to her?" To apply a line of Odysseus in Sophocles,

Κᾀγὼ θελοντὴς τῷδ' ὑπεζύγην πόνῳ.

The toiling young prince in the *Tempest* can encounter the

heaviest of his irksome labours smilingly, for Miranda's sake:

> "There be some sports are painful; but their labour
> Delight in them sets off . . .
> . . . This my mean task would be
> As heavy to me as 'tis odious; but
> The mistress, which I serve, quickens what's dead,
> And makes my labours pleasures."

And presently Ferdinand tells Miranda that but for her he would no more endure "this wooden slavery," of fetching logs, than he would suffer the flesh-fly blow his mouth.

> "Hear my soul speak;—
> The very instant that I saw you, did
> My heart fly to your service; there resides
> To make me slave to it; and for your sake
> Am I this patient log-man."

So, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, when Julia is bent on undertaking a journey to her (supposed) loving Proteus, Lucetta's, "Alas! the way is wearisome and long," is at once dismissed with the reflection,

> "A true-devoted pilgrim is not weary
> To measure kingdoms with his feeble steps.
> . . . Then let me go, and hinder not my course:
> I'll be as patient as a gentle stream,
> And make a pastime of each weary step,
> Till the last step have brought me to my love."

For Festo's sad sweet song, in *Twelfth Night*, "Come away, come away, Death," the Duke offers him money payment: "There's for thy pains." "No pains, sir; I take pleasure in singing," Festo replies. But then, as Clitipho muses, in the *Heautontimoroumenos*, "Nulla est tam facilis res, quin difficilis siet, quam invitus facias." If there be but the willing mind, there is love's labour; and love's labour is not lost. Euripides said, and showed, that "love esteems no office mean." The Italian proverb runs, *Amor non conosce travaglio:* love knows nothing of labour. To Mr. Reade's ill-starred but stout-hearted clergyman on the desert island, labouring with all his might for his delicate companion, that "feverish labour

was an unmixed joy. He was working, not only for the comfort, but the health, and even the life, of the lady he loved;" and this feeling made his homeliest work poetical, his heaviest work light.*

> "For the man that lo'es his mistress weel,
> Nae travel makes him weary,"

sings Robert Burns,—and sings it not from the throat merely, but in those deep chest notes of his which are so musically sympathetic. A later poet might tell of days and nights of painful patientness and toilful tendance, in pinching cold, and on short commons,—

> "But love makes warmth and fulness everywhere;
> The lover lives on love luxuriously,
> And lacks for nothing."

There is a passage in John Evelyn's Diary, in which, after recording some cheerfully undergone extreme of "drudgery," he breaks into, or breaks off with, the note of interrogation, "But what will not love and friendship make one do?" A woman of genius has said that household toils are a drudgery only when unpervaded by sentiment: when they are an offering of love, a ministry of care and devotion to the beloved, every detail has its interest. Kirby the entomologist points a moral to his description of certain insects doomed to arduous and incessant toil, to exertions apparently so disproportioned to their size. It would be a mistaken inference, he cautions us, to conclude that with these laborious little creatures the pains of life must far outweigh the pleasures. What strikes us as wearisome toil, is to the tiny agents, labouring for their young, delightful occupation. "Like the affectionate father, whose love for his children sweetens the most painful labours, these

* St. Francis Xavier has spiritualized in his own experience a more sacred work and labour of love. "The toils I undergo," he said of himself, as a missionary in the Spice Islands, "are an inexhaustible source of spiritual joys; insomuch that these islands, bare as they are of all worldly necessaries, are the very places in the world for a man to lose his sight through excess of weeping—but they are tears of joy."

little insects are never more happy than when thus actively engaged." Paley affirms a bee amongst the flowers in spring, when it is occupied without intermission in collecting farina for its young or honey for its associates, to be one of the cheerfullest objects that can be looked upon. That no man loves labour for itself, is a rule to which Johnson would admit of no exception,—and when Boswell suggested one,—"Yes, sir, I know a person who does: he is a very laborious Judge, and he loves the labour."—"Sir," replied Johnson, "that is because he loves respect and distinction. Could he have them without labour, he would like it less." "He tells me he likes it for himself," urged Boswell; only to be answered, "Why, sir, he fancies so, because he is not accustomed to abstract." An old divine puts the question and answer, What makes many men so strangely immerse themselves, some in chemical, and some in mathematical inquiries, but because they strangely love the things they labour in? Their intense study gives them skill and proficiency; and their particular affection to these kinds of knowledge puts them upon such study. According to æsthetics, as expounded by Kenelm Chillingly, man arrives at his highest state of moral excellence when labour and duty lose all the harshness of effort—when they become the impulse and habit of life; when, as the essential attributes of the beautiful, they are, like beauty, enjoyed as pleasure; and thus "each day becomes a holiday." By his model pastor, labour and duty are so taken up

> "In den heitern Regionen
> Wo die reinen Formen wohnen,"

that they become joy and beauty. When Trefalden, in another work of fiction, declares himself to be as firmly chained to Chancery Lane for the next five months as any galley-slave to his oar, "But, my dear sir," objects the Earl who has asked for his company out of town, "is it worth any man's while to be a galley-slave, if he can help it?" the answer comes that all depends on the motive, and that self-imposed chains are never very heavy to the wearer. In the activity of Phœbe, sprightly inmate of his drear House of the Seven Gables, Hawthorne

descries a spiritual quality: the life of the long and busy day—spent in occupations that might so easily have taken a squalid and ugly aspect—was made pleasant, and even lovely, by the spontaneous grace with which these homely duties seemed to bloom out of her character; so that labour, while she dealt with it, had the easy and flexible charm of play. "Angels do not toil, but let their good works grow out of them; and so did Phœbe." A poet of our day enforces the lesson that let a man live as long as he may, he may love on through life:

> "Love in fame; love in knowledge; in work; earth is rife
> With labour, and therefore with love, for a man.
> If one love fails, another succeeds, and the plan
> Of man's life includes love in all objects."

Expatiating on Lord Palmerston's wonderful power of mastering, even to the point of ignoring, bodily pain, Sir Henry Holland speaks of having seen him, under a fit of gout which would have sent other men groaning to their couches, continue his work almost without abatement, amid the chaos of papers which covered the floor as well as the tables of his room. And though his physician at first remonstrated against these unusual labours during illness, he soon learnt that such remonstrance was not only fruitless but injudicious, because to Lord Palmerston work was itself a remedy: "The labour he loved 'physicked pain.' No anodyne I could have prescribed would have been equally effectual in allaying it—or, as I may better say, in lessening that *sense* of suffering which is always augmented by the attention of the mind directed to it."* A passage may be remembered in the Confessions of Rousseau, in which he describes the intense study to which he devoted himself in serious illness: he was told he was injuring himself; he was convinced that he was acting kindly by body as well as mind; "car cette application, pour laquelle je me passionnais, me devint si délicieuse, que, ne pensant plus à mes maux, j'en étais beaucoup moins affecté."

* This curious point in Physiology is explicitly treated of in Sir H. Holland's *Mental Physiology*, chapter iii.

Of La Fontaine it has been said—all whose work was so carefully finished—that lazy though he was, *l'enfant de la paresse et du sommeil*, he would give nothing to the world but what was his best. "He did no task-work: but the labour that he delighted in physicked pain." It was at once his chosen amusement and his work; and, as Thackeray wisely says, he is the happiest man who gets the work to do best fitted to his hand, and does not get tired of it—and therefore does not get to be tired by it.

Wordsworth has a sonnet on a certain piece of toil undertaken and accomplished with the energy of real heart in the work—

> "Not by the sluggish and ungrateful pains
> Of labourer plodding for his daily gains,
> But by an industry that wrought in love."

And his successor in the laureateship has an *in memoriam* stanza, more subtle in import and suggestiveness, with which we may bring these excercitations and excerpts to an end:

> "But this it was that made me move
> As light as carrier-birds in air:
> I loved the weight I had to bear,
> Because it needed help of Love."

XII.

WRONGED, AND HATED FOR IT.

1 SAMUEL xviii. 29.

MOST scrupulously on his guard was young David the Bethlehemite to give no occasion of distrust or dislike to King Saul. But the distrust and the dislike arose, and soon grew intensely strong. Jealousy tortured the moody monarch. though the young man's loyalty remained unimpeachable. And one day Saul cast the javelin he had in his hand at the innocent harpist, saying to himself, "I will smite David even to the wall

with it." And David "avoided out of his presence twice." And from that time forth seems the king to have hated his minstrel worse and worse—hating him all the worse for having himself done him this foul wrong. *Odisse quem læseris* is an original sin in fallen nature. And even thus "Saul became David's enemy continually," and sought occasion to slay him.

By Amnon is Tamar foully wronged, and hated for it. His guilt accomplished, "then Amnon hated her exceedingly." The hate in shameful proportion to the wrong.

Dean Milman accounts for the excess of vindictive violence to which Philip the Fair was goaded by passion in his treatment of Guy of Dampierre, by significantly telling us that "Philip had the most deep-rooted hatred of the Count of Flanders, as a rebellious vassal, and as one whom he had cruelly injured." Dr. Thomas Brown somewhere speaks of it as a very common form of injustice, that we first oppress, and then despise because we have oppressed. Still more observably common is the practice of wronging, and then of hating him we have wronged.* And the man who has a secret consciousness that he has injured you, is, we know, very ready to find cause of offence or complaint against you: it balances matters somewhat. Such observations are of every-day growth.

Odisse quem læseris.—That is our text—a trite text. The hatred one comes to feel, and then to cherish, towards the

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* "Let us be open-hearted and candid, Earnshaw," proposes Mr. Harris in the *Gordian Knot.* "You hate me like the devil, or possibly a good deal worse, and you have a right to do so, because you have injured me; and I, knowing human nature, blame you not." (Chapter xlvi.)

Lord Lytton speaks of it as the most common thing in the world, when we have once wronged a person, to go on in the wrong, from a certain soreness with which conscience links the associations of the injured party. He illustrates this in the character of Godolphin, whose "very remorse made him unkind." (Chapter xli.)

Not inapplicable to the philosophy of the subject is that ironically humorous query put by Mr. Thackeray in *Pendennis*—What more can one say of the Christian charity of a man than that he is actually ready to forgive those who have done him every kindness, and with whom he is wrong in a dispute?

person one has wronged—that is our theme. The terse text of Tacitus is become an accepted truism. It is one of the commonplaces of stock quotation.

Indeed, Macaulay taxed the late Earl Stanhope—on the score of this selfsame text—with being a little too fond of uttering moral reflections in a style too sententious and oracular; and the Whig critic quoted from the Conservative historian this instance to his purpose: "Strange as it seems, experience shows that we usually feel far more animosity against those whom we have injured than against those who injure us; and this remark holds good with every degree of intellect, with every class of fortune, with a prince or a peasant, a stripling or an elder, a hero or a prince." This remark, observed Macaulay, in his review of Lord Mahon's *War of the Succession in Spain*, might have seemed strange at the court of Nimrod or Chedorlaomer; but it has now been for many generations considered as a truism rather than a paradox. "Every boy has written on the thesis *Odisse quem læseris.* Scarcely any lines in English poetry are better known than that vigorous couplet,

> 'Forgiveness to the injured does belong;
> But they ne'er pardon, who have done the wrong.'

The historians and philosophers have quite done with this maxim, and have abandoned it, like other maxims which have lost their gloss, to bad novelists, by whom it will very soon be worn to rags."

At the risk of being ranked with lower even than bad novelists, it is proposed in the present section to illustrate this trite text, this threadbare truism, by instances and allusions gathered here and there; in the belief that even a truism may be inspected with interest under side-lights from opposite quarters,—the interest lying in the diversity of ways in which various minds regard and exemplify the text. Worn to rags it may be; but there are such things as *purpurei panni.*

Here, for instance, is Sir Mulberry Hawk, who, when he began to dislike his dupe and victim, young Lord Frederick, measured his dislike, as men (we are reminded) often do, by

the extent of the injuries he had inflicted upon its object. "When it is remembered that Sir Mulberry Hawk had plundered, duped, deceived, and fooled his pupil in every possible way, it will not be wondered at, that, beginning to hate him, he began to hate him cordially." Sir Walter Scott illustrates the text in a conference between Buckingham and his tool, Edward Christian; where the former winds up a characteristic speech with the jaunty bidding, "Never be downcast, man; I forgive thee, I forgive thee." "Your Grace is of a most merciful disposition," is Christian's sneering reply, "especially considering it is I who have had the wrong; and sages have said, that he who doth the injury is less apt to forgive than he who only sustains it."

Mrs. Gore tells us of Augustus Hamilton and his maltreated, patient wife, whom he almost hated the more for the forbearance which kept her silent under strong emotion, that "he was conscious of having used her too ill not to wish to wreak further vengeance on her head." So with the Laird o' Grippy in John Galt's tale, when estranging himself from the son whom he has wronged of his inheritance. "Conscious that he had done him wrong—aware that the wrong would probably soon be discovered—and conscious, too, that this behaviour was calculated to beget suspicion, he began to dislike to see Charles," etc. Still, in this case it is to be noted, to Claud's credit, that so much was there of the "leaven of original virtue in the composition of his paternal affection," that this disagreeable feeling never took the decided nature of enmity. "He did not hate because he had injured."

The Edinburgh Reviewer of Lord Nelson's Letters to Lady Hamilton was candid in his censure of the great seaman's culpable disregard of domestic ties, and of his neglect, almost cruel neglect, of one whom he was bound by honour, as well as religion, morality, and law, to cherish. This neglect, the consequence of an illicit passion, seems (as frequently happens in minds otherwise virtuous) to have "rankled to a degree of hatred, from the workings of self-reproach." Nor can a more melancholy instance, adds the Reviewer, be found of the maxim,

that we are apt to dislike those whom we have wronged, and thus preposterously to visit upon them the sins of our own injustice. Familiar, or cheerful, or affectionate intercourse with those who have been wronged, is truly said to be generally out of the question; and the closer the intercourse, the less easily is it restored. "To forgive artistically," in the words of an essayist on social subjects, parents or friends ought to go so far as not merely to pass over, but to ignore what has been done. But even if they can bring themselves to this "gentle hypocrisy," the difficulty will not have disappeared,—"for those who are the wrong-doers will probably have a more tenacious memory, and not be easily ready to do the same."

Gibbon owed many things, both in matter and manner, or mannerism, to Tacitus; and the famous apophthegm of the Roman historian is again and again illustrated by the historian of Rome, *Proprium humani generis est odisse quem læseris.* Thus, in describing the murder of Para, king of Armenia, in the fourth century of our era. Gibbon writes: "After his return to his native kingdom, Para still continued to profess himself the friend and ally of the Romans; but the Romans had injured him too deeply ever to forgive, and the secret sentence of his death was signed in the council of Valens." So in the instance of Arcadius and his too powerful minister, Rufinus: "The emperor would soon be instructed to hate, to fear. and to destroy, the powerful subjects whom he had injured." And once again in the case of Genseric and the nobility of Carthage: "It was natural enough that Genseric should hate those whom he had injured." Cleomenes, says one historian of Athens, chafed at the failure of his attempt on the Athenian liberties, "conceived, in the true spirit of injustice, that he had been rather the aggrieved than the aggressor," and feeding up a cordial dislike to those he had wronged, set to work to wrong them anew, and with better success this time.

When Thomas Moore, in his Life of Byron, comes to treat of the mysterious feud that separated husband and wife in 1816, he remarks that if there be any truth in the principle that they "never pardon who have done the wrong," Lord Byron, who

was, to the last, disposed to conciliation, proved so far, at least, his conscience to have been unhaunted by any very disturbing consciousness of aggression. It is observable that Byron himself cites the adage, in a letter he wrote to his wife seven years later, one paragraph in which closes thus: "I assure you that I bear you now (whatever I may have done) no resentment whatever. Remember that, if you have injured me in aught, this forgiveness is something; and that, if I have injured you, it is something more still, if it is true, as the moralists say, that the most offending are the least forgiving."

Lucius Mason, in *Orley Farm*, no sooner finds that the property he has been enjoying has rightfully belonged all the time to another, than he begins to wax wroth with that other whom he has thus and for so long a time, however involuntarily, wronged. "His head, he said to himself, should never again rest under a roof which belonged of right to Joseph Mason. He had injured Joseph Mason—had injured him innocently, indeed, as far as he himself was concerned—but he had injured him greatly, and therefore now hated him all the more."

La Bruyère, in his pithy way, enunciates the double-faced or two-eyed proposition, with its negative pole, so to speak—that we violently hate those whom we have deeply offended, just as we foster a growing regard for those to whom we have done a kindness. "Comme nous nous affectionnons de plus en plus aux personnes à qui nous faisons de bien, de même nous haïssons violemment ceux que nous avons beaucoup offensés."

There came a crisis in the relations of the Emperor Domitian with Agricola, when the prince plainly intimated to the general that he dared not again employ him; and Agricola is said to have discreetly refrained from soliciting employment. If he was named for an important government, it was, says Dean Merivale, with the understanding that he should himself decline it; but the emperor took what was deemed a base advantage of his moderation, in withholding the salary of the office, which, it seems, ought in fairness to have been pressed upon him. "Domitian knew that he had now openly mortified

a gallant and popular officer, and he began to hate the man he had injured: such, as Tacitus reminds us, is a common infirmity of our nature. But Domitian's temper, he adds, was prone to take offence, and the more he dissembled, the more was he implacable."

Sir Charles Grandison, in his stately, sonorous way, apprises a clerical correspondent, "I have more than once, Dr. Bartlett, experienced the irreconcileable enmity of a man whom I have forgiven for a meanness, and who was less able to forgive me my forgiveness than I was him his fault." And as with Richardson, so with Fielding, the theme is once and again a topic for illustration. Booth's friend, the colonel, is described as eager in quest of any the shallowest reason for hating the man whom he could not help hating without any reason—at least, without any which he durst fairly assign even to himself. And Mrs. Bennet, in the same story, relating her step-mother's success in setting her father against her, and making him use her ill, declares her to have been unable so perfectly to subdue his understanding as to prevent him from being conscious of such ill-usage; and from this consciousness," she goes on to say, "he began inveterately to hate me. Of this hatred he gave me numberless instances; and I protest to you, I know not any other reason for it than what I have assigned, and the cause, as experience hath convinced me, is adequate to the effect." Rousseau was quite of the same mind when he emphatically asserted, as the alleged result of manifold experience on his part, that "la haine des méchants ne fait que s'animer davantage par l'impossibilité de trouver sur quoi la fonder; et le sentiment de leur injustice n'est qu'un grief de plus contre celui qui en est l'objet." In another of his autobiographical works, where he is expatiating after his peculiar and peculiarly aggrieved manner on the rancour of his alleged foes, all and sundry—he says of the doctors, to whom he *had* given cause of offence, that possibly they might become reconciled to him, but that as for the *oratoriens*, whom he had loved, in whom he had reposed confidence, and whom he had never offended—they, he was persuaded, would for ever be implacably hostile to

him: "Leur propre iniquité fait mon crime, que leur amour-propre ne me pardonnera jamais."

Beattie says in one of his letters that Lord Monboddo had never pardoned him for calling Captain Cook a philosopher, and probably never would; but what made the doctor hopeless of regaining the judge's goodwill was the *odisse quem læseris* maxim; for, he adds, "I think he did not use me quite well in the preface to his *Metaphysic*, and when a man uses you ill, he seldom fails to hate you for it." Swift introduces the truism in his *Modest Inquiry into the Report of the Queen's Death.* It is a common observation, he says, "that the offended party often forgives; but the offending party seldom. It is one of the corrupt sentiments of the heart of man to hate one the more for having used them ill; and to wish those out of the way who, we believe, ought in justice to revenge the injuries we have done them." In this last particular may be descried an efficient reason, in cases not a few, for the cherished hatred observable in the wrong-doer. Fear and apprehension keep him uneasy, and the object of his uneasiness is increasingly the object of his dislike.* Again, in the Dean's *History of the Four Last* (or should it be Last Four?) *Years of Queen Anne,* he gives this finishing touch to his portrait of the Earl of Sunderland: "The sense of the injuries he has done, renders him (as it is very natural) implacable towards those to whom he has given greatest cause to complain; for which reason he will never forgive either the queen or the present treasurer."

As Charles Fox is said to have never forgiven George IV. the falsehood which duped him into denying in the House the Fitzherbert marriage, so is it said of His Majesty that he too, on his part, could never prevail upon himself to forgive Mr. Fox for having so much to pardon.

* It has been wittily said of continental hotel keepers and lodging-house keepers, in whose bosoms the fleecing to which they have subjected you in bygone years stirs up hospitable emotions as often as you visit them again, that of them the old saying of *odisse quem læseris* is most emphatically untrue; for the more they have been able to injure you, the less do they hate you.

XIII.

THE CAVE OF ADULLAM.

1 SAMUEL xxii. 2.

FOR fear of Saul, fled David to Achish, king of Gath; and for fear of Achish he hied him to the cave of Adullam. In the cave he found a refuge, and to the cave there came other refugees,—a mixed multitude, more imposing in numbers than credit. For, "every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented [or bitter of soul], gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men." The character of the confederates would scarcely seem to have ranked much above that of the adventurers who, in like manner, once associated themselves to Jephthah, when that mighty man of valour, the outcast Gileadite, fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob; and there were gathered vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him.

Once accepted as authentic history was the record of Romulus issuing a proclamation with a view to the peopling of his new city,—declaring it to be an "asylum," a sanctuary and place of safety, for such as were banished from the other cities of Italy; a device which brought to him many who had quitted their respective towns, whether for debt, or on account of crimes by them committed.* And Chesterfield, in one of his

* Spartacus in revolt was presently joined by slaves and outlaws of all descriptions: he has the credit, however, of having enforced strict discipline, and so long as he was able, obliged his lawless followers to abstain from acts of violence and rapine. But discipline failed anon; and as incidental evidence of the extent of the ravages committed in central and southern Italy by the rude bands under his command, historians refer to the well-known line of Horace, in which the poet promised his friend a jar of wine made during the Social War, if he could find one that had "escaped the clutches of roaming Spartacus."

On Cæsar's side, against Pompey, were ranged "all the criminal and obnoxious," as the most elaborate and old-fashioned of our biographers of Cicero words it, following the wording of Cicero himself; "all who had

French letters, pauses to moralize on the surprising fact that the "wisest and most virtuous nation the world ever saw" should deduce its origin from *cet amas de vauriens et de coquins* —this seething mass of rascality and scoundrelism.

Gulliver was asked by his master the Houyhnhmm, how he could persuade strangers out of different countries to venture with him, after the losses he had sustained and the hazards he had run? And Captain Lemuel replied, in regard of his fifty Yahoos, that they were "fellows of desperate fortunes, forced to fly from the places of their birth on account of their poverty or their crimes." Some were undone by lawsuits; others spent all they had in debauchery and gaming; others fled for treason; many for homicide, theft, perjury, forgery, coining false money, or for flying from their colours and deserting to the enemy: most of them had broken prison; and none of them durst

suffered punishment, or deserved it; the greatest part of the youth, and the city mob; some of the popular tribunes, and all who were oppressed with debts." Cæsar in Gaul was thus a loadstone to Mark Antony when he left Egypt, but was too deeply in debt to show himself in Rome; for Cæsar's camp was the "sure refuge of all the needy, the desperate, and the audacious." In his letters to Atticus, Cicero inveighs against that "needy, profligate, audacious crew, prepared for everything that was desperate." Then again, after his personal interview with Cæsar: "Good gods! what a crew he has with him! What a hellish band, as you call them—what a troop of desperadoes!" Catiline, in Ben Jonson, bids Cethegus

"draw to you any aids
That you think fit, of men of all conditions,
Of any fortunes, that may help a war."

The commander of the opposing host describes the Catiline crew as comprising "all sorts of furies,

"Adulterers, dicers, fencers, outlaws, thieves,
The murderers of their parents, all the sink
And plague of Italy met in one torrent."

During Caligula's time the history of the Babylonian Jews makes prominent mention of the brothers Asinai and Anilai, around whom gathered a number of indigent and discontented youths, and who thus became the captains of a formidable band of robbers. They built a strong fortress, secured by the marshes around, and levied tribute on the shepherds, whom, however, they defended from all other assailants—on something of the black-mail system of the Scottish Highlands. Artabanus, king of Parthia, was sufficiently impressed by their valour in the field to send an embassy offering terms of accommodation.

return to their native countries, for fear of being hanged or of starving in a jail: hence their recourse to a service such as his.

The classical advocates for that ambassadorial right of asylum in Rome which Innocent XI. determined to do away with, and the abuse of which in favour of malefactors and *mauvais sujets* all and sundry had become contagious, took good care to quote the example of Romulus. But the Pope was not pagan enough, though full of pride, to accept the precedent. The Sanctuary of Whitefriars is best known to us in the Alsatia of Scott, as a place abounding with desperadoes of every description,—bankrupt citizens, ruined gamesters, irreclaimable prodigals, desperate duellists, bravoes, homicides, and debauched profligates of every degree, all leagued together to maintain the immunities of their asylum,—so that it was both difficult and unsafe for the officers of the law to execute warrants, emanating even from the highest authority, amongst men whose safety was inconsistent with warrants or authority of any kind.

While in a critical position as to his relation with the Liegers and with Charles of Burgundy, it suited the policy of Lewis the Eleventh to become a seemingly warm friend of the city of Paris: great as it was, he desired to have it greater still, fuller of populous life and popular spirit; and he had proclamation made, accordingly, by sound of trumpet, that men of all nations, who might have fled for theft or for murder, would find shelter here. Michelet assures us of Warwick the King-maker, that the city of London was what *he* most loved and honoured in this world; and of Warwick he tells us how safe were all who were under the ban of the law whilst that great earl was lord of the marches of Calais and Scotland; and how, if there were a "tall man" on the border, who resorted in trouble to Warwick, he was at once set down to dinner, instead of being strapped up to the next tree. Geraint, in the *Idylls of the King*, sets forth before his liege lord the very practical grievance that his princedom lay

> "Close on the borders of a territory
> Wherein were bandit earls, and caitiff knights,
> Assassins, and all flyers from the hand
> Of Justice, and whatever loathes a law."

The peopling of New Orleans is likened by Yankee vivacity to the place itself, as built on a bar in the harbour, made of snags, driftwood, and chokes, heaped up by the river, and then filled and covered with the sediment brought down by the freshets. "The froth and scum are washed up and settle at New Orleans. It's filled with all sorts of people, . . . mottled with black and all its shades. It is a great caravansary filled with strangers, dissolute enough to make your hair stand on end, drinking all day, gambling all night, and fighting all the time." But it is the same graphic humorist who, not less proudly than pungently, compares his country to the Thames as it was when sewers and drains, and dye-stuffs and factory-wash, and unmentionables without stint (not without stink), were poured into it. "Our great country is like that āre Thames water,—it does receive the outpourins of the world,—homicides and regicides,—jail-birds and galley-birds, poorhouse chaps and workhouse chaps,—rebels, infidels, and forgers,—rogues of all sorts, sizes, and degrees,—but it farments, you see, and works clear." History traces the Cossack nation to a mixed multitude composed of those who took refuge beyond the islands of the Dnieper, from the first general invasion of the Tartars, and of those again who fled thither during the Lithuanian wars, whose number was afterwards swelled by adventurers and outcasts, lovers of a free life, and fugitives from the law of arrest, deserters from various armies, and serfs who had broken their bonds and renounced the yoke. Here too the fermenting process has, in its way, worked clear. A cave of Adullam may be the cradle of a compact, imposing, and influential race.

From various parts of Shakspeare we might gather lines more or less applicable to the Adullamite adventurers. The adversaries too contemptuously described by Richard of Gloster, for instance, as

> "A sort of vagabonds, rascals, and runaways,
> Whom their o'er-cloyèd country vomits forth
> To desperate ventures and assured destruction.
> . . . [Mere] famish'd beggars, weary of their lives;
> Who but for dreaming on this foul exploit,
> For want of means, poor rats, had hang'd themselves."

Or again those scouted by Chatillon, in *King John*, as embodying "all the unsettled humours of the land." Or those so bitterly invoked by dying Bolingbroke, in prospect of a reign of license under his presumably still dissolute son:

> "Now, neighbour confines, purge you of your scum:
> Have you a ruffian that will swear, drink, dance,
> Revel the night, rob, murder, and commit
> The oldest sins the newest kind of ways?
> Be happy, he will trouble you no more . . .
> For the fifth Harry from curb'd license plucks
> The muzzle of restraint, and the wild dog
> Shall flesh his tooth in every innocent.
> O my poor kingdom! . . .
> Oh, thou wilt be a wilderness again,"—

or a cave of Adullam, without a David in it.

XIV.

THE MEASURE AND PRESSURE OF REHOBOAM'S LITTLE FINGER.

1 Kings xii. 6—11.

WITH the old men that had stood before Solomon his father did Rehoboam first consult, as to his treatment of pleading Israel. And the advice of the elders was that the new king should be compliant and conciliatory, and so win the hearts of his people for ever. To the young men that were of his own standing, and of his own tastes and habits, Rehoboam next addressed himself; and they, knowing his tastes, and chiming in with his prejudices, counselled irritating words of arrogant menace as the only proper reply to such *canaille*. His subjects complain, forsooth, of being overburdened. Let him clap heavier loads on their backs. Let him prove to them at once, and once for all, that he is master, and means to be; that he has a will of his own, and that they are to have none. Let him stamp out the last spark of their independence of spirit.

His part is to rule, and to make the rule absolute; theirs is to submit, to succumb, to efface themselves before him, to know that he is monarch of all he surveys, whose right there is none to dispute.

The counsel of the flippant youngsters jumped with the humour of the king, and for it he forsook the counsel of the graybeards, trained in Solomon's court, and the confidants and abettors of his policy. So Rehoboam answered the people roughly. Asperity was the tone he deemed it politic to use; and at the young men's prompting he used their very words. "My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." It is hard to suppose that he omitted that other graphic clause in the dictated speech: "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins." His remonstrant subjects were thus to be defied, not appeased; provoked, not conciliated: they were thus to be taught to know their place, and to know his—to know themselves, and to know him. He gave them the measure of his little finger that day, and its pressure they were to feel from that day forth, more and more, continually. Solomon's girdle would not go round Rehoboam's little finger. A greater than Solomon was here.

Altering but a word or two, the sombre forecastings of Henry the Fourth, happily groundless, in Shakspeare, might be attributed to the wise father of foolish Rehoboam:

> "Only compound me with forgotten dust;
> Give that, which gave thee life, unto the worms;
> Pluck down my officers, break my decrees;
> For now a time is come to mock at form.
> Once Rehoboam crown'd—up, vanity!
> Down, royal state! all you sage counsellors, hence!
> And to the Jewish court assemble now,
> From every region, apes of idleness!"

With a sore heart Samuel Pepys recorded in his Diary the impolitic wilfulness of England's Merry Monarch. "If any of the sober counsellors give him good advice, and move him in

anything that is to his good and honour, the other part, which are his counsellors of pleasure, take him when he is . . . in a humour of delight, and then persuade him that he ought not to hear nor listen to the advice of those old dotards," etc. Several years later we again read in the Diary of the "wicked men that command the King," the "idle companions" that are always about him, the "young rogues" to whom he always gives way. When a revolution in Greece put an end at last to the reign of King Otho, we were told by Mr. Finlay that a thousand petty acts of the misguided prince had long been rankling in the hearts of his subjects, who felt themselves despised; and indeed that for some months past King Otho had been universally and passionately hated. "Yet the sycophants who surrounded the King persuaded him that the opposition was a mere *clique* of place-hunters." We recall the vigorous anathema in an old tragedy of John Marston's,—

> "Confusion to those limber sycophants.
> No sooner mischief's born in regency,
> But flattery christens it with policy."

How rarely does a king attain wisdom! muses Goethe's Egmont, in regard of the policy of Philip II. in the Netherlands; and he urges recourse to counsellors that have grown old in the service of the State, and to measures of conciliation towards the revolting remonstrants. He tells Alva, all for blood and iron, "The measures you propose will never do. I know my countrymen. It may be difficult to win their confidence, but it is easy to retain it. Firm and unbending, they may be crushed, but not subdued." But Philip had resolved as no sovereign ought to resolve. In order to govern his subjects more easily, he would crush, subvert, nay ruthlessly destroy, their strength, their spirit, and their self-respect. It was Rehoboam over again—that infatuated prince whom, so changed, the Florentine seer beheld in the first cornice of the purgatorial mount:

> "O Rehoboam! here thy shape doth seem
> Louring no more defiance; but fear-smote,
> With none to chase him, in his chariot whirled."

Could he but have assented to the counsel of the elders,

that with fair words, kindly spoken, he might win the cordial allegiance of his people, and make them, in no servile spirit, his servants for ever!—*Errat longe*, decides the Micio of Terence, *mea quidem sententia*,

> "Qui imperium credat gravius esse aut stabilius,
> Vi quod fit, quam illud, quod amicitia adjungitur."

Political observers have described as "astonishing" how much a conciliatory manner can disarm, nay sometimes convert, opponents, and preserve authority to resistance and dignity to defeat. No one overcomes the difficulties in his way by acridity and spleen. "Hannibal, in spite of the legend, did *not* dissolve the Alps by vinegar." The conciliatory negotiator makes the adversary ashamed of violence. "The Greeks represent Persuasion as crowned"—so potent in families well ordered is the one firm, sweet temper, which controls without seeming to dictate. If a skilful orator desire to propitiate a hostile assembly, though it be the "most unmanageable of all assemblies, an angry mob," he will certainly not begin by scolding and railing against it. "Even in outlaws and thieves themselves, they who have undertaken the benevolent task of reforming them bear general testimony in favour of the good effects of praise, and the comparative nullity of scolding." The advice is tendered in one of W. S. Landor's historical dramas, not to decry the object of one's solicitude, but to try what can be done rather by cherishing

> "The good we see in it, and overlooking
> What is less pleasant in the paths of life.
> All have some virtue if we leave it them
> In peace and quiet; all may lose some part
> By sifting too minutely bad and good."

Such the policy advocated and illustrated by Shelley in his *Revolt of Islam*, where it is found to answer in the case of "bloody bands" of lawless evil-doers:

> "The sweet awe
> Of such mild looks made their own hearts grow mild,
> And did with soft attraction ever draw
> Their spirits to the love of freedom's equal law."

The opposite policy has its advocates too,—of the style of Mr. Randolph Marcy's Rocky Mountain philosopher, who affirmed that "the only way to treat Injuns [for instance] is to thrash them well at first, and then the balance will sorter take to you and behave themselves." So with General John Campbell and his experience of the ways of the wild tribes of Khondistan: like all savages, he says of them—and he is ready to say it of all Orientals—they require to be treated with much more of the *fortiter in re* than of the *suaviter in modo*: demonstrations of physical force he found to be at once indispensable and infallible. A type of such natures, so interpreted, might be found in that historical elephant to whose wild doings in civilized society Mr. Charles Reade has devoted the best part of a volume—a brute to be won by no amount of kindness, and amenable only to harsh, cruel, painful discipline, as brutal as herself. Her keeper's secret lay in simply "walking into her with a pitchfork." The riddle-key of Mademoiselle Djek was "steel." And our author assures us that there are no two ways with wild beasts. "If there is a single white spot in your heart —leave them; for your life will be in danger every moment. If you can despise them, and keep the rod always in sight, they are your humble servants; nobody more so." Years of experience with Mdlle. Djek show how lump-sugar was a signal failure in the long run, while pitchfork held good. The policy would seem to have thrived better in this case than it did as applied by Spenser's "unlovely Proteus" to fair Florimell:

> "For, when as neither gifts nor graces kind
> Her constant mind could move at all he saw,
> He thought her to compell by crueltie and awe."

A previous canto had intimated the same failure of ingratiating overtures, and the consequent resort to harsher treatment:

> "But when all this he nothing saw prevaile,
> With harder meanes he cast her to subdewe,
> And with sharpe threates her often did assayle:
> So thinking for to make her stubborne corage quayle."

Very *mauvais* indeed is the *sujet* against whom Duke

Vincentio in Shakspeare issues his edict, "Take him to prison, officer;

> "Correction and instruction must both work,
> Ere this rude beast will profit."

To Cecil wrote Rokesby from Ireland, in the spring of 1570, "So beastly are this people, that it is not lenity that will win them. . . . It must be fire and sword, the rod of God's vengeance." Even thus outspake Miles Standish, the stalwart Captain of Plymouth, muttering deep in his throat, for his voice was husky with anger:

> "'Truly, the only tongue that is understood by a savage
> Must be the tongue of fire that speaks from the mouth of the cannon!'*
> Whereupon answer'd and said the excellent Elder of Plymouth,
> Somewhat amazed and alarm'd at this irreverent language:
> 'Not so thought Saint Paul, nor yet the other Apostles;
> Not from the cannon's mouth were the tongues of fire they spake with.'"

From one of the pilgrim fathers might have come, with consistency, a sterner note—more consonant with the protest of John Foster, gentle of heart though he was—against systematic resort to the milder suasives of love, and disparagement of threats and terrorism. He insisted that the larger proportion of what in the Bible is said of sinners, and addressed to them, "is plainly in the tone of menace and alarm. Strange if it had been otherwise, when a righteous Governor was speaking to a

* Similar is the strain of the good archer, Gilbert Greenleaf, to De Walton, the Governor of Castle Dangerous: "Your honour knows how to deal with [the Scots of the border],—ride them strongly and rein them hard,—you are not like those simple novices who imagine that all is to be done by gentleness, and wish to parade themselves as courteous and generous to those faithless mountaineers, who never, in the course of their lives, knew any tincture either of courteousness or generosity."

Experts in travel, while regretting the something eminently unsatisfactory in relations between Englishmen and Egyptians, assure us that kindness is weakness in native eyes, on the banks of the Nile; that an act of good-nature is the signal for abuse; and that the outward and visible sign by which your Nile crew, for instance, recognize a master, are harshness and sternness: if he push hardness to brutality, he will be the more respected

depraved, rebellious race." And he cites assentingly the testimony of Dr. Watts, who, all mild and amiable as he was, and delighting to dwell on the congenial topics, said deliberately, that "of all the persons to whom his ministry had been efficacious, only one had received the first effectual impressions from the gentle and attractive aspects of religion; all the rest from the awful and alarming ones—the appeals to fear." And this John Foster asserted to be all but universally the manner of the Divine process of conversion. Compare with this the tone of an eloquent and perhaps more conventionally orthodox nonconformist of our day, when discoursing on God's love as the attracting power—"with lovingkindness have I drawn thee;" for by terrifying man "you only keep him from God." "Little is said in this book about penalties, about the fearful apparatus of punishment in the future; much is said about love, about pardon, about salvation for the lost. Punishment does little for men; love is the only conqueror of hearts." Perhaps we might find a sort of middle term for both views, a composition of the two conflicting forces, in what one of our old Anglican divines has to say of the word of God as a spiritual sword, with an irresistible edge entering the heart and affections,—that it is not like the song of one that has a pleasant voice, that only strikes the ear, gratifies the fancy, and courts those affections which it should command; but it comes with such a searching, invincible quickness, such a spiritual keenness, that it shall cut and make its way through the hardest heart, and

and arbitrary tyranny is the surest way to be beloved. Mr. Frederick Eden, who essayed and who wrote *The Nile without a Dragoman*, blamed himself at least as much as the Arab ingrates he had to do with, for "the foolish fancy that gratitude may be found in Arab nature:"—it was confessedly his own weakness—the foolish consideration he sometimes showed them, in spite of dear-bought experience—that had spoiled them so thoroughly. As one of his reviewers said, Had he only treated them like dogs, they would probably have served him better in the time of his necessity.

But there are more trustful and enduring souls who would be for stigmatizing every such apologist for severity, in the style of Varney's apostrophe to Tony Foster,—"Thou sullen, uninventive companion, who knowest no mode of control, save downright brute force."

not find admittance by mere petition, or precarious suasion; for a sword never enters by entreaty.

When Don Carlos, in Schiller, pleads with his unrelenting father in behalf of the revolted Netherlands, whither he would fain be sent, with terms of conciliation, Philip's reply is,

> "Terror alone can tie rebellion's hands:
> Humanity were madness. Thy soft soul
> Is tender, son; they'll tremble at the Duke"

of Alva; whose thorough policy of blood and iron was nevertheless a failure with the Dutch. Philip's ambassador in England, Renard, as astute as his name might betoken him, counselled his royal master as to the likeliest mode of mastering and managing us refractory English. "Above all, there must be no more of this barbarous precipitancy in putting heretics to death. The people must be won from their errors by gentleness and by better instruction. Except in cases of especial scandal, the bishops must not be permitted to irritate them by cruelty." So Maitland advised Leicester, for the hearing of Elizabeth, that with the Scots force would accomplish nothing, whereas by conciliating treaties she might bring all parties to accord, pacify the country, and deserve and win the gratitude of every class. Mr. Froude begins his chapter on the Spanish Treaty (1573-77) with some remarks on Elizabeth's disposition to compromise, and her extreme objection to severity or coercion, which were eminently suited to conciliate defeated enemies; and he goes on to say of her that, whether from policy, or because, like Hamlet, she "lacked gall," she never remembered an injury. She fought with treason, he adds, by being blind to it, and made men loyal in spite of themselves by persistently trusting them.

Masters of the art of education, and head-masters in the public school practice of it, have found success in managing the young by showing confidence in them, and trusting to their implied honour. By a sort of imputed righteousness they have gained their purpose. Dr. Arnold was the great practitioner on this method. He took for granted the boys were honourable; and they in time came to see and to say that it was a shame

to deceive him, or to take advantage of the trust he placed in their word. Instead of suspecting, he confided. "Call a man a thief, and he'll steal;" "Give a dog a bad name, and he'll bite you;" and a commentator on these saws goes on to add, "Tell a child that he is 'a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven,' and he feels, to say the least, civilly disposed towards religion;" whereas to be told that he is under God's wrath and curse, makes his religious associations less acceptable—especially if he has the lesson whipped into him, or has to go to bed without his supper for not learning it by heart and repeating it offhand. William Forsyth showed his acquaintance with human nature, and boys' nature, when he thus dealt with the Cromarty lads who were brought before him charged with stealing green-peas out of a field. If they did it again, he told them, they were safe to be locked up in the Tolbooth for a fortnight; but meanwhile, to keep them honest, he would sow a field of peas himself, to which he would make them all heartily welcome. Accordingly, next season the field was sown, and there could not be a more exposed locality. Such, however, testifies a Cromarty man, Hugh Miller, was the appreciative spirit of the lads, that not one pod of Mr. Forsyth's peas was touched. As with a recorded experience of Charles Lamb's at Christ Hospital, when, the gates being for once left without watchers, the whole body of that great school, with one or two graceless exceptions, kept rigorously within their bounds, by a voluntary self-imprisonment—the exceptions being consigned to infamy and reprobation: "so much natural government have gratitude and the principles of reverence and love." As with the Thicket Street girl Nixy, in an American story, a crisis in whose life occurred when a "real lady" professed readiness to take her at her word, and to believe whatever she deliberately said. "Nixy understood, at least, that she was trusted." And partly from a keen sense of policy, partly from a genuine though crude sense of honour, she from that moment decided, in her own words, to "go it honest" with her benefactress. So again with the thievish negro children in one of Mrs. Stowe's tales, who were cured by

being formally and unconditionally trusted—everything in the house left unlocked, by way of experiment, and no watching allowed. All the dainties were left untouched after that: it was a taste of a new kind of pleasure—the novelty of being trusted. The principle is pretty much the same with that which led Chatham to show confidence in the Highlanders in 1757. As he told the House of Lords, twenty years later: "I remember how I employed the very rebels in the service and defence of their country. They were reclaimed by this means; they fought our battles; they cheerfully bled in defence of those liberties which they had attempted to overthrow but a few years before." So at Naples in 1860, when the Camorristi troubles had come to a head, Liborio Romano, the Minister of Police, determined to imitate Lamartine's experiment of the *Garde Mobile*, and make use of the organization of the Camorra for the defence of the city: it was made to take the place of the police; and the new civic force not only conducted itself well, but with honesty, and maintained the security of life and property in the streets. The principle finds poetical exposition and expression in various pages of Mr. Coventry Patmore's love poems. For instance:

> "The generous credit he accords
> To all the signs of good in her
> Redeems itself; his praiseful words
> The virtues they impute confer."

Long afterwards we come upon this bit of sage counsel from the Dean, to quite the same purpose:

> "Her strength is your esteem; beware
> Of finding fault; her will's unnerved
> By blame; from you 'twould be despair;
> But praise that is not quite deserved
> Will all her noble nature move
> To make your utmost wishes true."

Long before we had had this picture of the Dean's own wife, dead and gone now:

> "Her life, all honour, observed, with awe
> Which cross experience could not mar,
> The fiction of the Christian law
> That all men honourable are;

And so her smile at once conferr'd
High flattery and benign reproof;
And I, a rude boy, strangely stirr'd,
Grew courtly in my own behoof."

Napoleon at St. Helena, discoursing on human weakness of character and principle, and on the best way of dealing with it, and, if possible, of raising and strengthening it, said that at any rate the worst way is to treat it harshly and overwhelm it with contempt. He was for persuading it to account itself better than it really is, if all the good of which it is capable is to be obtained from it. Among soldiers, tell the cowardly they are brave fellows, and you go the way to make them so. And after the same sort, he argued, should men in general be treated, imputing to them the good qualities to which you would train them—*et leur supposer les vertus qu'on veut leur inspirer.*

But to revert, before closing this chapter, to the subject of State policy in adopting gentleness rather than defiant rigour and menace as a rule of action.* One other illustration from history may here be offered. The British ambassador (Lord Bristol) at the court of Madrid under Charles III., wrote home to Mr. Pitt this character of that mild and well-intentioned monarch: "He ever prefers carrying a point by gentle means. . . . Yet with the greatest air of gentleness, he keeps his Ministers and attendants in the utmost awe." In *Philip van Artevelde*, Lestovet urges Burgundy to control by conciliation; assuring him that not only

"His grace of Bourbon, but full many lords
Who bear a part against you in the council,
Would yield upon a gentle provocation,
That stiffen with a rougher."

* A noteworthy experimentalist in both directions was Alexander Pope's namesake and good friend, the minister of Reay, who used to drive his graceless parishioners to church with a stick when he found them engaged on Sundays at outdoor games; but who also used to make all the "rough characters" in his parish elders of the kirk, so that, invested with ecclesiastical dignity and responsibility, they might be shamed out of their misdoings.

To Orlando, rushing in upon the company with his sword drawn, and his style menacing and forbidding, Arden's naturalized Duke addresses the very temperate and successful remonstrance,

> "What would you have? Your gentleness shall force,
> More than your force move us to gentleness."

Blushing, Orlando puts by his sword, and prays them to let gentleness his strong enforcement be. In *Timon of Athens* the senators tell besieging Alcibiades that what he wills, he rather shall enforce it with his smile, than hew to't with his sword. Speaking for her sex at large, though by an equestrian simile, Hermione assures Leontes, in *A Winter's Tale,*

> "You may ride us,
> With one soft kiss, a thousand furlongs, ere
> With spur we heat an acre."

The rough old king in the *Princess* thinks otherwise of the sex: "Look you, sir! Man is the hunter: woman is his game. . . . They love us for it, and we ride them down." The king's son had not spoken to his father's mind when he spoke out his preference for a policy of conciliation: "More soluble is this knot by gentleness than war. I want her love,"—the Princess's, to wit; and his sire thought he went the wrong way to get what he wanted. Take as another type of the rougher sort, one of the brothers in Crabbe's Family of Love:

> "For lenient measures James had no regard—
> 'Hardship,' he said, 'must work upon the hard:
> Labour and chains such desperate men require;
> To soften iron you must use the fire.'"

The education of a poor, perplexed, and recalcitrant boy in the same tale is pertinent to our subject:

> "Thus fed and beaten, Tom was taught to pray
> For his true friends: 'But who,' said he, 'are they?'
> By nature kind, when kindly used, the boy
> Hail'd the strange good with tears of love and joy;
> But, roughly used, he felt his bosom burn
> With wrath he dared not on his uncles turn:
> So with indignant spirit, still and strong,
> He nursed the vengeance, and endured the wrong."

XV.

ZIMRI'S END.

1 KINGS xvi. 18.

HAD Zimri peace, who slew his master?* Jezebel from the window cried that question to Jehu. But Jehu was not the man to be daunted by such questioning. Not long afterwards we hear him saying to all the people, "Behold, I conspired against my master, and slew him,"—and a good thing too, he seems to say, and to wish them to join him in saying. He hoped for another sort of career than that of Zimri, and another sort of ending to it. Zimri was servant and captain under Elah, king of Israel, and conspired against him as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of his steward. "And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him," and reigned in his stead. And all the house of Elah he destroyed. But there was to be nothing of prosperity or peace for Zimri. For all Israel made Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp; and Omri went up, and all Israel with him, and besieged Tirzah. "And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died."

During the first period of the Civil Wars of Rome, Judacilius, finding that he could hold Asculum no longer, raised a funeral

* Spenser was sounding the depths of early English history when he told how

> "'gan Carausius tyrannize anew,—
> But him Allectus treacherously slew,
> And tooke on him the robe of emperoure;
> Nath'lesse the same enjoyed but short happy howre,
> For Asclepiodate him overcame,
> And left inglorious on the vanquisht playne,
> Without or robe or rag to hide his shame;
> And afterwards he in his stead did raigne."

Had Zimri peace? had Allectus? To Don Carlos in Schiller is pointed the like moral when Lerma warns him, "Undertake no bloody deed against your father, Prince!"

> "Philip compell'd his father to yield up
> The throne to him; and this same Philip now
> Trembles at his own son.'

pile in sight of his banqueting-hall, and after a sumptuous entertainment given to his friends, drained a poisoned cup of wine to its dregs, ascended the pile, and bade his guests set fire to it. At the close of the siege of Masada, we find Eleazar, worthy descendant of Judas the Galilean, proposing to his followers to set the city on fire, and perish together, with their wives unviolated, their children free from captivity, on that noble funeral pile. And stirring is the story of their resolute fulfilment of the design—the multitude vying with each other in eagerness to begin on the instant the work of self-devotion, and loyally carrying out the internecine plan, until there was a last man left, who, after he had carefully searched whether there was any more work for him to do, seized a lighted brand, set fire to the palace, and then, with unflinching hand, drove the sword to his own heart.

At the siege by Cimon of Eion in Thrace, garrisoned under a Persian noble, the commandant collected his treasure on a pile of wood, which mounting with his slaves, women, and children, he set fire to it—a mode of suicide then accepted as orthodox in the East. Plutarch gives in detail, in his Life of Alexander, the characteristic circumstances of the death of Callanus—how he caused his funeral pile to be erected, approached it on horseback, poured the libations on himself, and taking leave of the Macedonians, desired them to spend the day in jollity and drinking with the king—then stretched himself on the pile, and welcomed the flames.

In Trajan's time, the final defeat of the Dacians was effected when the hill fort in which resided their chieftain, Decebalus, was stormed after a desperate resistance: Decebalus fell on his own sword amidst the ruins of his capital, and the nobles of the conquered land followed the example of their sovereign, first firing their houses, and then handing round the poisoned bowl.*

* "Such is the scene represented on the column at Rome, which still records in monumental sculpture the chief features of this memorable struggle."—Merivale, *History of the Romans under the Empire*, vol. vii., p. 239.

In the days of the massacre of the Jews in York, a number of the besieged, at the bidding of their Rabbi, collected their most precious effects, burned all that was combustible, and buried the rest; then set fire to the castle in many places, cut the throats of their wives and children, and, that done, their own.

Whatever the century in which such acts occur, it may seem to be so far safe from Mr. Carlyle's derision or disdain of the eighteenth, which to him has nothing grand in it, except what he calls that grand universal Suicide, named French Revolution, by which it terminated "its otherwise worthless existence with at least one worthy act;—setting fire to its old home and self; and going up in flames and volcanic explosions, in a truly memorable and important manner."

But to go on with our historical illustrations and parallels. At the battle of Chalons, Attila had provided for the worst, by collecting into a funeral pile the saddles and rich furniture of the cavalry—that magnanimous barbarian having resolved, if his entrenchments should be forced, to rush headlong into the flames, and so deprive his enemies of the glory which they might have acquired by the death or captivity of Attila. Both the friends and the enemies of Chosroes were persuaded of his intention to bury himself under the ruins of his city and palace of Dastagerd. But he disappointed them all, and proved how much there was of a difference in him, not however for the better, from

"ces rois d'Assyrie
Qui traînaient au tombeau femmes, enfans, patrie,
Et ne savaient pas mourir seuls :
Qui jetaient au bûcher, avant que d'y descendre,
Famille, amis, coursiers, trésors reduits en cendre,
Espoir ou souvenirs de leurs jours plus heureux,
Et livrant leur empire et leurs dieux à la flamme,
Auraient voulu qu'aussi l'univers n'eût qu'une ame
Pour que tout mourût avec eux!" *

* In Mr. Wilkie Collins's *Antonina, or, The Fall of Rome*, Vetranio promises himself and his guests that the last banquet given in Rome, ere the city is annihilated, shall be his. The Goths and the famine shall have

The Veiled Prophet, Hakem Ben Haschem, besieged in Nekhscheb, and reduced to despair, is said to have poisoned his seïdes at a banquet, and "exploded" himself and his belongings in a cellar filled with combustibles—from which general explosion his horses, and one concubine out of the many, managed somehow to escape. In an imaginary conversation between Metellus and Marius, Landor pictures with telling suggestiveness the voluntary holocaust of the Numantians—the assembled inhabitants, about the altar? no, upon it: "It blazed under them and over them and round about them." The catastrophe of the Siege of Corinth is told in Byron's most vigorous manner,—Minotti's last and stern resource,—and old Minotti's was the hand to fire the train. 'Tis fired:

> "Spire, vaults, the shrine, the spoil, the slain,
> The turban'd victors, the Christian band,
> All that living or dead remain,
> Hurl'd on high with the shiver'd fane,
> In one wild roar expired!"

With equal resolve perished the Dutch Vice-Admiral Klaaszoon, in 1606, after drifting about for two whole days in his crippled ship. With his surviving officers and men he knelt upon the deck, and prayed a last prayer; with his own hand he then lighted the powder magazine, and the ship was blown into the air.

In the Guadaloupe revolt of 1801, Delgrasse blew himself up, with three hundred of his followers, rather than surrender to the enemy. In 1808, the Grand Vizier Bairakdar, defeated by the Janissaries, himself set fire to a powder magazine,

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no part in his death. Pleasure shall preside at his last moments, as over his whole previous life. "I will die like Sardanapalus, with my loves and my treasures around me; and the last of my guests who remains proof against our festivity, shall set fire to my palace, as the kingly Assyrian set fire to his." He makes his last oration as the host of the Banquet of Famine, and demands who would sink ignobly beneath the slow superiority of famine, or perish under the quickly-glancing steel of the barbarian conqueror's sword, when such a death is offered to the choice—when wine flows bright, to drown sensation in oblivion, and a palace and its treasures furnish alike the scene of the revel and the radiant funeral pile.

which he had provided as a last resource against his enemies, and, with his whole household, was blown into the air. Ali Pacha, in 1822, found or meant to find his last resource in a tower three storeys in height—the uppermost one housing himself, his harem, and fifty armed followers—the second, his treasures—and the lowest forming a powder magazine, at the door of which a trusty guardian was stationed, with a lighted match in his hand. The Pacha, if it came to the worst, would perish *en roi*:

> " Et s'il me faut tomber, eh bien ! tombant en roi,*
> Que toute ma maison s'engloutisse avec moi ! "

A salient contrast we see between the great Mahmoud who first styled himself Sultan, and the voluptuary Sardanapalus, in the recorded close of their respective lives, so far as the treatment of their treasures is concerned;—Mahmoud ordering all his costliest apparel, and his vessels of silver and gold, and his pearls and precious stones, the inestimable spoils of the East, to be displayed before him: to what end? that he might weep like a child at having to die and leave them;—Sardanapalus collecting his, to be consumed with himself and his household, in one fiery mass: he would have one banquet more, and there an end: the banquet over, he would rejoin his fathers, with what was left of their squandered treasures:

> " And the light of this
> Most royal of funereal pyres shall be

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* So we read of Arbaces the Egyptian: "He resolved to crowd, monarch-like, on his funeral pyre, all that his soul held most dear."—*Last Days of Pompeii*, bk. ii., ch. viii. The penultimate chapter of *John Marchmont's Legacy* is entitled "A Modern Sardanapalus;" and it tells how Paul Marchmont, having systematically lived for a year past like that Assyrian prince, resolves to die like him; and heaps together accordingly all his treasures of art. "I will die like Sardanapalus. The King Arbaces shall never rest in the palace I have beautified.

> " Now order here
> Fagots, pine-nuts, and wither'd leaves, and such
> Things as catch fire with one sole spark . . .
> Bring cedar, too, and precious drugs and spices,
> And mighty planks, to nourish a tall pile;
> Bring frankincense and myrrh too, for t
> For a great sacrifice I build the pyre."

Not a mere pillar form'd of cloud and flame,
A beacon in the horizon for a day,
And then a mount of ashes, but a light
To lesson ages, rebel nations, and
Voluptuous princes . . . . .
A problem few dare imitate, and none
Despise—but, it may be, avoid the life
Which led to such a consummation."

XVI.

AHAB'S APPETITE; WHY LOST, AND HOW RECOVERED.

1 KINGS xxi. 4—7.

KING Ahab set his heart upon Naboth's vineyard, to have and to hold. He had taken a fancy to it, for a garden of herbs, because it was near his house. And the royal fancy must be indulged, or some one would suffer,—perhaps more than one, first and last. Ahab was himself the first to suffer. His fancy was made known to Naboth the Jezreelite, and that proprietor declined to part with his possession; even the offer of a better vineyard in place of it, if he preferred that to hard cash, failed to induce compliance on Naboth's part; for the Jezreelite cherished his vineyard as the heritage of his house, and would come to no terms with the king for parting with a plot of ground he held so dear. It was a matter of religion with him to keep in the family what had been theirs for generations past. He would think foul scorn of himself to traffic in a matter of sentiment, a point of honour. All that was high-minded and honourable within him revolted at the bare notion. "The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee." And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken unto him; and he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. And Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, "Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?" And he told her

what he had asked of Naboth, and what the bluff answer had been. *Cur quis non prandeat, hoc est.* He had no stomach for victuals, but went sulky to bed. The affront rankled in the moody monarch. His appetite was so great for what was not his own, that it cost him his appetite for what was. Jezebel was the man of the family,* and she treated her lord and

* And as such she would have no sympathy with the approved style of the sex, in modern verse and fiction at least, in marvelling at male powers of appetite under adverse conditions. Miss Marjoribanks ordered tea for her father, the Doctor, instead of dinner, for which she imagined he could have little appetite, on the day of their common loss; but the Doctor rang the bell violently when he saw the tea-service, and desired its instant removal. and required to be told at once when dinner was ready. "On the whole, master stood lessened in the eyes of all the household by his ability to eat his dinner, and his resentment at having his habitudes disturbed. 'Them men would eat and drink if we was all in our graves,' said the indignant cook, who indeed had a real grievance." Mrs. Jerningham jots down in her journal the fact that whereas herself too excited far to eat, her

"John would eat or well or ill (Men never seem to turn from meat,
Their dinner never comes amiss)."

Gifted Hopkins's mother, fearing he might pine away in his disappointment, solicited his appetite with her choicest appliances—but his manner of disposing of these satisfied her there was no immediate cause of alarm. "Il dit qu'il ne veut pas manger" is the answer le Père Grandet gets from his womankind when he asks at dinner-time after the nephew suddenly fatherless. "Bah! il ne pleurera pas toujours," rejoins the old hunks: "La faim chasse le loup hors du bois." The similarly bereaved sisters, in Cooper, wept instead of eating, while the Deerslayer "gave proof of possessing one material requisite of a good soldier—that of preserving his appetite in the midst of the most alarming and embarrassing circumstances." So again one of Marryat's naval heroes, under a corresponding loss, feels a positive interest in the clock's notification of dinner-time. "That he could eat his dinner was certain, and he scorned to pretend to feel what he did not." "Goldery, tu penserais à manger le jour de la mort de ton père!" exclaims Goldery's master, and the man is not a whit ashamed to avow it. People must eat and drink even when the grim monarch is in the house, as Mr. Trollope observes—and it is held to be a relief when they first dare to do so with some attention to the comforts which are ordinarily so important to them. "For themselves alone women seldom care to exercise much trouble in this direction; but the presence of a man at once excuses and renders necessary the ceremony of a dinner." "Come, come, my lad," urges the good-natured baronet in *Tylney Hall*, as he puts a cold pigeon on

master, in his weaker than weak womanish whinings, as a child—a child that cries for the moon. He should have his fancy. The toy should be his, and at once; so let him take his food again as usual. Nay, let him make an extra meal of it—a festive one, sparing not the good wine. *She* would make it all right for him. Let him leave it to her. *She* would give him the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

Ahab, poor creature, had given up as soon as the sturdy Jezreelite had said him nay. The almost vehement scouting of his proposal by Naboth, had made the king think it a hopeless case. Well might one with Jezebel's instincts of domination utter the contemptuous query, "Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel?" He might reign, but that was not governing; and Jezebel had no predilection for that modern figment of constitutional kingship, where his majesty *regne mais ne gouverne pas.* Well; she would give him the vineyard he thought to have had for the asking. His it should be, without more ado. Never mind as to the means; that was her business. He had found Naboth recalcitrant, refractory, uncompromising; and perhaps he doubted his wife's succeeding much better,

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his nephew's plate at breakfast; "supposing your poor father to be looking down from above at this moment, he wouldn't object to our taking our meals." There is murder in this story, and a later chapter tells how the Justice returned to the Hall with his hunger much sharpened by the examination of a batch of suspected persons,—a process which took off the edge of their stomachs in the same proportion, so that they went back to durance with little more appetite than Wordsworth's cattle, forty of which ate like only one.

When Queen Mary was captured, after the battle of Carberry Hill, a lodging had been prepared for her at the Provost's house, to which she was forced along past Kirk o' Field, which still lay charred in ruins; and Mr. Froude relates that "supper was on the table; but she was one of those high-blooded people, whose bodies do not ask attention when the soul is sick." Not that she shared the weakness of Archie Lovell's stepmother, in Mrs. Edwardes' fiction, whom we discover in the act, when surprised by a visitor, of hurriedly putting out of sight the remains of an excellent high tea—cold chicken bones, salad reliques, remnants of cake, butter, and marmalade—for "nothing exasperated Bettina so much as the imputation of being able to swallow food when she was alone or in adversity." When trouble

woman of business though she was. Methinks the lady doth protest too much? Nay, but she'll keep her word.

If a man of an unbounded stomach in one sense, *alieni appetens*, this poor creature of a king had a crazy enough stomach in another sense—one easily deranged, one quickly put out of working order; cross his whim, and the tone of his stomach was gone. Whatever he took to heart, it seems, told on his stomach. To be vexed was to lose his appetite. Like the great English Cardinal that Shakspeare drew, King Ahab seems to have been "of an unbounded stomach;" but cross him in his cravings, gainsay his greed, and straightway you sent him moping to bed, with no stomach at all.

How he recovered it, was by severely simple means; for Jezebel set to work at once, and by trumping up a malicious and foundationless charge against Naboth, made a summary end of him, and so made over his coveted vineyard to the king. When did ever unscrupulous might fail of a pretext, plausible or otherwise, against unprotected right? It is the old story of the wolf and the lamb; "la raison du plus fort est toujours la meilleure"—and short work the wolf makes of the lamb, "sans autre forme de procès." Another of La Fontaine's fables contains a line still more applicable to poor incriminated Naboth: *On résolut sa mort, fût-il coupable ou non.* As

of the heart overtakes Patty Maynard, in Miss Thackeray's new reading or adaptation of *Little Red Riding Hood*, her mother silently gives her at tea-time her cupful of tea, and cuts her bread-and-butter, and puts liberal helpings of jam and fruit before her; and Patty eats her bread and jam in sorrowful silence. There is no great harm done, Mrs. Maynard thinks, as she keeps her daughter supplied; she has herself been so disturbed and overcome by the stormy events of the day that she cannot eat. "She made the mistake that many elders have made before her: they mistake physical for mental disturbance; poor well-hacked bodies that have been jolted, shaken, patched and mended, and strained in half a dozen places, are easily affected by the passing jars of the moment: they suffer and lose their appetite, and get aches directly which take away much sense of the mental inquietude which brought the disturbance about." But young healthy creatures like Patty, her author argues, can eat a good dinner and feel a keen pang and hide it, and chatter on scarcely conscious of their heroism.

Bassanio says, "It must appear that malice bears down truth." Accepted as an adage is the saying of Syrus, *Malefacere qui vult, nusquam non causam inveniet.* A Spanish proverb suggests to him that has a mind to quarrel with his wife, to bid her bring water to him in the sunshine—a very fair quarrel may be picked up about the motes in the clearest water. Charles de Bernard nothing exaggerates when he says, "Les duellistes qui ont envie d'une querelle savent fort bien se faire coudoyer ou marcher sur le pied. Un prétexte! tu n'as donc jamais lu la fable du loup et de l'agneau?" Wretch! cried the reign of terrorists to the mild and benign Archbishop of Arles, "you shed the blood of the patriots." "I never injured a human being," replied the prelate. "Then I will despatch you," was the very practical logic of a rough-and-ready general practitioner. Buffon *fils* explained to the Revolutionary Tribunal that he could not have conspired as they alleged—he could prove an *alibi.* "No matter," said Fouquier-Tinville, "you have conspired *some*where"—and the guillotine was the penalty. *Mais que ne prouve-t-on pas quand on est le plus fort?* is a line by Berchoux that Father Prout admired so much, one is surprised he could refrain from translating it. Victor Hugo tells us,

> "J'ai vu le loup mangeant l'agneau, dire: Il m'a nui!"

and another pregnant line of his may be applied:

> "Le fer dit que le sang qui jaillit, se révolte."

In one of his Odes, Dryden with too much reason affirms that "conquerors will never want pretence, when armed, to justify the offence." Nor is a couplet in his *Absalom and Achitophel* altogether wide of the mark:

> "And when to sin our biassed nature leans,
> The careful devil is still at hand with means,"

such as false witnesses to incriminate Naboth, and stalwart stone-throwers to stone him to death. An American historian significantly remarks of the early accusations against the Indians, that informers abounded where tale-bearing met with

countenance and reward; and the sword was readily unsheathed when its success was certain, and it carved out empire. In his *Histoire de Languedoc*, Vaissette says of the treaty of cession to the King of France, that it is clear the chief instigators of the war against Raymond thought very much less about his catholicity, than about the readiest mode of ousting him from his dominions and securing the spoil. Cortez solemnly protested that his prime motive in the expedition he directed was a desire to wean the natives from their idolatry. For the seizure of the hospitable monarch, Montezuma, a plausible pretext was found—the most barefaced action, as Mr. Prescott observes, seeking to veil itself under some show of decency. So again in the history of Peru: religion furnished a plausible pretext for incessant aggression, and disguised the lust of conquest in the Incas, probably from their own eyes. The Incas, in their turn, were similarly treated by Pizarro, whose twelve charges against them, drawn up in the form of interrogatories, "are so absurd, that they might well provoke a smile, did they not excite a deeper feeling:"—the mere specification of the articles must have sufficed to show that the doom of the Incas was already sealed.

The historian last quoted remarks elsewhere of the treaty of Cambray, that, in that corrupt age, the more flagitious the meditated enterprise, the deeper was the veil of hypocrisy thrown over it. Ferdinand's conquest of Navarre was a "bold unblushing usurpation rendered more odious by the mask of religious hypocrisy." Mr. Carlyle's second act or epoch of the Thirty Years' War is concerned with the Kaiser's zeal in getting Germany ready for conversion to orthodoxy: "All Europe shall become Papist again, by the help of God *and* the devil." So the Kaiser, on hardly any pretext, seized Mecklenburg; and that done, seized Pommern, stirring up Max of Bavaria to make some idle pretence to it. Bolingbroke dismisses as "ridiculous" the various pretences that France took for attacking the states of the Low Countries: "they imposed on no one; and the true object of Louis the Fourteenth was manifest to all." The Grand Monarque seized into his own

hands, under the notion of dependencies and the pretence of reunions, whatever towns or districts of country tempted his ambition, or suited his conveniency. "Pretexts for a quarrel were easily found," writes Macaulay, in his story of the march of Surajah Dowlah with a great army against Fort William. But pretexts were equally abundant on the other side; and in the case of Clive's successor, a pretext was the last thing that Warren Hastings was ever likely to want. Homer Wilbur, in his Biglow annotations, asks, "When hath Satan been to seek for attorneys?" in reference to those of his compatriots who have maintained that their inroad upon Mexico was undertaken, not so much for the avenging of any national quarrel, as for the spreading of free institutions and of Protestantism. Very old indeed is the divinity that inspired the words metrically done to order by Spenser:

> "For never wight so evill did or thought,
> But would some rightfull cause pretend, though rightly nought."

But it is more than time to retrace these wandering steps of ours to their starting-point in Naboth's vineyard.

Readers of Carlyle's History of Frederick the Great will not have forgotten the Potsdam miller, who had in him the sturdy spirit of Naboth, happily free as the Prussian king was from Ahab's repining wretchedness. It was while Sans-Souci was getting built that the celebrated affair occurred of this Potsdam miller, and his obstinate windmill, which still grinds on its knoll in those localities, and would not, at any price, become part of the King's Gardens. "Not at any price?" said the King's agent: "cannot the King take it from you for nothing, if he chose?" "Haven't we the Kammergericht at Berlin!" answered the miller. To Frederick's great delight, his English historian accords; for the miller's stout assertion of his rights, and hearty reliance on the means of enforcing them, may have rendered the mill itself a kind of ornament to the royal Gardens from that time forth.*

* One of Sir Walter's best historical fictions represents our King James the First urging on Lord Huntinglen the expediency of young Nigel's assent

Naboth's point-blank rejection of the king's advances had sent Ahab home savagely in the sulks. To bed he went straightway, supperless and spiritless. In bed he brooded on his bitter mortification. The Jezreelite had miserably humbled the miserable man, and for the time there was neither relish nor nutriment in food left to him. How he hated that dogged stickler for private rights—how gladly would he be revenged upon him, if only he knew how!

> "Had all his hairs been lives, my great revenge
> Had stomach for them all,"—

the more so because stomach for daily food was lost by the Jezreelite's refusal. But Jezebel had made all things smooth again; Ahab was avenged; the coveted vineyard was his, with none to gainsay, for the one gainsayer was disposed of, stoned to death; and meet and right it now was that the king should comply with her behests, "Arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry;" for the royal whim was gratified to the full. It was meet that he should make merry and be glad; for his dead interest in life was alive again, and his lost appetite was found.

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to the alienation of his family estate: "Let the land gang, man, let the land gang; Steenie [Buckingham] has the promise of it from our Scottish Chancellor—it is the best hunting-ground in Scotland—and Baby Charles and Steenie want to kill a buck there this next year—they maun hae the land—they maun hae the land; and our debt shall be paid to the young man [Nigel], plack and bawbee, and . . . we'll stuff his stomach with English land, which is worth twice as much, ay, ten times as much, as these accursed hills and heughs, and mosses and muirs, that he is sae keen after." But the stout old Scottish lord composedly replies: "An it please your Majesty [so learned in divinity], there was an answer yielded by Naboth when Ahab coveted his vineyard—'The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee!'"—*Fortunes of Nigel*, chap. ix.

XVII.

SEAWARD GAZING FROM MOUNT CARMEL.

1 KINGS xviii. 43—46.

GREAT famine was throughout all the land, in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months. When would there be rain? The ear of the prophet was quick to catch the sound, at last, of abundance of rain. So "Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, Go up, now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand."* It was enough. The seaward gazer had seen in that little cloud the assured end of the famine. Let the king prepare his chariot, and start for Jezreel, that the rain stop him not. For meanwhile the heaven blackens with clouds and wind, and there is anon a downpour of deluging rain.

No picture in holy writ of wistful watcher, with strained gaze fixed on vacancy, is more picturesque than this of the seer and his servant on the heights of Carmel. But there are various pictures of such gazing, for one purpose or another, and all of them more or less striking; whether it be the mother of Sisera looking out at a window,† and crying through the

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* Scott has an imposing simile that may be called to mind:

> "As that sea-cloud, in size like human hand
> When first from Carmel by the Tishbite seen,
> Came slowly overshadowing Israel's land,
> Awhile, perchance, bedeck'd with colours sheen,
> While yet the sunbeams on its skirts had been,
> Lining with purple and with gold its shroud,
> Till darker folds obscured the blue serene,
> And blotted heaven with one broad sable cloud—
> Then sheeted rain burst down, and whirlwinds howl'd aloud."
>
> *The Vision of Don Roderick*, xxxvi.

† As with Madame, or Milady, in what Father Prout calls "the immortal air of Malbrouck," where

> "Madame à sa tour monte,
> Le plus haut qu'on peut monter," etc.

lattice, "Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariot?" or Eli, infirm and aged, sitting upon a seat by the wayside, watching—for his heart trembled for the ark of God; or King David's watchman gone up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifting up his eyes, and looking, and behold, a man running alone—whose running is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok—a good man, that cometh, it is to be hoped, with good tidings; or again, King Joram's watchman, that stood on the tower in Jezreel, and spied a company advancing, and marked how the king's messenger came to them, but came not back again, —and who reported presently that the driving was like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for this charioteer was driving furiously. Nor be overlooked that strained gaze of another watchman in Isaiah's burden of the desert of the sea—who beheld a chariot with two horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels; and who hearkened diligently with much heed; and who cried, "A lion! My lord, I stand continually upon the watch-tower, in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights;"—and to whom the iterated cry came, echoed through all time, and of late made musically vocal by an inspired master, "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?"

Seaward gazing, in hope of sighting some token of deliverance or relief: be the standpoint Mount Carmel or whatever other, be it in history or in fiction, the attitude is always more or less impressive, sometimes sublime. Memorable in English verse is the picture of Enoch Arden on his desert island,

"As down the shore he ranged, or all day long
Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,
A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a sail:*
No sail from day to day, but every day

* Alliteration is not a weak point with Mr. Tennyson; but, as in this line, and in the last one of the passage above quoted, he can and does make effective use of it when he pleases. Not so often he pleases as

The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts
Among the palms and ferns and precipices;
The blaze upon the waters to the east;
The blaze upon his island overhead;

Coleridge did in an elder generation; nothing like so often as Robert Lord Lytton does in a younger one. *In Memoriam* offers us such incidental examples as, "On the *b*ald street *b*reaks the *b*lank day;" the stanza immediately following which is melodiously liquescent with l's:

> "A happy *l*over who has come
> To *l*ook on her that *l*oves him well,
> Who *l*ights and rings the gateway bell,
> And *l*earns her gone and far from home," etc.

Farther on we have a delirious man "Whose *f*ancy *f*uses old and new, And *f*lashes into *f*alse and true." And again, later, the seamew that dives in "*g*reening *g*leam," and birds that "*b*uild and *b*rood; that *l*ive their *l*ives From *l*and to *l*and," and the poet's regret that, violet-like, "*b*uds and *b*lossoms," in the same stanza. Having named Coleridge, we may refer to such lines as (in the *Kubla Khan*) "Five miles meandering with a mazy motion,"—or these from a sibilant stanza, "Soft his speech, and soft his sigh; But no sound like simple truth,"—or this, from a fragment on Moles, "Nature's mute monks, live mandrakes of the ground." It is more dangerous to have named the second Lord Lytton, for, once begin quoting from him instances of alliteration, and where would a full-stop come? But if the reader care to see the manner of a few of them, here are some random specimens from the *Chronicles and Characters* (the title itself alliterative): "*C*ramp'd in *c*old *c*lasp of *c*lay-born Circumstance;" "If he *s*miles, a *s*warm of gilded *s*laves *S*miles also, *g*rateful for the *g*race that saves Their *f*ortunes one day longer: if he *f*rowns, *S*pears *s*parkle on the walls of frighten'd towers," etc.

> "Him all these immense means to make him glad,
> Misused immensely, make immensely sad . . .
> How things desired, and had, desire destroy!
> How hard it is, enjoyment to enjoy!"

Then we come upon "Music's strenuous stream Of pining sounds makes passionatest pain"—"A greater than their greatest in that great Grey-headed, blind, old man, who sits sedate And serious"—and doomed roofs that blaze in many a globèd fold

> "Of *s*plendour, *s*et with *s*ilver *s*tuds and discs:
> And *s*ombre *c*ypress *s*tripe with blackest shade
> *S*ea-terraces, by *S*ummer overlaid."

Such lines again as "Stript, singed him, stabb'd him, stampt upon him, smote His cheek, and spat upon it, slit his throat, Crusht his big brow, and cleft his crown;"—"Her fervid foot with fiery purpose shod (Forged by strong Faith) the formidable field Of frenzied Opposition firmly trod;"

> The blaze upon the waters to the west;
> Then the great stars that globed themselves in Heaven,
> The hollower-bellowing ocean, and again
> The scarlet shafts of sunrise—but no sail."*

Old-fashioned lovers of Cowper may recall his description of the "gentle savage," Omai, straying on the beach, and duly every morn climbing the mountain top, or with eager eye exploring far and wide the watery waste for sight of ship from England. "Every speck seen in the far horizon, turns thee pale with conflict of contending hopes and fears." Or Mr. Tennyson himself will ply us with another picture:

> "Now thrice that morning Guinevere had climb'd
> The giant tower, from whose high crest, they say,
> Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,
> And white sails flying on the yellow sea," etc.

—"Heroism, and Hope, and Hate, Hunger, Horror;" "Stormy starvelings, smutcht and soil'd;" "Whose endeavour undoes our deedless doings;" "The cold clung to her, creeping up the creepy stream;" "In this tense tangle of tormented souls," etc. Nor does the noble poet seem less inclined to dally with this "artful aid," as time matures his powers and ripens his taste. Here follow a few examples from the *Fables in Song*. A lion "rose, and round him roll'd a regnant eye." The cry of the cock "set smarting in his sensitive strong soul a secret nerve." The "gregarious goat and ruminating ram." "Reynard's romantic and a radical."

> "Princes for provinces, and pads for purses.
> Creatures of crocodile-creating clay."

Liquids are predominant in lines about the "rippled liquid in her lone low reedy creeks," and "the liveried lackeys of Light." Then we have the "reed-fenced rivage damp" and the "filth of the fenny swamp." To swan is offered by swine his "fulsome friendship filthy and free, and a swan is shamed by a swinish offer." A workman we see, ever working, waxing old, and "wearily wending that way thro' the world whereunto is no ending." "A shower of stormy sleet thro' shroud and spars shriek'd," 'mid a "trouble of tiller and tackle."—But this footnote is stepping out beyond all measure. The note-maker's own transgressions in alliterative prosing, must be more than sufficiently known to every note-taker, and must have tried some good tempers, in their time.

* Memorable too in French prose is the story of Gilliat, in *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*, as we see him climbing upon the wreck, grasping the knotted rope, and mounting the Great Dourre; but not a sail was in sight around the horizon, not a boat's lantern: the wide expanse, as far as eye could reach, was a desert.

Nothing, it has been said, can be more grand and impressive than the opening of the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus, with the solitary watchman on the tower, who for ten long years has watched nightly for the beacon fires that are to announce the fall of Ilion, and who now beholds them blaze at last.

Gibbon described with animation, and almost with sympathy, the pastoral diligence of Bishop Anianus, at the siege of Orleans by Attila and the Huns, in exhausting every art of religious policy to support the courage of the besieged, till the arrival of the expected succour; and how that "bishop of primitive sanctity and consummate prudence," anxiously counting the days and hours, despatched a trusty messenger to observe, from the rampart, the face of the distant country. Twice that messenger returned, without any intelligence that could inspire hope or comfort; but in his third report—are we not put in mind of the seaward gazing from Mount Carmel?—he "mentioned a small cloud, which he had faintly descried at the extremity of the horizon. 'It is the aid of God!' exclaimed the bishop, in a tone of pious confidence; and the whole multitude repeated after him, 'It is the aid of God!'" The remote object, on which every eye was fixed, became each moment larger and more distinct; the Roman and Gothic banners were gradually perceived; and a favourable wind blowing aside the dust, discovered, in deep array, the impatient squadrons of Ætius and Theodoric, who pressed forward to the relief of Orleans. Another available description in Gibbon is that of the relief brought at sunset to Abdallah and his five hundred, when encompassed and overwhelmed at the "fair of Abyla" (A.D. 634): "About the hour of sunset, when their weapons dropped from their hands, when they panted on the verge of eternity, they discovered an approaching cloud of dust; they heard the welcome sound of the *teebir* [so the Arabs call their shout of onset], and they soon perceived the standard of Caled, who flew to their relief with the utmost speed of his cavalry." We recall the picture in Tasso, done into English by old Fairfax, of the wary watchman that "looked over,

From tops of Sion's towers, the hills and dales,
And saw the dust the fields and pasture cover,
As when the thick mists rise from moory vales:
At last the sun-bright shields he 'gan discover,
And glist'ring helms, for violence none that fails;
The metal shone like lightning bright in skies,
And man and horse amid the dust descries.
Then loud he cries, Oh, what a dust* ariseth!
Oh, how it shines with shields and targets clear!"

At the siege of Neuss, during the wars between Charles of Burgundy and the Swiss, that brave little town held out till famine set in, when a procession was made in honour of the Virgin, in the midst of which there fell among the starving citizens a ball with written words on it of promised deliverance. They looked from the tops of their walls, and soon had reason to return thanks to God: the innumerable banners of the empire were already fluttering in the horizon.

The chronicles of the Conquest of Granada show us Queen

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* Will it be casting dust in the reader's eyes to make this dust a reminder of that other dust commemorated in Mr. F. W. Bayley's metrical version of *Blue Beard*?

"Sister Anne saw at once, time was not to be lost,
So on to the castle her body she toss'd;
On to the battlement nearest the sky.
And she clapp'd the telescope close to her eye,
And she kept looking out while her sister downstairs
Was momently crying . . . .
'Sister Anne, sister Anne, pray what do you see?'
'See! not the ghost of a soul!' said she.
'Sister Anne, on what do your eyes now fall?'
'Alas! dear sister, on nothing at all!'
'Sister Anne, is nobody coming, my dear?'
'You've exactly guess'd it—there's nobody here.
* * * * *
'Tell me, oh, tell me, does no one approach,
No one on horseback, and no one by coach,
No one by garden, no one by wall?'
'In so much plain English—no one at all.'
'Sister Anne, sister Anne, see something you must.'
'Yes . . . now
You're right, I vow!
I *do* see something—I *do* see—a *dust!*'
'What is it kicking that dust up afar?'
'It's a great flock of sheep, and they're all crying [a cockney rhyme] baa!
They're bleating it loud, and bleating it fast;'—
'*Then*, thank heaven, *my brothers are coming at last!*'"

Isabella at Vaena, in anxious suspense as to the result of the expedition, on the castle heights, looking towards the road that winds through the mountains from Moclin, and regarding the watch-towers that crowned the neighbouring heights, in hope of favourable signals. Elsewhere we see Joan of Naples on the tower top, watching that furious contest which should decide her fate,—following with her eyes the cloud of dust which rose from her husband's horse, through the thickest of the fight. The lot of many ladies, royal and of low degree, from Sisera's mother downwards, in time and station, is typified in a stanza of the grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spens:

> "O lang, lang, may the ladies sit,
> Wi' their fans in their hand,
> Before they see Sir Patrick Spens
> Come sailing to the strand!"

Admissible too among our medley of instances are those of Columbus and his crew intently watching for the first sight of land: every seaman so eagerly on the look-out—mounting to the masthead, or climbing about the rigging, straining their eyes in the direction pointed out. Again and again their cloud-built hopes faded away, and the fancied land melted into thin air. One evening, as the light is waning, we see Columbus himself take his station on the top of the castle or cabin on the high poop of his vessel, ranging his eye along the dusky horizon, and maintaining an intense and unremitting watch. About ten o'clock, he thought he could descry a light glimmering at a great distance; nor was he deluded this time: he saw it, and was glad. Later voyages afford repetitions in plenty of the like strained gaze, but hardly one so intense in interest as this one, of the discovered light—*not* a light that never was on sea or land, though it might fitly be called a consecration of the poet's dream.

The distresses of the voyagers, in Pizarro's first expedition to the south, are prominent in the history of the Conquest of Peru —when day after day, week after week, passed away without tidings of the vessel that was to bring relief to the wanderers: in vain did they strain their eyes over the distant waters to

catch a glimpse of their coming friends : not a speck was to be seen in the blue distance, where the canoe of the savage dared not venture, and the sail of the white man was not yet spread. Gonzalo Pizarro's expedition, some sixteen years later, when Orellana sailed down the Amazon, had its corresponding picture of suffering expectancy : "Days and weeks passed away, yet the vessel did not return ; and no speck was to be seen on the waters, as the Spaniards strained their eyes to the farthest point, where the line of light faded in the dark shadows of the foliage on the borders." Southey's return of Madoc to Aztlan recurs to the memory ; for although

> "No watchman had been station'd on the height
> To seek his sails,—for with Cadwallon's hope
> Too much of doubt was blended and of fear :
> Yet thitherward whene'er he walk'd abroad
> His face, as if instinctively, was turn'd ;
> And duly morn and eve Lincoya there,
> As though religion led his duteous feet,
> Went up to gaze . . .
> [And] all his pleasure was at earliest light
> To take his station, and at latest eve,
> If he might see the sails where far away
> Through wide savannahs roll'd the silver stream.
> Oh, then with what a sudden start his blood
> Flow'd from its quicken'd spring, when far away
> He spied the glittering topsails !"

Of Lord Cornwallis, besieged in Yorktown, historians (of Old, not New England) sympathisingly surmise how often and anxiously he must have looked out for a white sail gleaming in the distance on the blue waters of the bay. In a like spirit Earl Stanhope relates the relief from England to the ahungred defenders of Gibraltar in 1781—how they beheld with delight from their ramparts, one morning as the mist slowly rolled away, the flag-ship of Admiral Darby steer into their bay, followed by several other men-of-war and by his convoy, consisting of near a hundred vessels laden with provisions and supplies. In the same noble author's Life of Pitt, we have a rememberable glimpse of Napoleon in Boulogne in 1805, all expectation and suspense : "For hours and hours together he was

seen to stand on the seashore straining his eyes along the vast expanse, and watching for a sail to rise on the blue horizon." One of Schill and his troops at Stralsund, four years later, is quotable from Alison, who, with reproachful reflections on English apathy, describes all eyes as turned in vain towards the ocean: in vain every steeple was crowded with gazers anxiously surveying with telescopes the distant main; not a friendly sail appeared, not a pennon of England brought hope and consolation to the besieged.

The Russian generals who repulsed so vigorously the attack on the citadel of Smolensko by Ney's corps, are yet described as most anxiously looking out for the approach of the main army: at length vast clouds of dust were seen afar off, and through their openings long black columns, resplendent with steel, appeared advancing with uttermost speed: it was Barclay and Bagrathion hastening to the relief of their comrades, at the head of a hundred and twenty thousand men; and rapturous was the enthusiasm of the besieged. But examples to the same effect might be multiplied indefinitely from history, let alone fiction, historical or otherwise.* Let us glance instead at some passages in miscellaneous literature which may be taken to illustrate divers aspects of our theme.

Tiberius is gloomily pictured by Thomson, as, day after day,

* Not to let it quite alone, however, reference may be allowed, in passing, to the Fair Maid of Perth on the castle top, gazing on the forest glade through which she could see a body of horsemen advancing at full gallop—in time to save Catharine, though not the Duke of Rothsay. And again, to Henry Morton in the hands of the Covenanters, when his death is delayed by that distant noise which, to one of them, sounds like the rushing of the brook over the pebbles,—to another, as the sough of the wind among the bracken: "It is the galloping of horse," said Morton to himself, his sense of hearing rendered acute by the peril of his position. "God grant they may come as my deliverers!" As indeed they did. Nor be overlooked the weird figure of Scott's Highland Widow, as she sat at her cottage door and watched the road—her imagination forming out of the morning mist or the evening cloud the wild forms of an advancing band of "dark soldiers," *Sidier Dhu;* albeit for so long in vain Elspat's eyes surveyed the distant path, by the earliest light of the dawn and the latest

sad on the jutting eminence he sat, and viewed the main that ever toils below;

> "Still fondly forming in the farthest verge,
> Where the round ether mixes with the wave,
> Ships, dim-discovered, dropping from the clouds."

Byron gives us Medora rising to rouse the beacon-fire, and out-watching each star, night after night,—

> "And morning came—and still thou wert afar.
> Oh, how the chill blast on my bosom blew,
> And day broke dreary on my troubled view,
> And still I gazed and gazed—and not a prow
> Was granted to my tears—my truth—my vow!
> At length—'twas noon—I hail'd and blest the mast
> That met my sight—it near'd—Alas, it past!
> Another came—Oh, joy! 'twas thine at last!"

In the tragedy of *Constantine Paleologus*, the second act closes with the signal cries of a ship in sight, "supplies and warlike aid. O blessed sound! there is salvation in it" to the brave besieged. The same dramatist's better-known *Family Legend* has a sensation scene of a gentle outcast on a rock at sea—the scene concluding with her excitement and emotion at catching, as she believes, a sound of voices in the wind, like hope upon a hopeless state. She starts up from a crag of the rock, gazes eagerly around her, and resolves,

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glimmer of the twilight: no rising dust awakened the expectation of nodding plumes or flashing arms.—Compare, or contrast. with this last figure, that of Madonna Mary as Mrs. Oliphant sketches her, when she wandered from room to room, watching the two bits of road, as the shadows of evening stole into the corners, and a star, which it made her heart sick to see, peeped out in the darkling sky—first the one bit of road, which was fainter and farther off, then the other, which was overshadowed by trees, yet visible and near: every time that she changed the point of watching, she felt sure that her boy must be coming; but the stars peeped out in numbers, and the lamps were lighted on the road, and he appeared not.—If Romola's picturesque or classical form occurs to us in any such connection as this, it is on account of the simile her attitude suggests, when we see her, as she sees herself, as in the midst of a storm-troubled sea, caring nothing about the storm, but only about holding out a signal till the eyes that looked for it could see it no more.

"I'll to that highest crag and take my stand :
Some little speck upon the distant wave
May to my eager gaze a vessel grow—
Some onward wearing thing—some boat—some raft—
Some drifted plank.—O hope! thou quitt'st us never!"

And in yet another of the Plays on the Passion, *Ethwald*, there is a tower-top scene, which opens with Bertha exclaiming—

"O, will they ne'er appear? I'll look no more ;
Mine eager gazing but retards their coming.
Holla ; good Murdoch !—
Thou putst thy hand above thy sunnèd eyes,
Dost thou descry them ?
Murd. Mercy, gentle lady,
If you descry them not from that high perch,
How should I from my level station here ?"

May that allowably make way to Wordsworth's Betty Foy, high upon the down, where she can see a mile of road, but not a single soul abroad ?

"She listens, but she cannot hear
The foot of horse, the voice of man ;
The streams with softest sound are flowing,
The grass you almost hear it growing,
You hear it now, if e'er you can."

More consonant with the sustained dignity of the poet's larger style, is a passage in his *Prelude*, where he describes his wistful watching, as a schoolboy, for the envoy that should summon him home :

"There rose a crag,
That, from the meeting-point of two highways
Ascending, overlooked them both, far stretched ;
Thither, uncertain on which road to fix
My expectation, thither I repaired,
Scout-like, and gained the summit : 'twas a day
Tempestuous, dark, and wild, and on the grass
I sat, half-sheltered by a naked wall . . .
Straining my eyes intensely, as the mist
Gave intermitting prospect of the copse
And plain below."

XVIII.

THE LAST OF SENNACHERIB.

2 KINGS xix. 28 sq.

THE last march of Sennacherib, as chronicled in holy writ, was a disastrous failure. Overwhelming as might seem to be his invading host, and inevitable the destruction it menaced, the virgin, the daughter of Zion, was emboldened to despise him, and laugh him to scorn—the daughter of Jerusalem, to shake her head at him. Imposing as was his array, multitudinous as were the ranks of his army, he should not come into Jerusalem, nor shoot an arrow there, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same should he return, but should not come into that city, decreed the King of Kings. What was this invading lord of a host, against Zion's protecting Lord of Hosts?

So much for Sennacherib's last military progress. It was to provoke derision from its intended victim, presumably helpless and despairing. True, there was an appalling tragedy in the background; but meanwhile the irony of high comedy was to be, in Jerusalem, the inspired order of the day. The King of Assyria was to go back by the way that he came, *re infectâ*, and to be laughed at for his pains.

> "A fixèd figure, for the time of scorn,
> To point his slow unmoving finger at."

History is apt to be scornful of any such portentous expedition, resulting in zero or worse. Charles VI. of France exhausted his resources in the equipment of such a force, for the invasion of England, and had to return foiled to Paris, after desolating by the consequences of that march the face of the country which he traversed. Our Edward II. obeyed his father's injunctions to prosecute the war in Scotland, to the extent of proceeding on his march into that country as far as Cumnock in Ayrshire; but here he turned round without having done anything, and made his way back to England.

Many years later, he set out again for the conquest of Scotland, but only got as far as Culross, in Fife, whence he returned with nothing achieved except the destruction of a few religious houses. Even his vigorous son is to be seen in 1328 heading a numerous army against the Scots, but failing to encounter them; and after a campaign of three weeks, this expedition too ended in nothing. Ridiculed by the nickname of the Chicken War was that miserable expedition got up by Sigismund of Poland in 1539, against the Wallachians, when 150,000 militia, splendidly armed, assembled at the royal summons, but separated without striking a blow.

> "Thus with a blessed and unvex'd retire,
> With unhack'd swords, and helmets all unbruised,
> We will bear home that lusty blood again,
> Which here we came to spout against your towns."

Philip Augustus might well fume when required by the Pope to desist from further hostilities against John, who had now made his peace with the Church. What! after equipping one of the noblest armaments which had ever met under a King of France, at infinite expense, and at the Holy Father's own entreaty, was he now to dismiss them, and nothing to come of it all? The case would be as bad nearly as the traditional one of that King of France who, with twenty thousand men, marched up a hill, and then marched down again; or of Béranger's King of Yvetot, who

> "each year call'd his fighting men,
> And march'd a league from home, and then
> March'd back again."

So again we see Philip, the son of Charles of Valois, descending the Alps, in 1321, at the head of three thousand men-at-arms, the Guelfs eagerly flocking to his standard,—but anon retreating beyond the Alps without striking a blow. The fag-end of La Fontaine's fable has never wanted practical interpreters, with perhaps, crab-like, their strategic movements:

> "Quant à tourner le dos
> A son but, j'y reviens; la méthode en est bonne,
> Surtout au métier de Bellone:
> Mais il faut le faire à propos."

Heraclian, Count of Africa, in arms against Honorius, with an armament which might, says Gibbon, "have subverted or restored the greatest empire of the earth," ignominiously fled with a single ship. Six millions of ducats have been computed as the cost of Philip's Armada in a single year—with all which outlay nothing was accomplished, and Spain, in a moment, instead of seeming terrible to all the world, became ridiculous. It has been said of Charles the Fifth of France that he only represented the universal sneer of the world in his famous instructions to the French forces not to engage with their English opponents: "Although a storm or a tempest rage over a land, they go away and disperse of themselves. So will it be with these English;" and indeed English historians discern in the collapse of Lancaster's expedition in 1373 the death-blow of chivalry. Never, we are told, had knighthood started in a more imposing guise: the mightiest army England could pour out had simply marched across France without a blow, and without a blow it was turned by a few simple marches into such a horde as Napoleon brought back from Russia.* The Foul Raid was the name given to Albany's invasion of England, so long remembered in the north on account of its inglorious progress and impotent conclusion. A century later, an English army, led by the Duke of York and the Earl of Salisbury, approached with hostile front the Scottish Marches, but this host of more than forty thousand men fell to pieces and dispersed without performing anything else worth notice. Another Albany, in 1522, has been perhaps unfairly taxed with pusillanimity for the manner in which, encamped at Annan with a well-appointed army, eighty thousand strong, and with a formidable train of artillery, he yet disbanded that army without striking a blow.†

* "*He* found the place too warm for him,
For they set fire to Moscow.
To get there had cost him much ado,
And then no better course he knew . . .
But to march back again from Moscow."
SOUTHEY—*The March to Moscow.*

† Few defaulting commanders but find an apologist sooner or later. Domitian has been duly (or unduly) derided for his expedition against the

Mr. Carlyle writes of the Siege of Dresden, in 1759,—"So far as I can gather, that superb park of Austrian artillery, though built into batteries, and talked about in a bullying manner, was not fired from at all." His readers will easily recall his drawing, or caricature, of His Britannic Majesty, in 1742, *not* getting out his sword, but, after all that straining of every fibre for a twelve-month past, having to sit down again, panting in an Olympian manner, with that expensive long-sword of his still sticking in the scabbard. Or again that earlier misunderstanding, when war or duel seemed so imminent, but the "huge world-wide tumult suddenly collapses, sinks into something you can put into a snuff-box."

When it was the turn of the British to threaten the shores of Lake Champlain from Montreal, Sir George Provost advanced at the head of 11,800 troops, many of whom had served in Spain; but his indecision more than neutralized his advantages in numbers and quality, and "this fine army retreated (from before Plattsburg) into Canada without having struck a blow." One storm sufficed to discourage France from her project of invading England in behalf of the Pretender: the royal exile, who had embarked so eagerly, was put ashore again; and historians aver that history has few parallels, of a plan so large and elaborate, collapsing so suddenly and so utterly.

One tragically fatal distinction differentiates the baffled return home of Sennacherib from nearly all the others here referred to, and that is, the total destruction in one night of his mighty host, leaving him to return all alone. "*So* Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead."

Chatti, which was a mere summer promenade; but Dean Merivale, for one, declines to join the laughers, or to treat as merely contemptuous that campaign from which the young emperor hastened back to Rome, and no doubt vaunted his prowess to the utmost.

Killed during divine service, killed in church, so to say. Even thus did Jehu contrive the wholesale slaughter of the priests and prophets and servants of Baal, when the solemn assembly for Baal was proclaimed, and the house of Baal was full from one end to another; and vestments were put upon all the worshippers,—and not one of them escaped.

In one of the volumes of translations published by or for the Society of Biblical Archæology, the Rev. A. H. Sayce has given what is believed to be the oldest will in the world—the private testament, namely, of Sennacherib, who, with exemplary precision and brevity conjoined, bequeaths all his personal property to Esarhaddon, his son, who reigned in his stead. Had this to do with the "deep damnation of his taking off" at the hands of his two other sons? And was it of express design that they killed him at his prayers—as though to show that Nisroch could not save him? Nothing had they, it would seem, of the reverence for temple sanctity that made Benaiah scruple about slaying Joab when holding on the horns of the altar. Slain in God's house—the stigma on the slayer is broad and deep and dark, to the eye of common humanity. In hell saw Dante him who

> "in God's bosom smote the heart
> Which yet is honour'd on the bank of Thames"—

the allusion being to Simon de Montfort's "murther of Prince Henrie, committed afore the high altar, as the same Henrie kneeled there to hear divine service"—and to the alleged putting of Henry's heart into a golden cup, and placing it on a pillar at London bridge, "for a memorial to the English of the said outrage." Nor is Dante unmindful of the king of Assyria; but the vision this time is in Purgatory, not that "other place;" and there by Virgil was he shown

> "How, in the temple, on Sennacherib fell
> His sons, and how a corpse they left him there."

In the church he had hied him to for refuge was the last Visigoth king of Spain, Amalric, killed without scruple or remorse. In church was slain the Emperor Leo V. (the Arme-

nian), as he began chanting a new psalm. Fredegonde caused the Archbishop of Rheims to be murdered while he was chanting the service in church—and in this crime a bishop and an archdeacon were her accomplices. "Talk not to me," fierce Lorn declaimed,

> "Talk not to me of sheltering hall,
> The Church of God saw Comyn fall!
> On God's own altar stream'd his blood,
> While o'er my prostrate kinsman stood
> The ruthless murderer."

Later on in the *Lord of the Isles* that denounced manslayer is again denounced as "a wretch, beneath the ban of Pope and Church, for murder done even on the sacred altar-stone." But the Abbot, that, Balaam-like, arose to curse the Bruce, ends, Balaam-like, by blessing—overpowered by an influence within, which in vain he struggles to resist:

> "De Bruce, thy sacrilegious blow
> Hath at God's altar slain thy foe:
> O'ermaster'd yet by high behest,
> I bless thee, and thou shalt be blest!"

Of that Solomon who filled with honour the place of Belisarius, we read in Gibbon that "the Arians piously resolved" to sacrifice him "at the foot of the altar, during the awful mysteries of the festival of Easter." At Moscow, in 1771, the plague then raging, the primate Ambrosius was savagely murdered while officiating at the altar, by the maddened mob, with whose superstitions he had ventured to interfere. The *Dance of Death* may claim many verifications by violence, as well as by "natural" course, of the lines in it—

> "J'attrape l'un pendant qu'il prie . . .
> L'autre qui dans son oratoire
> A son Dieu rend honneur et gloire."

Philaster tells Pharamond, in Beaumont and Fletcher, "But were't the church, ay, at the altar, there's no place so safe but I dare kill thee." "Sir, will you have him murdered in a church?" asks Black Will of Mosby, in the matter of Arden of Feversham. "Or on the altar?" suggests Shakebag, Black Will's accommo-

dating accomplice: Mosby has only to say the word, and it shall be done.

It was a favourite trick with the Sicarii, or Assassins, the most extravagant of the school of Judas the Galilean, to make the Temple itself no place of safety for worshippers in those troublous times: for all the worshipper knew, the man who knelt by his side was preparing to plunge a dagger to his heart. During the conflicts of the factions, the Zealots being unhampered by religious scruples, clouds of missiles were continually discharged into the inner court of the Temple, and the whole sacred pavement was strewn with dead bodies. Milman refers to it as a strange feature in this fearful contest, that the religious ceremonies still went on upon the altar, which was often encircled with the dead. Visitors and strangers from afar would pass over pavement slippery with human blood, and themselves pay with their lives the price of kneeling and worshipping in the sacred place. At the siege of the Temple, in A.D. 70, men with swords reeking with blood rushed to and fro along the Holy Place, or even the Holy of Holies,—the very Romans are said to have shuddered at the profanation, and Titus protested with vigour against this Jewish violation of the Jewish sanctuary, by thus defiling it with blood and carnage. Was the house of Jehovah, then, to become a shambles? Was there to be no sanctuary, where man's life should be safe,—no sanctity, where God's honour was concerned?

The Pazzi conspiracy, designed to overthrow the power of the Medici, and to substitute the rule of another faction and family, is alleged to have been deliberately planned at Rome in the Papal counsels; the Pope's nephew being the prime mover, the leading agent an archbishop, and the means of the revolution foul murder. The place of that murder, pointedly writes Dean Milman, was the great church of Florence, the time of that murder the celebration of the Mass, the signal for that murder the elevation of the Host, the presentation to the adoring people (as all believed) of the God of mercy and love. "Lorenzo saw the dagger driven home to the heart of his brother Giuliano; but escaped himself by a strange accident,"

—to wit, that the ruffian to whom his death was assigned, a man whose hands were dyed with a hundred murders, and who was inured to the death-shriek of innocent men, scrupled at his task; he would not murder in a church. "A priest was easily found with none of these compunctious visitings; but the priest's hand was feeble and unpractised, and Lorenzo came off with a slight wound. The Pope's complicity is beyond all doubt." Ranke speaks of Alexander VI. as not only cognizant of the Pazzi conspiracy, but in the secret of the murder which these men perpetrated before the altar of the cathedral—he the Father of the Faithful.

Stigmatized by South as diabolical in its malice is the revenge taken by "that wretch who made a poor captive renounce his religion, in order to the saving of his life; and when he had so done, presently ran him through, glorying that he had thereby destroyed his enemy, both body and soul." Roderick Random's literary patroness thought she had made a masterstroke in planning a tragedy, the subject of which should be the murder of a prince before the altar, while busy at his devotions. Desperate as John Chiesley of Dalry was, in scheming the murder of Sir George Lockhart, his design to shoot the judge while attending upon divine service was not carried out,—some feeling as to the sanctity of the place restraining him, if not any care for the soul of the President of the Court of Session: the High Street, and not the High Church, of Edinburgh became accordingly the scene of murder. The fate of Captain Porteous, in the following century, supplied Sir Walter Scott with material for illustrating the vehemence of vengeance which refuses time and scope for a soul's salvation: the pastor's pleading voice to the mob, "We will not kill both his soul and body," being drowned in the clamour for instant execution. In Victor Hugo's grotesquely unhistorical *Cromwell*, the conspirators—some of them. at least—propose to slay Oliver and his bodyguard as they kneel in prayer:

> "Ils sont tous à genou, le tyran et sa garde;
> Que ne frappons-nous? Dieu!—Le frapper quand il prie!" etc.

Hamlet subtilizes with a devilish refinement of calculating

vindictiveness on the expediency or otherwise of despatching Claudius while that wicked king is on his knees in prayer.*

> "Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying;
> And now I'll do't; and so he goes to heaven:
> And so am I revenged? That would be scann'd;
> [For] . . . am I then revenged
> To take him in the purging of his soul,
> When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
> No.—Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent;
> When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;
> . . . At gaming, swearing; or about some act
> That has no relish of salvation in't:
> *Then* trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,"

and vengeance be complete not only on body but on soul.†

* The Princess Clœlia, in Mr. C. Reade's powerful story of the times of Erasmus, having occasion to hire a bravo in the Eternal City, is instructed by that worthy in the distinctive grades of greater and lesser vendetta. "The lesser vendetta, lady, is the death of the body only. We watch our man come out of church; or take him in an innocent hour; and so deal with him. In the greater vendetta we watch him, and catch him hot from some unrepented sin, and so slay his soul as well as body. But this vendetta is not so run upon now as it was a few years ago."—*The Cloister and the Hearth*, vol. iii., ch. xv.

† Hartley Coleridge characterized this as a speech which Shakspeare, had he lived in these days, would not have written—nor indeed would, in his own day, have put into the mouth of Hamlet, had he meant to represent him as a sane and exemplary youth. "Yet I know not whether the notion of retributive revenge as a propitiation to the departed, will not justify this horrid scruple. The speech, whatever it were meant for, certainly is a tremendous satire on revenge." The same critic, writing for once at least in the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, under the name and in the style of Christopher North himself, (and John Wilson would have welcomed his endeared Hartley to play that part very much oftener,) described Hamlet as vindicating his adjournment of vengeance on the King by arguments which certainly "have no relish of salvation in them," but which, perhaps, sounded less impious in an age when every staunch Protestant, no less than orthodox Roman Catholic, thought himself bound to believe in the eternal perdition of his dissentient neighbours.

The excellent critic who wrote *Shakspeare in Germany*, held that in all these purposes of refined and fearful revenge Hamlet is in truth representing his own state of mind and his own determination as darker and more hideous than they are: could we believe them real, our pity for him would merge

XIX.

CLEAN FORGOTTEN, AS A DEAD MAN OUT OF MIND.

PSALM xxxi. 14 (English Prayer Book version).

THIS, among the more salient indications of his over-clouded lot, the Psalmist deplored: that already was he forgotten by acquaintance and friends,—clean forgotten, as a dead man out of mind. As in the words of another Psalm, if not of another Psalmist, he was "counted as one of them that go down into the pit," "free among the dead, like unto them that . . . lie in the grave, who are out of remembrance." The oblivion might be construed from the language of Bildad the Shuhite concerning one who is destroyed from his place, and then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee. Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow. The race endures, but the individual man dies out, and, being dead, is soon forgotten. Out of sight, out of mind. And yet, "Absence and Death, how differ they!" the poet exclaims. And if, living, but absent, and so out of sight, is to be out of mind, how much more is the dead and gone to be beyond ordinary remembrance—forgotten, clean forgotten, as a dead man out of mind!

The pathetic exhortations on country tombstones, "Grieve not for me, my wife and children dear," etc., are all too truly said to be for the most part speedily complied with: we do not leave so great a void in society as we are inclined to imagine, partly to magnify our own importance, and partly to console ourselves by sympathy. Even in the same family, as Hazlitt says, the gap is not so great; the wound closes up sooner than we should expect; nay, our "room" is not unfrequently thought better than our "company." People walk along the streets the day after our deaths just as they did before, and the crowd is not diminished. The same moralist accounts it amazing how

in horror and disgust: but he is trying to excuse his delay and irresolution, even to his own mind, by dwelling on the more complete and awful vengeance which the future *may* afford.

soon the rich and titled, and even some of those who have wielded great political power, are forgotten. "A little rule, a little sway, Is all the great and mighty have Betwixt the cradle and the grave"—and, after its short date, they hardly leave a name behind them. "A great man's memory may, at the common rate, survive him half a year." Why be surprised that those are forgotten so much sooner after quitting this mortal stage, who are scarcely noticed while upon it? Leave your place in the world for ten minutes, and when you come back some one else has taken it, Mrs. Colonel Poyntz remarks; but when you leave the world for good, who remembers that you had ever a place even in the parish register?* Apemantus cynically assures the recluse in his cave,

> "Thy flatterers yet wear silk, drink wine, lie soft,
> Hug their diseased perfumes, and have forgot
> That ever Timon was."

To La Bruyère's mortifying query there is no complacent answer easily forthcoming: "Qui peut, avec les plus rares talens et le plus excellent mérite, n'être pas convaincu de son inutilité, quand il considére qu'il laisse, en mourant, un monde qui ne

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* "It is very mournful, yet not useless, to see and know, how the Greatest and Dearest, in a short while, would find his place quite filled up here, and no room for him."—*Sartor Resartus*, book i., chap. vii.

Ah, mes amis, sighs a commonplace philosopher, after we die, it would not be expedient, even if it were possible, to come back: many of us would not like to find how little they miss us. Few, once observed Sydney Smith, have the plain sense to see that they must soon be inevitably forgotten,—or the fortitude to bear it when, yet alive, they are. They represent to themselves imaginary scenes of deploring friends and dispirited companies—but the ocean might as well regret the drops exhaled by the sunbeams. Life goes on; and whether the absent have retired into a cottage or a grave, is much the same thing. *De non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio.* Whoever, remarks one of Jeremy Taylor's biographers, has revisited scenes and persons from whom he had long been separated, must have sighed over the comparative indifference that welcomed his return: other associations have effaced his own: the most familiar door turns upon a rusty hinge; and little remains for him but to moralize over the fragility of the structure which expectation builds. Redux Rip Van Winkle's "How soon we are forcot!" speaks homely and homeless pathos both in one.

se sent pas de sa perte : et où tant de gens se trouvent pour le remplacer?" 'Tis the law of nature, quoth that seasoned worldling, Sir Horace Lumley : if graves did not close over the dead, like traps in a pantomime, how could the business of the stage be carried on? His own brother was the subject of Samuel Pepys's exclamatory reflection, "But, Lord ! to see how the world makes nothing of the memory of a man, an hour after he is dead !" The living, Chateaubriand complains, are in haste to usher the defunct into eternity, and to rid themselves of his corpse : amongst friends, some accompany the corpse to church, and, the grave once filled up, all memory is effaced.

> "Even thus life's rushing tide
> Bears back affection from the grave's dark side ;
> Alas, to think of this !—the heart's void place
> Fill'd up so soon !—so like a summer cloud
> All that we loved to pass and leave no trace !"

To Nathaniel Hawthorne there was something awful in the "endless endurance," the "almost indestructibility" of a marble bust,—for this reason, that, whether in our own case, or that of other men, it bids us sadly measure the little, little time during which our lineaments are likely to be of interest to any human being. *Hélas!* is Madame de Staël's utterance, to think that, after the loss of life's dearest object, the activity of living dislimns the memory of the dead, so that often, in the midst of one's enjoyments, one feels remorse at being so capable of them, and seems to hear a resigned yet half-remonstrant voice asking, "Hast thou, whom I loved so dearly, so soon forgotten me?" Le père Aubry was not talking at random when he thus avowed his misgivings : "Si un homme revenait à la lumière quelques années après sa mort, je doute qu'il fût revu avec joie par ceux-là même qui ont donné le plus de larmes à sa mémoire : tant on forme vite d'autres liaisons, tant on prend facilement d'autres habitudes, tant l'inconstance est naturelle à l'homme, tant notre vie est peu de chose, même dans le cœur de nos amis !"* One of Overbury's elegists can speak

* Says Chateaubriand, in defending this passage, "Sans parler des morts dont on ne se souvient guère, que de vivants sont revenus dans leurs

of "wearing the sprigs of memory No longer than thy friends did rosemary, Or than the doale was eating for thy sake, And thou hadst sunke in thine owne wine and cake." *Qu'est-ce donc que l'homme, dont la mémoire périt si vite!* Ah, what is man! is Byron's prelude to the story of Lambro's return to the family that had supposed him dead:

> "Lambro's reception at his people's banquet
> Was such as fire accords to a wet blanket."*

Nobody has time to miss his neighbour who goes away, wrote Thackeray of Londoners at large; nor do we weep when he leaves us. "We humbly acknowledge, if fate calls us away likewise, we are no more missed than any other atom." The drearier of the Two Voices tells him that listens,

> "'Tho' thou wert scatter'd to the wind,
> Yet is there plenty of the kind.'
> Then did my response clearer fall:
> 'No compound of this earthly ball
> Is like another, all in all.'
> To which he answer'd scoffingly;
> 'Good soul! suppose I grant it thee
> Who'll weep for thy deficiency?
> * * * *
> Do men love thee? Art thou so bound
> To men, that how thy name may sound
> Will vex thee lying underground?
> The memory of the wither'd leaf
> In endless time is scarce more brief
> Than of the garner'd Autumn-sheaf.'"

Le monde, saurait-il aller sans nous? Mais oui donc, millefois oui. So muses the historiographer of the Dedlock family,

familles, et n'y ont trouvé que l'oubli, l'humeur, et le dégoût!"—*Préface d'Atala* (1805).

* Compare the metrical legend of a dead pope, to whom, as he eyed the public festivity,

> "That sight was somewhat provoking: millions of men, all jostling, joking,
> As merry as so many Prodigal Sons; . . . and yet not one of those millions
> Who seem'd aware of the dead Pope there, or even very much to care
> What had become of His Holiness, how he must feel now, or how he might fare;
> Who, all the while, was nevertheless sole cause of the general joyousness.
> This was certainly hard to bear." *Chronicles and Characters*, ii. 120.

whose pictured forms are upon the walls before him: "So did these come and go; so did they see this gallery hushed and quiet, as I see it now; so think, as I think, of the gap that they would make in this domain when they were gone; so find it, as I find it, difficult to believe that it could be, without them; so leave no blank to miss them, and so die." If the faults of the dead are soon forgotten, yet the memory of their virtues is not much longer lived,—by the reckoning, at least, of Mr. Peacock, who suggests, as an appropriate inscription for ninety-nine grave-stones out of every hundred, these words of Rabelais: *Sa mémoire expira avecques le son des cloches qui carillonaient à son enterrement.*

By the next morning, after a day of trouble and humiliation, the autobiographic heroine of Jean Ingelow's "first romance" began to notice how unchanged everything else was, in spite of the change in herself. "What a commonplace experience!—and yet we are all surprised by it in our turn, and with it comes the first power to understand how (greatly as some of us may be loved) we shall make no abiding change even in any one human face by our going away." It is said that ghosts loiter about their former haunts a good deal when they are first dead; flit wistfully among their old friends and companions, and, as Thackeray surmised, expect to hear a plenty of conversation and friendly tearful remark about themselves. "But suppose they return, and find nobody talking of them at all? Or suppose, Hamlet (Père, and Royal Dane) comes back and finds Claudius and Gertrude very comfortable over a piece of cold meat, or what not?" Would not that be a signal for the prompter's cry of Crow, cocks! Quick, sun-dawn! Open, trap-doors! and for the *revenant* to *s'en aller*, or get out of that, with all practicable despatch? Had the old vicar of Hurst Staple, of Mr. Trollope's depicting, come up from his grave at the end of three months, he would hardly have found that he was missed: a very elegant little tablet had been placed to his memory; and there apparently was an end of him. "The widow's cap did make some change in the appearance of the family circle; but it is astonishing how soon we get used even

to a widow's cap." It is a clergyman who moralizes on the thought, how many of his reverend brethren, seeing the strong marks of grief evinced by the congregation as they preach their farewell sermon before going to another parish, can scarcely conceive how quickly the congregation will get over its loss; and how soon it will come to assemble Sunday by Sunday with no remembrance at all of the familiar face that used to look at it from the pulpit, or of the voice which once was pleasant to hear. In public as in private life, reflects a political dissertator, the most valuable and necessary existence, the life upon which all hopes hang, and at the close of which the very sun in heaven seems as if it must pale—when it actually ends at last, leaves the bystanders lost in amaze that it should be so little missed. "The world which God has taken the trouble to make, gets on moderately well, and takes its own way, whoever may die or be overthrown." When Ben Jonson's Knowell talks of the whole nation sustaining a felt loss indeed were it to lose Bobadil, that bragadocio has the grace, or the mock humility, to reply, "Alas, no! What's a peculiar [private, or individual] man to a nation? not seen." Many a homily has been preached on Napoleon's text, that No man is indispensable—none of whom it might not sooner or later be said, with whatever more or less of difficulty, that we could do without him. And as to peculiars, or privates, or blank individuals, they are typified *en masse* by the Gartneys who disappeared out of the places that had known them so long, and could yet, their best friend allows, do so exceedingly well without them. "Do the cloven waters stand agape for the little dipperfull of drops that may be drawn out from among them?" Lord Beaconsfield's account of the cordial parting of Vivian Grey with the German Prince is qualified by the reflection that, most probably, in less than another week his affectionate Highness would not be able to recall Mr. Grey's name under an hour's effort. "Such are friends! The moment that we are not at their side, we are neglected; and the moment that we die, we are forgotten." The bond of kindred is broken, as Dr. Newman words it, and the silver cord of love is loosed: we talk about the dead as

if they were persons we do not know; we talk about them as third persons; whereas they used to be always with us, and every other thought which was in us was shared by them. "Or perhaps . . . we do not mention their names at all." The world goes on without them; it forgets them. The great preacher charges the world with contriving to forget that men have souls, and with looking upon them all as mere parts of some great visible system: this continues to move on, and to this the world ascribes a sort of life and personality; when one or other of its members dies, it considers them only as falling out of the system, and as come to nought,—for a minute, perhaps, it thinks of them in sorrow, then leaves them—leaves them for ever.

Here shift the scene, to represent How those Swift loved his death lament.

"Poor Pope would grieve a month, and Gay
A week, and Arbuthnot a day.
St. John himself will scarce forbear
To bite his pen and drop a tear.
The rest will give a shrug, and cry,
'I'm sorry—but we all must die!'
  Indifference, clad in Wisdom's guise,
All fortitude of mind supplies . . .
My female friends, whose tender hearts
Have better learnt to act their parts,
Receive the news in doleful dumps:
'The dean is dead: (Pray, what is trumps?)' . . .
'Madam, your husband will attend
The funeral of so good a friend?'
'No, madam, 'tis a shocking sight;
And he's engaged to-morrow night . . .
He loved the dean—(I lead a heart),
But dearest friends, they say, must part.
His time was come: he ran his race;
We hope he's in a better place.'
  Why do we grieve that friends should die?
No loss more easy to supply.
One year is past; a different scene!
No further mention of the dean;
Who now, alas! no more is miss'd
Than if he never did exist."

XX.

WELL SPOKEN OF IF WELL TO DO.

Psalm xlix. 18.

"SO long as thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee." Very successful, they say; and the saying is a benediction. It is the way of the world.

> "Prosperity
> Is warranty of wisdom with the world;
> Failure is foolishness."

Men are apt to gauge the great, not by their merit, but their success. Wallenstein's scheme,

> "Plann'd merely, is a common felony;
> Accomplish'd, an immortal undertaking:
> And with success comes pardon hand in hand."

Or as the schemer himself words it, there's many a crown shines spotless now, that yet was deeply sullied in the winning. As old Agrippa d'Aubigné said of his *co-religionnaires*, the reform party in France, they were "criminels de leurs faiblesses et malheurs, les ligués au contraire justifiés par leurs forces et prosperités." The growing fashion of modern historians to admire success at the expense of morality, has called forth some very desirable protests, from others who decline the invitation to fall down and worship a Cæsar or a Frederick, without even the pretence that they were virtuous, but simply because they were successful. One such objector declares the modern Temple of Fame to be beginning to resemble a shady sort of pawnbroker's shop; no questions are to be asked as to antecedents, and no inquiries to be made as to character. "The Ten Commandments are to be superseded in favour of the one simple injunction, Succeed. Get to the top of the tree, and nobody will care how you got there." There is nothing, it has been said, so abject as the worship of mere success, unless indeed it be the worship of mere wealth; there is nothing lower than to admire and flatter a man simply because he has got on, and to think scorn of others whose merits and efforts may have

been equal to his, or very likely much greater, though from some cause or other they have come signally short of success. Cornelius Nepos may say that we estimate great men by their virtue, not by their success: *magnos homines virtute metimur, non fortunâ;* but the comment of scholiasts is, Philosophers may do this, but not so the public. Such a public, at any rate, as Juvenal had in his mind's eye when he said that had Sejanus been successful in his intrigues, the populace that hurried him to death would have hailed him as Imperator and Augustus. When the French king, in Shakspeare, pondering the claims of England's rival York and Lancaster, demands of Edward's advocate, "But is he gracious in the people's eye?" "The more that Henry was unfortunate," is Warwick's answer. And anon we find King Lewis addressing himself to Henry's queen after this sort—

> "But if your title to the crown be weak,—
> As may appear by Edward's good success,"

for his majesty of France lends his august authority to confirm the maxim, that nothing succeeds like success. Adam Smith asserts of Cæsar that had he, instead of gaining, lost the battle of Pharsalia, his character would, at this hour, have ranked a little above that of Catiline; and that the weakest man would have viewed his enterprise against the laws of his country in blacker colours than, perhaps, even Cato, with all the animosity of a party man, ever viewed it at the time. Cato would have found Dryden's couplet to his liking,

> "Unpraised by me, though Heaven may sometimes bless
> An impious act with undeserved success."

That the world judges by the event, and not by the design, has been in all ages the complaint, and is called in the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* "the great discouragement of virtue. Everybody agrees to the general maxim, that as the event does not depend on the agent, it ought to have no influence upon our sentiments with regard to the merit or propriety of his conduct. But when we come to particulars, we find that our sentiments are scarce in any one instance exactly conformable to what this

equitable maxim would direct." For it is made clear that the happy or unprosperous event of any action is not only apt to give us a good or bad opinion of the prudence with which it was conducted, but, moreover, almost always animates our gratitude or resentment, our sense of the merit or demerit of the design.* La Bruyère never wrote in hot haste, or let his pen run away with him; and upon this subject La Bruyère emphatically writes, "Les hommes sur la conduite des grands et des petits, indifféremment sont prévenus, charmés, enlevés par la réussite: il s'en faut peu que le crime heureux ne soit loué comme la vertu même, et que le bonheur ne tienne lieu de toutes leurs vertus." It must be a very black business indeed, he adds, an extremely foul and altogether loathsome enterprise, that cannot find its justification in its success. Has not Pope said pretty much the same thing of Vice in his Epilogue to the Satires?—

> "Let greatness own her, and she's mean no more;
> Her birth, her beauty, crowds and courts confess,
> Chaste matrons praise her, and grave bishops bless;
> In golden chains the willing world she draws,
> And hers the gospel is, and hers the laws;
> Mounts the tribunal, lifts her scarlet head,
> And sees pale Virtue carted in her stead."

The sophist adventurer Randal Leslie argues with himself, "If power is only so to be won," the so meaning by sinister practices, "does not success in life justify all things? And who prizes the wise man if he fails?" When the very French Cromwell of French romance is assured by a toady that his abortive idea of a mined felucca was sublime, "It is absurd," he replies, "because it has proved useless. There are no ideas sublime in politics, but such as bear fruit; every abortive idea is foolish." He would have made great eyes at the sentiment of a French satirist, unless explained to be satirical,

> "Vos coupables succès ont ouvert tous les yeux;
> Le crime couronné paraît plus odieux."

* Compare chapter iii. of the section on Merit or Demerit, with the third section in Part vi., on the Character of Virtue.

But we may refer to the unsatirical sense of this couplet of Colnet's what Mr. J. Stuart Mill says of the popular party in France when the Bastille fell,—namely, that success, which is often said to be a justification, has here proved the reverse; for men who "would have ranked with Hampden and Sidney if they had quietly waited to have their throats cut, passed for odious monsters because they have been victorious." The French Revolution, first and last, would furnish many a text for varied readings of our theme. On divers pages of Carlyle's History of it may be read, for instance, such passages as this on the summary condemnation of General Custine: "Custine was accused of harshness, of unskilfulness, perfidiousness; accused of many things; found guilty, we may say, of one thing, unsuccessfulness." Or this again, some half-dozen chapters later: "The Generals go fast to the guillotine; justly and unjustly. From which what inference? This, among others: That ill-success is death; that in victory alone is life." To conquer or die was no theatrical palabra, in these circumstances, but a practical truth and necessity. In *Past and Present*, Mr. Carlyle has, explicitly enough, put on record his estimate of mere success, military or other, as such; where he assures a very successful friend, that if he had all the artillery of Woolwich trundling at his back in support of an unjust thing, and infinite bonfires visibly waiting ahead of him, to blaze centuries long for his victory in behalf of it, his "success" cannot go for much, after all: "If the thing is unjust, thou hast not succeeded; no, not though bonfires blazed from north to south, and bells rang, and editors wrote leading articles, and the just thing lay trampled out of sight, to all mortal eyes an abolished and annihilated thing." To pass in one stride from a Thomas Carlyle to a Horace Walpole may seem to require a very long stride indeed, amounting to a strain on the muscular system, and perhaps on the nervous too; but the dapper dilettante of Strawberry Hill may be heard saying, in his thin but clear voice, "I am far from allowing that even wise measures, with all the prospect of success, are good; for then fortunate conquerors would be excusable, which I shall never think."

He was capable, with all his levity, of taking the side of those English critics of M. Thiers' histories who declare the French historian's highest morality to be the worship of success; his passion being for war if it is successful, while there is no one of Napoleon's acts of spoliation which he does not defend: it is only when the Empire was falling to pieces that M. Thiers can detect any errors in the Imperial policy, and regrets that the system of the Consulate had not been persevered in. Lord Brougham set himself the task (before Mr. Carlyle took up Old Fritz) to "reduce to their true dimensions" the merits of Frederick the Great, a task "rendered necessary" by the universal belief in that prince's greatness, and the disposition to exalt his merits because of the success which followed his ambition. "To the success of his intrigues and arms [he owes] the appellation of Great;—a title which is the less honourable, that mankind have generally agreed to bestow it upon those to whom their gratitude was least of all due." Elsewhere his lordship claims credit for attempting at least to reclaim mankind from the evil habit, "so nearly akin to vicious indulgence," of palliating cruelty and fraud committed on a large scale, by regarding the success which attended those foul enormities; and in yet another volume, for showing the glare that success gives to bad actions, and the shade into which good ones are thrown by failure, to be temporary only; constantly warning his readers, as he does, to struggle against the prepossession thus raised by the event, and to mete out praise or blame by the just measure of desert. Samuel Butler, among his Miscellaneous Thoughts, had preached with point and pungency from the selfsame text,—albeit with a halting rhyme:

> "Success, that owns and justifies all quarrels,
> And vindicates deserts of hemp with laurels;
> Or, but miscarrying in the bold attempt,
> Turns wreaths of laurel back again to hemp."

The topic was a favourite one with Butler, who thus touches on it, for instance, in *Hudibras*, that puritan and predestinarian hero being, however, the speaker:

> "Success, the mark no mortal wit
> Or surest hand can always hit:

For whatsoe'er we perpetrate,
We do but row, we're steer'd by fate,
Which in success oft disinherits,
For spurious causes, noblest merits."

And again, in a later canto: "'Tis not the least disparagement To be defeated by th' event." That the present age, notwithstanding the intellectual culture and widespread inquiry into all subjects which distinguish it, is probably remarkable above its predecessors in its adoption of a coarse and material standard in judging of men and things, the authority of England's "leading journal" may be cited to show; for we are there assured that success never succeeded as it does now—that is, never was regarded with such entire confidence, favour, and admiration. It is there in evidence that measures ill conceived and badly executed are quite sure to enlist a host of admirers if only by some strange caprice of fortune they escape the failure which they deserve. "The adoption of such a criterion saves an infinity of trouble. We have only to suspend our judgment while events are in preparation, and when the event is decided to give it roundly in favour of the winner." The worst of this kind of proceeding confessedly is, that it is always making and unmaking heroes: men are raised to a temporary eminence and depressed again to very humble positions by successes which have had little merit, and by failures which do not really imply any serious blame. "Il n'y a rien de plus bas," says La Bruyère, "que de parler en des termes magnifiques de ceux mêmes dont l'on pensoit très-modestement avant leur élévation." And how like the moralist is that stroke of his in the chapter *Des Biens de Fortune*, where he remarks that if a financier misses his aim, court folks call him a bourgeois, a nobody, a mere snob; but if he hits the mark, they ask for his daughter in marriage. No sooner was Columbus successful, than the courtiers began to caress the man they had so persistently kept out in the cold. Leigh Hunt says of Wolsey, that, "as the prosperous and the upper classes are apt to do in all ages," he probably worshipped success itself as the final proof of all which the divine Governor of the world intended,

in His dealings with individuals or society: hence the cardinal's proud swelling while possessed of it, and his undisguised tears and lamentations during his decline. Mr. Herman Merivale, in his historical study of Joseph II., charges the world with having judged that "excellent though unfortunate sovereign," as it usually judges, by success:—because he failed, he has become a byword; but had he carried into execution the scheme of policy which he conceived, he would have been regarded as the greatest, as well as the most beneficent, monarch who ever swayed the destinies of the human race. To apply Corneille's words, in his preface to the *Héraclius*, "Dans un dessein de cette nature, ce qu'un bon succès fait passer pour une ingénieuse hardiesse, un mauvais le fait prendre pour une témerité ridicule." Byron is satirical as regards what is

> "Firmness yclept in heroes, kings, and seamen,
> That is, when they succeed; but greatly blamed
> As obstinacy, both in men and women,
> Whene'er their triumph pales, or star is tamed.
>
> * * * * *
>
> Had Bonaparte won at Waterloo,
> It had been firmness; now 'tis pertinacity:
> Must the event decide between the two?
> I leave it to your people of sagacity
> To draw the line between the false and true,
> If such can e'er be drawn by man's capacity."

When the Count de Cabra, who had captured one king of Granada, attempted to capture another, and failed, some of the counsellors of Isabella, "of that politic class who seek to rise by the faults of others," * were loud in their censures of his

* And of such as whom Dean Swift makes food for satire, where he makes them say of themselves,

> "Fools may pursue their adverse fate,
> And stick to the unfortunate;
> We laugh while they condemn us.
> For, being of that generous mind,
> To success we are still inclined,
> And quit the suffering side;
> If on our friends cross planets frown,
> We join the cry and hunt them down,
> And sail with wind and tide."

rashness. The queen defended him with prompt generosity. "The enterprise," she said, "was rash, but not more so than his previous one, which was crowned with success, and which we have all applauded as the height of heroism. Had the Count de Cabra succeeded in capturing the uncle [El Zagal], as he did the nephew [Boabdil el Chico], who is there that would not have praised him to the skies?" As a queen of older times enunciates the truism:

> "Success is made the measure of our acts . . .
> Between the culprit and the demigod
> There's but one difference men regard—success."

Dr. J. C. Bruce, in his elucidations of the Bayeux Tapestry, commenting on the oath of Harold, goes on to say: "Success attended the side which Raol espoused, and we hear nothing of his perjury. Harold fell on the hard-fought field of Hastings, and heaven and earth resounded with cries of horror at the foul sin." Michelet ascribes to the success of Lewis the Eleventh a great shock to the morality of the period; for craft and wisdom came to be confounded in men's minds, and the long-abiding consequence was admiration of cunning, and the worship of success. The same historian writes of the Guises: "Leur audace séduisit la France. Quoique éminemment faux, et tout mensonge, ils plurent par le succès." To them was attributed the supreme gift which in after-days Mazarin preferred in a general to any solid merit,—for his question ever was, "Est-il *heureux?*" The philosophy is that derivable from Samuel Daniel's lines,—

> "Where evermore the fortune that prevails
> Must be the right: the ill-succeeding mars
> The fairest and the best-faced enterprize."

Of Guise, an admiring France that watched his progress was able to say, "Il est heureux;" and he was adored accordingly. He was looked upon as a gambler who always won, who was safe always to win. "Fatale idolâtrie, et punissable! La France expie bientôt d'avoir fait un dieu du succès." Cicero recommends Pompey under this particular head to the Romans, with whom the character of being fortunate was so popular, that

several of the emperors gave it a place among their titles. The *felicity* of Augustus, observes De Quincey, was often vaunted by antiquity,—success being then not so much a test of merit as itself a merit of the highest quality. Lucan takes for granted that the cause of Cæsar had the approbation of the gods, simply from the event, because notoriously it was the triumphant cause. "I am sure," said Bishop Gauden, "the event or success can never state the justice of any cause;" but this was a Christian conviction. In every age and clime there are numbers who, as the Winterslow essayist puts it, judge by the event, and change with fortune: they extol the hero of the day, and join the prevailing clamour whatever it is; they blow hot or cold, according as the wind sets favourably or otherwise; and with them the only infallible test of merit is success.

> "Had Sejanus thrived
> In his design, and prosperously opprest
> The old Tiberius; then, in that same minute,
> These very rascals that now rage like furies
> Would have proclaim'd Sejanus emperor."

Pizarro's American historian remarks that "Success only, the best argument with the multitude," redeemed the expeditions of that daring Spaniard from the fatal imputation of utter extravagance. Another of Mr. Prescott's histories illustrates the caprice of "the fickle populace, with whom misfortune passes for misconduct." Macaulay, treating of Mackay in 1689, than whom no general had ever been more completely beaten, refers scornfully to the detractors who therefore distrusted him, and who considered success as the only test of the ability of a commander: whoever wins a battle is, in the estimation of such persons, a great general; whoever is beaten, is a bad general. *C'est que le succès est un grand maître*, said Barante; *pour presque tous les hommes il est le jugement de Dieu.* Glory covers the multitude of sins. Mr. Napier quotes as a maxim of Raleigh's—haply somewhat garbled however in the quoting —that "good success admits of no examination;" in which sardonically expressed *pensée*, Sir Walter, as his devout admirer and apologist, Mr. Charles Kingsley contended, was not

giving his own morality, but that of the world, which makes every man who has failed (as Raleigh had failed in the mining scheme) a mark for slander and insolent detraction. In another of his books the sometime Cambridge Professor of History describes Archbishop Aldred as endowed with prudence of the sort that will "honour the powers that be," if they be but prosperous enough: "For after all, if success be not God, it is like enough to Him in some men's eyes to do instead." When it was known in England that Nelson had returned after an unsuccessful pursuit of the French fleet, the cry was raised that he ought to be impeached; for the young officer had not yet attained that fame which compels envy to be silent.* Marlborough is Mr. Addison's theme when he, in *Esmond*, affirms the greatest of a great man's qualities to be success; it is the result of all the others,—a latent power in him which "compels the favour of the gods, and subjugates fortune. Of all his gifts I admire that one in the great Marlborough. To be brave? every man is brave. But in being victorious, as he is, I fancy there is something divine." *Sachons préférer à certaines victoires une noble défaite*, is not a rule of universally easy construction, or ready application. Remarking upon the way of the world, which is to huzza prosperity, and to turn away from misfortune as from some contagious disease, Mr. Thackeray asks, "Indeed, how can we see a man's brilliant qualities, if he is what we call in the shade?" We are told of the great Rothschild, that he did not care to meet with any one who was proverbially unlucky: like Mazarin, *Est-il heureux?* was a test question with the shrewd old Hebrew. "If I were to give the best advice I could to a young man," said he, "it should be this: 'Always associate with successful men.'" To him that hath shall be given; and from him that hath not

* Churchill wrote, in his Epistle to *William Hogarth*,

"Is any one so foolish to succeed?
On Envy's altar he is doom'd to bleed."

And Mr. Dickens said, in one of his earlier books, If a man would commit an inexpiable offence against society, let him be successful: they will forgive him any crime but that.

shall be taken even that which he hath—this, according to the author of *The Way we Live Now*, is the special text that we delight to follow, and success the god we delight to worship. But Churchill long ago explained to us that

> "Beggars, in every age and nation,
> Are rogues and fools by situation;
> The rich and great are understood
> To be of course both wise and good."

It is by the thoughtful deemed matter of great congratulation that there is not an invariable alliance between prosperity and desert; and some think it even more fortunate that it is not the province of society at large to gauge the exact merits of its members, and to assign them precedence accordingly—for the result would demonstrably be, not only a social slavery of the most degrading kind, but the introduction of a universal system of Mammon-worship such as the world has happily never seen. "At present, a poor man feels that no one but an insolent fool would despise his poverty; but it would be far otherwise if poverty and misfortune were the sure marks of crime or folly." Pope glances at this hypothetical state of things, as actual, in those expressive lines of his,

> "The grave Sir Gilbert holds it for a rule
> That every man in want is knave or fool:
> 'God cannot love,' says Blount, with tearless eyes,
> 'The wretch He starves,'—and piously denies,"

therefore, the assistance implored. Fielding's Allworthy had often observed with concern that distress is more apt to excite contempt than commiseration, especially among men of business, with whom poverty is understood to indicate want of ability.

> "If your lot in this life should be hard, men will treat you with scorn and neglect:
> For they always mete out their regard by the credit that yours will reflect.
> While you till your poor acre alone, they will mock as they sit and carouse;
> When your wide fields are harrow'd and sown, they will hasten to lend you their ploughs.

If your foes shall be thoroughly thrash'd, they will see your success with delight;
But if your own head should get smash'd, their verdict will be 'Serve you right!'
For, how noble soever your plan, the world lays it down as a rule—
'To succeed is to be a great man, to fail is to be a great fool.'"

XXI.

FAR AWAY REMEMBRANCE OF ZION.

PSALM cxxxvii. 1, 5, 6.

TEARFUL were the remembrances of Zion, that swelled the hearts of the Hebrew exiles as they sat down by the rivers of Babylon, and hanged their harps upon the willows that fringed those watercourses. Singer's voice may be all the sweeter, more sympathetic, more telling, more thrilling, for *les larmes dans la voix.* But how if the tears choke utterance? How *then* sing the home songs of Zion in a strange land?

"Tears from the depth of some divine despair,
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes, . . .
In thinking of the days that are no more,"

and of the native land that is very far off. And as Camöens paraphrased in a sonnet the psalm of pious, patriotic remembrance, "When the cup of woe Is fill'd, till misery's bitter draught o'erflow, The mourner's cure is not to sing—but die." So at least Mrs. Hemans Englished the Portuguese; and from her own miscellaneous poems might be offered a choice of more or less parallel passages; as where the Norsemen bade the Sicilian captive sing of her distant land, whose lyre she held with a trembling hand, till the spirit its blue skies had given her woke, and the stream of her voice into music broke:

"They bid me sing of thee, mine own, my sunny land, of thee!
Am I not parted from thy shores by the mournful-sounding sea?
—How should thy lyre give here its wealth of buried sweetness forth—
Its tones of summer's breathings born, to the wild winds of the north?"

But the heart of the songstress breaks with the singing.

The weeping Hebrews were not a cheerful sight to those who had carried them away captive. And if the captors required of them a song, it was with a view to gladsomeness. Might not music, in the sense and spirit of mirth, disperse their heaviness? Might not singing help them to forget? But that was just what the exiles would not hear of, could not bear the mere thought of. Forget? "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

Breathes there a man with soul so dead, as not to respond to, not to beat in unison with, this utterance of the exiles? Who can forget, or who would, in such a case?

> "Nescio quid natale solum dulcedine cunctos
> Ducit, et immemores non sinit esse sui."

There is, says Goldsmith, something so seducing in that spot in which we first had existence, that nothing but it can please; whatever vicissitudes we experience in life, however we toil, or wherever we wander, our fatigued wishes still recur to home for tranquillity, and we long to die in that spot which gave us birth. His Traveller sets the sentiment in metre:

> "And as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
> Pants to the place from which at first she flew,
> I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
> Here to return—and die at home at last." *

* Old as human nature itself is the wish to die at home, and. if not, at least to be buried there. Barzillai prayed David the King to let him turn back again, in his old age, and die in his own city, and be buried by the grave of his father and of his mother. It was part of the prophetic malediction upon Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim (Jerem. xxii. 26), that he should be cast out, and his mother that bare him, into another country where they were not born, and there should they die; but to the land whereunto they desired to return, thither should they not return. Vain would it for *them* to emulate Joseph, who "gave commandment concerning his bones." The night before the exiled Hippias conducted the Persians to the plains of Marathon, he dreamt a dream which he was fain to hope promised his reinstatement at Athens, and his dying in his own house there of old age. Neither the pomps of Rome nor the pleasant seclusion of Montefiascone,

Sternitur, et moriens dulces reminiscitur Argos. Byron's dying Gladiator, butchered to make a Roman holiday, regards not the brutal shout that hails his fall: he heard it, but he heeded not—his heart was far away, at his rude hut on the banks of the Danube. Campbell's Swedish soldier, one of the bleeding thousands marched by their Charles to Dnieper's swampy shore,—ere yet he sank in Nature's last repose,

> "Ere life's warm torrent to the fountain froze,
> The dying man to Sweden turn'd his eye,
> Thought of his home, and closed it with a sigh."

The military hospital experiences of Sisters of Mercy show how very generally the force of early association asserts itself in

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writes Dean Milman, could retain a French prelate, though that prelate was Urban V. To Avignon he returned to die; his alleged excuse a parental desire to reconcile the kings of France and England (A.D. 1370), but the accepted motive "a secret inward longing for his native land." We find a later Pope, Æneas Sylvius, writing: "I dread nothing so much as to lay my bones in a foreign land, though the way to heaven or to hell lies open alike from both." It is touching to read of the deprived Archbishop Sancroft retiring to Fresingfield, the place of his birth, and writing his own epitaph, "returned hither to end his life," when deprived of all he could not keep with a good conscience. So it is to find Charles Leslie, the non-juror, seeking permission from the government of King George I. to return and die in the land which gave him birth, and not in that sunny Italy whither he had followed the Pretender. Hanz Egede, the apostle of Greenland, carried back with him to Copenhagen the coffined wife who had so vainly yearned to see her native land again; and when, some twenty years later, his own time was drawing nigh, and he too again at a distance, he was for going to Copenhagen to die there, and would have done so, dying, but that he was promised he should be laid beside her, dead. We bear within us, said the first Lord Lytton, an irresistible attraction to our earliest home: "It matters not where our mid-course is run, but we will *die* in the place where we were born—in the point of space whence began the circle, there shall it end." Like Adrastus in *Ion*:

> "Here let me rest;
> In this old chamber did my life begin,
> And here I'll end it.'

Charles Magnin's attachment to the town of Salins, "où il a voulu que ses restes furent transportés pour y reposer dans le terroir paternel," evokes from Sainte-Beuve a note of admiration for "cette fidelité au pays, à la source originelle," which was "un des traits de sa nature." Shakspeare's

supreme moments of physical weakness,—the thought of the household grave, in the familiar churchyard, pressing upon the last thoughts of the men, especially of those country born. "Oh, with what vivid hues life comes back oft on death!" Macaulay's exiled Jacobite, "grey-haired with sorrow in his manhood's prime," pined to death in Italy for his own English lakes and falls,—

> "Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
> And pined by Arno for his lovelier Tees;
> Beheld each night his home in fevered sleep,
> Each morning started from the dream to weep,"

till his last sleep overtook him, and his last thoughts were still

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Camillo, after fifteen years' absence, importunes his royal master to let him see Sicily again: "Though I have, for the most part, been aired abroad, I desire to lay my bones there." Some there are, muses Wordsworth's Solitary,

> "Who, drawing near their final home, and much
> And daily longing that the same were reached,
> Would rather shun than seek the fellowship
> Of kindred mould."

But with the morbid muser the poet could have little sympathy; and the suggested instinct of the dying hart of Harp-leap Well is more to his mind —coming to make his death-bed near the well, whose water was perhaps the first he drank when he had wandered from his mother's side: "And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was born Not half a furlong from that selfsame spring." Burns's wanderer beside the Thames is pining for his native banks of the Nith:

> "Though wandering now must be my doom, far from thy bonnie banks and braes,
> May these my latest hours consume, amang the friends of early days."

In one of Crabbe's tales we see old Allen landing in his native bay, "Willing his breathless form should blend with kindred clay;" for, when

> "years advancing undermined his health,
> Then ofttimes in delightful dreams he flew
> To England's shore, and scenes his childhood knew, . . .
> And thus excited, in his bosom rose
> A wish so strong, it baffled his repose:
> Anxious he felt on English earth to lie;
> To view his native soil, and there to die."

Nothing can be simpler or quieter than the pathos of John Evelyn's entry in his Diary, of his going, "after more than 40 years, to spend the rest of my dayes at Wotton, where I was born." Macaulay writes of Warren Hastings that when, under a tropical sun, he ruled fifty millions of

of home. The Lakes have their own laureate, and this is his apostrophe to them, in the Latin poet's spirit of dulcet reminiscence *in articulo mortis:*

> "Dear native Regions, wheresoe'er shall close
> My mortal course, there will I think on you;
> Dying, will cast on you a backward look;
> Even as this setting sun (albeit the Vale
> Is nowhere touched by one memorial gleam)
> Doth with the fond remains of his last power
> Still linger, and a farewell lustre sheds
> On the dear mountain-tops where first he rose."

The testamentary codicil that Columbus is said to have written on the blank page of his little breviary (the gift of Pope Alexander VI.), has stirred biographers to admire its evidence of the affection with which his last thoughts were bent on his native city. The elder Disraeli is touched with Racine's death-bed desire to be buried in the solitudes of Port Royal, where he was bred; and on the same beloved retreat did Arnauld, persecuted, and dying in a foreign country, still cast his lingering, longing looks,—and to it he bequeathed his heart, to be there inurned.

When Sir Walter Scott, during his last and fruitless sojourn

Asiatics, his hopes, amidst all the cares of war, finance, and legislation, still pointed to Daylesford; and that when his long public life, so singularly chequered with good and evil, had at length closed for ever, it was to Daylesford that he retired to die. Edmund Waller's purchase of a small property at Coleshill was just too late for securing the fulfilment of his wish, "to die like the stag, where he was roused"—for death overtook him at Beaconsfield; a spot now associated with the name of one English statesman, and with the home-life of two. Bolingbroke had long wished to fetch his last breath at Battersea, where he was born; and fortune, that had through life, says one of his biographers, "seemed to traverse all his aims, at last indulged him in this." Not so was it to be with that first of the four Georges whose accession dealt a heavy blow and great discouragement to accomplished St. John and his party. The heart of Georgius Rex was ever away in Hanover; and to many is familiar the picture of him when taken ill on his last journey, as he was passing through Holland, thrusting his livid head out of the coach-window, and gasping out, "Osnaburg! Osnaburg!"

An English traveller in Russia speaks of the people of that country in

on the Continent, heard news of the death of Goethe,—to be followed within a few months by his own,—"Alas for Goethe!" he exclaimed; "but he at least died at home.—Let us to Abbotsford." *Grata quies patriæ* was then a quotation that trembled more than once on his paralysed lips and pen. *Hame, hame, hame wad he be.* And when home was almost reached, and the sight of Gala Water revived him, and of Buckholm, and of Torwoodlee, when the hill at Ladhope was rounded, and the outline of the Eildons burst on him, and at length his own towers, at the distance of a mile, his gradually advancing excitement was wellnigh too much for him, if not for his companions, especially when at that first glimpse of Abbotsford he sprang up with a cry of delight. For he, after all, like Goethe, *beatus ille*, was to die at home. Numerous and varied are the incidental illustrations of the general subject that might be cited from his pages. In the *Talisman*, the Scottish esquire who lies sick in the crusaders' camp near Ascalon, is overheard murmuring how cold and refreshing taste the waters of the Clyde, after the brackish springs of Palestine. He dreams of his native land, and is happy in his slumbers. Again, there is Quentin Durward on French soil, in the hands of Petit-André and Trois-Eschelles, bethinking him of the little rude and unroofed chapel which now held almost all his race but himself: "Our

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general as an exception to the rule which makes most men yearn to retur home to die. According to him, it very rarely happens that moujiks who from serfs have become merchants of the second guild, and amassed large fortunes, ever think in their declining days of retiring to the village which gave them birth; and soldiers too, when discharged from service, scarcely ever retrace their steps to their native hamlet. At any rate they have no credit such as the Cornish miner enjoys, of always, however far he may become, returning home to die:

> "Should he get rich in other zones,
> To Cornwall he brings back his bones,'

rhymes the author of *Rhymes from Cornwall*, who is glad withal to remind us that "Australian, Californian gold, Tells where a Cornishman takes hold." But the sentiment is pure and potent as in the more refined instance of Lamartine's wistful wanderer:

> "Il a voulu revoir ce ciel de son enfance,
> Revenir et mourir au lieu de sa naissance."

feudal enemies gave my kindred graves in our own land," he thought, "but I must feed the ravens and kites of a foreign land, like an excommunicated felon." And there is the convicted and condemned chieftain, Fergus Mac-Ivor, hoping the gaol authorities will set his head on the Scotch gate of Carlisle Castle, that he may look, even after death, to the blue hills of his own country, by him loved so dearly.

The Alexander Oldworthy of one of Mr. Charles Reade's most charmingly told historiettes, reverts in affection and longing to his native Warwickshire, at the close of his long life in the greatest of cities,—and his thoughts are on the pleasant fields where he had played among the lambs and the buttercups in the morning of his days. Fain would he see once more those pleasant fields, and sit in the sun a little while, and then lie beside his father in the old churchyard. And humbly he lies there, as he wished, beneath the shadow of Coventry's great old loftiest spire. It is of his own neighbouring cathedral town that Dickens is writing when he refers to those who, in their dying hours afar off, have imagined their chamber-floor to be strewn with the autumnal leaves fallen from the elm-trees in the Close: so have the rustling sounds and fresh scents of their earliest impressions revived when the circle of their lives was very nearly traced, and the beginning and the end were drawing close together. So with De Quincey's Spanish Military Nun, when, her brain wandering, now that her feet were not, she said to herself, "It is evening; and the hour is come for the *Angelus* to be sounding through St. Sebastian,"—her memories reverting to cathedral choirs, and to St. Sebastian's chapel, with its silvery bells that carried the echoing *Angelus* far into mountain recesses.

On the plains of Troy, and amid Ida's spreading woods —"fair Ida, watered with descending floods"—the forlorn Achilles feeds his fancy on memories of a far-away stream,— "Sperchius, whose waves in mazy errors lost, Delightful roll along my native coast." No distant charge or dignity availed to efface from Cicero's very present remembrance the endeared aspect of Arpinum. "I dŏ and must love my country," wrote

expatriated Atterbury: "My last wish shall be like that of Father Paul, *Esto perpetua!* and when I die at a distance from it, it will be in the same manner as Virgil describes the expiring Peloponnesian," who, in the act of expiring, *reminiscitur Argos.* Of le Maréchal Marmont (Duc de Raguse) we read that, "par un sentiment précurseur, et comme il arrive à ceux qui, loin du ciel natal, se sentent décliner et approcher du terme, il nourrissait depuis quelque temps un vif et secret désir de revoir la France;" a yearning not destined to be gratified. "Le mal du pays le gagna; ce cœur si fort fut brisé." The French and the Scotch might perhaps divide honours on the score of patriotic attachment. Dr. James Hamilton somewhere expatiates on the instinct that seems to bring back the exile, perhaps after the interval of a generation, to his Highland glen, whether it be from luxury in a soft Bermudan life, or from that Canadian clearing in which a rosy household has sprung up, and in proud affection clings around him: towards the haunts of his childhood there is a strange deep-hidden yearning, which often sends absent looks towards northern stars, and ends at last in the actual pilgrimage. As in Grahame's lines:

> "Yes! I may love the music of strange tongues,
> And mould my heart anew, to take the stamp
> Of foreign friendships in a foreign land;
> But to my parchèd mouth's roof cleave this tongue,
> My fancy fade into the yellow leaf,
> And this oft-pausing heart forget to throb,
> If, Scotland! thee and thine it e'er forget."

Verstigan tells how a traveller in Palestine was once startled by hearing a captive Scotswoman singing as she dandled her baby at the door of one of the Arab tents, "Oh, Bothwell bank, thou bloomest fair!" John Leyden, in the delirium of a mortal fever in Java, was heard repeating snatches of old Border songs. Happier was Sir James Mackintosh, in that his lot was not far-away exile, when, in his dying moments, the image of the woods of Aldourie and the banks of Loch Ness,—every object seeming to be imprinted indelibly on his memory,—haunted him to the very last.

XXII.

FLATTERING LIPS.

PROVERBS xxix. 5.

THE words of wisdom warn us that a man who flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet. Surely the net is spread in vain in the sight of any bird? Not always in vain. Witness the Nonne Prest His Tale in Chaucer of the cock and the fox, and again the crow that warbled a hoarse croak to charm Reynard, and so was caught,—at least his cheese was. "A flattering mouth worketh ruin," another proverb has it. And another runs: "He that rebuketh a man shall afterwards find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue." It was Elihu's pride, so to speak, that he knew not to give flattering titles unto men. The Psalmist couples flattering lips with a double heart. And St. Paul exulted in the consciousness of not having at any time used flattering words, as the Thessalonians knew, and as he called God to witness.

Especially to them of high degree is there need of warning:

> "Allas! ye lordlynges, many a false flatour
> Is in your house, and many a lozengour,
> That pleasen yow wel more, by my faith,
> Than he that sothfastnesse unto you saith.
> Redith Ecclesiast of flaterie;
> Bethwar, ye lordes, of her trecherie."

Clarendon traces a considerable measure of Edmund Waller's success in high circles, and where it craved wary walking, to his exercise of "servile flattery to the height the vainest and most imperious nature could be contented with it." We have South's word for it, that if ever you find an ignoramus in place and power, and can have so little conscience, and so much confidence, as to tell him to his face that he has a wit and an understanding above all the world beside,—"as fulsome a dose as you give him, he shall readily take it down, and admit the commendation, though he cannot believe the thing." *Blanditiæ*,

etiam cum excluduntur, placent. It is Glenalvon's conviction, and one he acts upon, that

> "flattery direct
> Rarely disgusts. They little know mankind
> Who doubt its operation: 'tis my key,
> And opes the wicket of the human heart."

Molière's Valère will not allow the cleverest of men, *les plus fins*, ever to be safe from becoming the dupes of flattery; there is nothing, he asserts, too extravagant or ridiculous for them to swallow, if only it is well seasoned with panegyric. Himself a pronounced flatterer, he owns that sincerity is something of a sufferer in a game such as he systematically plays; but when you have need of people, you must accommodate yourself to them; and since flattery is the only way of making sure of them the fault (on his showing) lies not with those who so flatter, but with those who must and will be flattered, at whatever cost. La Fontaine's fox tells his crow, "Apprenez que tout flatteur vit au dépens de celui qui l'écoute." An apostrophe in the old historical play (1597, author unknown) of *Edward the Third*, runs into an aspiration:

> "O thou World, great nurse of flattery,
> Why dost thou tip men's tongues with golden words,
> And poise their deeds with weight of heavy lead,
> That fair performance cannot follow promise?
> O that a man might hold the heart's close book
> And choke the lavish tongue when it doth utter
> The breath of falsehood, not charácter'd there!"

St. Simon describes Lewis the Fourteenth as spoiled by adulation—for his ministers, his mistresses, his generals, his courtiers, perceiving his weakness—an unmeasured love of admiration—were emulous in flattering him; and the flattery "pleased him to such an extent, that the coarsest was well received, the vilest still better relished. It was the sole means by which you could approach him." Catharine the Great was little enough to be notoriously insatiable of flattery: she expected to be addressed in a strain of Oriental adulation, and to be approached with all the deference due to a divinity. Kaiser Joseph II., during his visit to her in 1780, is said, "by the

most delicate and artful flattery," to have "wrought up her admiration of his character almost to enthusiasm."

The husband of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu has been characterized as combining very moderate talents with most overweening vanity: from several of her ladyship's letters to him the inference is obvious that no flatteries were too gross for his taste. "No man of real sense would have endured such fulsome praise of it," Earl Stanhope remarks. David Garrick's portrait, as painted by Goldsmith, was painted from the life:

> "Of praise a mere glutton, he swallowed what came,
> And the puff of a dunce, he mistook it for fame."

Less good-natured is what the younger Colman says of him—(not thus would George the elder have written down his fellow-playwright and old friend:) that after gorging upon the applause of thundering audiences and judicious critics, Garrick's unsatiated and grovelling appetite hungered for the admiration of a shoeblack or an infant: "he would steal a sidelong look at a duke's table, to ascertain whether he had made a hit upon the butler and the footmen. Such were the littlenesses of the Great Roscius." John Gay asserts that

> "flattery never seems absurd;
> The flattered always take your word:
> Impossibilities seem just:
> They take the strongest praise on trust.
> Hyperboles, though ne'er so great,
> Will still come short of self-conceit."

By help of this false magnifying glass, as John Oldham words it, "a louse or flea shall for a camel pass;" and if before his "vile rascal" of a fulsome flatterer you "produce a hideous wight, more ugly far than those ill shapes which in old hangings are,

> "He'll make him straight a beau garçon appear;
> Commend his voice and singing, tho' he bray
> Worse than Sir Martin Marrall in the play . . . ;
> And here's the mischief . . . he is believed."

The effrontery is marvellous, as the late Mr. Savage once remarked, with which some men can flatter others in the

grossest manner to their faces: but then there are people on whom flattery can never be laid too thick to be agreeable; you may lay it on them with trowels; nay, you may shovel it over them; they can bear any weight of it; cartloads of encomium, mountains of compliments, Pelion on Ossa, and Ossa on Olympus. "There are gross feeders, or there would not be gross caterers." It has been severely said of Tom Moore, as self-portrayed in his Diary, that he gloats over adulation in every page, and with the most unflinching nerve licks up the most nauseous and greasy draughts of flattery—nothing coming amiss to him. The cant and blarney of an Irish linkboy were as acceptable as the insolent familiarity of a Royal Duke. "Moore had nostrils very undiscriminating. It was equally incense whether the tribute was of the gums of Arabia or a pastile of camel's dung." Lalande was noted while yet a child for his "unusual love of adulation." Benjamin West was taunted with a like charge by Peter Pindar (whose accentuation of Niagara is exceptionable, as so many things about him were):

> "Don't be cast down—instead of gall,
> Molasses from my pen shall fall:
> And yet I fear thy gullet it is such
> That could I pour all Niagara down,
> Were Niagara praise, thou wouldst not frown,
> Nor think the thundering gulf one drop too much."

Mr. Seward related an early interview of Hannah More with Johnson, when the lady peppered so highly that the Doctor turned suddenly to her, with a stern and angry countenance, and said, "Madam, before you flatter a man grossly to his face, you should consider whether or not your flattery is worth having."

John Ballantyne's hearty praise of *Woodstock* was dear to Sir Walter,—"did me much good," the Diary says. "I think I make no habit of feeding on praise, and despise those whom I see greedy for it, as much as I should an underbred fellow who, after eating a cherry-tart, proceeded to lick the plate. But when one is flagging, a little praise (if it can be had genuine and unadulterated by flattery, which is as difficult to come by

as the real mountain-dew) is a cordial after all." The Ettrick Shepherd declares him that "disna like flattery" to be either "less or mair nor man. It's the natural language o' freenship, and as distinck frae flummery as a bee frae a drone, a swan frae a guse," etc. "Commend me to freens that flatter you, as it is ca'd, afore your face, and defend ye ahint your back." In England, a man who tries to recommend himself by saying fulsome things, is, as an essayist on Compliments observes, very soon marked, and shunned accordingly; or, at best, he sinks into the position of toady *en titre* to some very empty-headed grandee. "In private life, compliments are discreditable to the utterer, and odious to the receiver." But it is complained that the moment a man appears in public, all his decent reserve is thrown aside; and at a public dinner or meeting the flatteries are a matter of course, which most men would turn red all over before they could hear said of themselves, or say of another. Even prayer is pressed into this service; and prayer is held to be a more effective vehicle, both of flattery and of detraction, than any other species of composition. If your catalogue of praises of a "noble chairman," for instance, takes the form of a thanksgiving to the Supreme Being for the blessing He has vouchsafed to His people by endowing with rank and fame a vessel of so much piety, wisdom, zeal, etc., etc., you "may venture upon a very considerable amount of unctuous hyperbole without palling on the taste of your audience." Meanwhile, the noble chairman, it is added, undergoes the oleaginous application with a modest smile, and, when it is over, with a few friendly counter-compliments, and a pious ascription, accepts the fact of his own canonization. Oil of Flattery, Mr. Carlyle prescribes, (and yet proscribes,) as the best patent anti-friction known, subduing all irregularities whatever. Crabbe's Laughton is skilled, "by pouring oil of flattery on its rage," the swelling force of the angriest deep to assuage. "Delicious essence!" Sterne apostrophizes it; "how refreshing art thou to nature! how strongly are all its powers and all its weaknesses on thy side! how sweetly dost thou mix with the blood, and help it through the most difficult and tortuous

passages to the heart!" Mr. Thackeray calls a "blundering idiot" the author of the saying that "fine words butter no parsnips"—half the parsnips of society being in fact served and rendered palatable with no other sauce: a skilful artist will make a few simple and pleasing phrases go further than ever so much substantial benefit-stock in the hands of a mere bungler. "Nay, we know that substantial benefits often sicken some stomachs; whereas most will digest any amount of fine words, and be always eager for more of the same food." But here too there are stomachs and stomachs, and some soon turn. Recording in his diary a compliment paid him by Madame d'Arblay, Sir Walter Scott writes, "This was really a compliment to be pleased with—a nice little handsome pat of butter made up by a 'neat-handed Phillis' of a dairymaid, instead of the grease, fit only for cart-wheels, which one is dosed with by the pound." The crowning merit of a clever woman's flattery is said to be the fact that it never seems like flattery; and this is illustrated in the description of Sir Jasper Denison's acceptance of every syllable of Mrs. Harding's honeyed discourse, as if unconscious that she was anything but a very sensible woman, —a little worldly-wise, of course, yet in a general way a really candid creature, with plenty of sound common sense. The widow, it seems, drew her most potent magic from the vanity of her victim, and her highest art consisted in a skilful cultivation of his own weakness. He was mortal, and he liked incense, and she flattered him. She "kept the perfumed censer burning as steadily as if it had been the sacred fire which classic vestals watched." In every word, in every gesture, in every glance, in every tone, she contrived to convey some breath of the insidious vapour which lulled him into a "delicious trance of self-complacency." She would appear to have studied the tactics of Byron's hero, concerning whom we are told that Aurora,

> "who in her indifference
> Confounded him in common with the crowd
> Of flatterers, though she deem'd he had more sense
> Than whispering foplings, or than witlings loud,—

> Commenced—(from such slight things will great commence)
> To feel that flattery which attracts the proud
> Rather by deference than compliment,
> And wins even by a delicate dissent."

Byron himself takes note in his diary of having received a letter from Madame de Staël, in which "she flatters me very prettily;—but I know it." The reason, he adds, that adulation is not displeasing is, that, though untrue, it shows one to be of consequence enough, in one way or other, to induce people to lie, to make us their friend. "That is their concern," he cynically concludes. To Boswell's remark that no quality will get a man more friends than a disposition to admire the qualities of others,—meaning, not flattery, but a sincere admiration,—"Nay, sir," replied Johnson, "flattery pleases very generally. In the first place, the flatterer may think what he says to be true; but, in the second place, whether he thinks so or not, he certainly thinks those whom he flatters of consequence enough to be flattered." A maxim of Swift's is, that love of flattery, in most men, proceeds from the mean opinion they have of themselves; in women, from the contrary. Among his *Hints on Good Manners* occur these two: "Nothing is so great an instance of ill manners as flattery. If you flatter all the company, you please none: if you flatter only one or two, you affront the rest." "Flattery is the worst and falsest way of showing our esteem." Take the word of Timon of Athens for it, and verily we are all of us guilty in this matter:

> "Who dares, who dares,
> In purity of manhood stand upright,
> And say, 'This man's a flatterer'? if one be,
> So are they all; for every grize of fortune
> Is smoothed by that below."

But *la flatterie n'émane jamais des grandes âmes*, says Balzac; "elle est l'apanage des petits esprits, qui réussissent à se rapetisser encore pour mieux entrer dans la sphère vitale de la personne autour de laquelle ils gravitent." *La flatterie sous-entend un intérêt.* As with the model flatterer in Crabbe's *Borough*,

> "Falsehood in him was not the useless lie
> Of boasting pride or laughing vanity;

It was the gainful, the persuading art,
That made its way and won the doubting heart,
Which argued, soften'd, humbled, and prevail'd;
Nor was it tried till every truth had fail'd;
No sage on earth could more than he despise
Degrading, poor, unprofitable lies."

Coleridge somewhere observes, sententiously, that truth is not detraction, and that assuredly we do not hate him to whom we tell the truth; but that with whomsoever we play the deceiver and flatterer, him at the bottom we despise. "He that slanders me," writes Cowper to Newton, disclaiming all design to flatter him, "paints me blacker than I am, and he that flatters me, whiter—they both daub me, and when I look in the glass of conscience, I see myself disguised by both: I had as lief my tailor should sew gingerbread-nuts on my coat instead of buttons, as that any man should call my Bristol stone a diamond. The tailor's trick would not at all embellish my suit, nor the flatterer's make me at all the richer. I never make a present to a friend of what I dislike myself: ergo . . . I did not mean to flatter you." His lines are more serious, if not more earnest, to the same effect, and with the same assurance:

"The worth of these three kingdoms I defy
To lure me to the baseness of a lie:
And of all lies (be that one poet's boast)
The lie that flatters I abhor the most."

Rousseau declares *la vérité qui blâme* to be *plus honorable que la vérité qui loue*—because praise serves but to corrupt those who relish it, and the least worthy are ever the most hungry for it; whereas censure is useful, and only real merit can endure it.

"Know, glutton-like, on praise each monarch crams:
Hot spices suit alone their pampered nature:
Alas! the stomach, parched by burning drams,
With mad-dog terror starts at simple water.
Fierce is each royal mania for applause;
And as a horsepond wide are monarch maws,—
Formed therefore on a pretty ample scale:
To sound the decent panegyric note,
To pour the modest flatteries down their throat,
Were offering shrimps for dinner to a whale."

So Dr. Wolcot assured his readers; and much he knew about it. But the same sort of thing is asserted on higher authority, by those conversant with courts. One of Chesterfield's miscellaneous reflections, *pensées*, or maxims, is, that flattery, though a base coin, is the necessary pocket-money at court; where, by custom and consent, it has obtained such a currency, that it is no longer a fraudulent, but a legal payment. Of kings in general he elsewhere scruples not to affirm that "flattery cannot be too strong for them; drunk with it from their infancy, like old drinkers, they require drams." Samuel Pepys hies him to the Tennis Court to see the King play at tennis, and goes home to journalize his impressions of the scene: "But to see how the King's play was extolled, without any cause at all, was a loathsome sight, though sometimes, indeed, he did play very well, and deserved to be commended; but such open flattery is beastly." *Le flatteur n'a pas assez bonne opinion de soi ni des autres*, La Bruyère says. Goldsmith's Chinese philosopher maintains that no people in the world flatter each other more than the English, but that none understand the art less, or flatter with such little refinement. He likens their panegyric to a Tartar feast, served up indeed with profusion, but of which the cookery is insupportable. "A client here shall dress up a fricassee for his patron, that shall offend an ordinary nose before it enters the room." A master of the art inveighs against the clumsiness of indiscriminate dabblers in it, who, instead of repairing and heightening the piece judiciously, with soft colours and a delicate pencil, daub and besmear it with a coarse brush, and a great deal of whitewash. Such a dauber's flattery "offends even his patron; and is almost too gross for his mistress. A man of the world knows the force of flattery as well as he does; but then he knows how, when, and where to give it; he proportions his dose to the constitution of the patient. He flatters by art, by application, by inference, by comparison, by hint; and seldom directly." Molière is disdainful of "ces adulateurs à outrance, ces flatteurs insipides, qui n'assaisonnent d'aucun sel les louanges qu'ils donnent, et dont toutes les flatteries ont une douceur fade qui fait mal au cœur à ceux qui les écoutent.',

Contrasting the compliments of commonplace men with those of the all-incomparable Sir Charles, her peerless Grandison, the Hon. Miss Byron observes that the highest things are ever said by men of the lowest understandings ; and their bolts once shot, the poor souls can go no farther. Sir Ralph Esher remarks of fawning Mr. Braythwaite, that "with all his cunning he had not the art of making his flattery agreeable," a defect more common than is suspected. Perhaps there is not one more common with pretenders of all kinds, nor less conceivable by their understandings. Macaulay prescribes a study of Voltaire's correspondence with Frederick the Great as likely to be of advantage to those who wish to become proficients in the ignoble art of flattery. No man, he says, ever paid compliments better than Voltaire, whose sweetest confectionery had always a delicate yet stimulating flavour, which was delightful to palates wearied by the coarse preparations of inferior artists. "It was only from his hand that so much sugar could be swallowed without making the swallower sick." The most effective flattery is said to be the praising a person for qualities which he or she ought to have, or pretends to have, and has not. If a respectable man of letters, Mr. Hayward surmises, had told Madame de Staël that her *Germany* was a great work, she would have turned from him with a sneer ; but, by alluding to her feminine fascinations, the veriest coxcomb might have become her oracle. So again, though it might have been a hazardous feat to commend Cardinal Richelieu for his statesmanship, a judicious compliment to his tragedy might have earned a pension or a place. Goldsmith had long before written about compliments being the more agreeable the less they are deserved : those we think deserved we accept only as debts, with indifference ; but those which we are conscious of not meriting, we receive with the same gratitude that we do favours given away.

Noteworthy among adroit flatterers is Photius, whom at one time we see, by his skill in the art, securing the protection of the Emperor Michael ; at another, overcoming the resentment and rancour of the Emperor Basil, who was then induced to recall him from his monastic retreat, and reinstate him in the

see of Constantinople. Clarendon makes particular mention of Sir John Colepepper's "wonderful insinuation and address," all the more effective because of his uncourtliness, "for sure no man less appeared a courtier,"—and how he was believed at court to speak with all plainness and sincerity, "flattery being a weed not so natural to the air and soil of the country, where he had wholly lived." Hence his influence with both king and queen, though, or indeed because, "no man more complied with those infirmities they both had," and by compliance he prevailed. No flattery, a contemporary thinker observes, is so delicate as that which consists in a listener's lively perception of the force of your every remark, and a thorough approval of your sentiment. Being indirect, it is free from the liability of direct flattery to make, as M. Paul Mesnard says, "trébucher dans le mauvais gout et dans le ridicule les esprits les plus fins et les plus judicieux." When Vivian Grey tries his art upon Mrs. Million, that lady muses on the secret of his spell: It is not flattery, she flatters herself, nor is it a rifacimento of compliments: apparently she has heard a young philosopher delivering his sentiments upon an abstract point in human life, and yet has not listened to a triumphant defence of her conduct. "Of course it was unintentional, and yet how agreeable to be unintentionally defended!" She is not to be taken in what Boileau calls the *filets d'une sotte louange:*

> "Aussitôt ton esprit, prompt à se révolter,
> S'échappe, et rompt le piège ou l'on veut l'arrêter.
> Il n'en est pas de ces esprits frivoles
> Que tout flatteur endort au son de ses paroles."

Burns owns to Mrs. Dunlop his having had his head turned by the "artful compliments" of certain demoiselles at Dunlop: they did not "lard" him over as so many a poet does his patron, but so intoxicated him with their "sly insinuations and delicate innuendos of compliment," that he was all but carried off his feet. He was not one, he implies, to swallow *sans dégoût le plus grossier éloge;* but it was hardly in him to resist (again to quote Despréaux) "la louange adroite et délicate dont la trop forte odeur n'ébranle point les sens." Such praise as Madame

de Sévigné accredits De Bussy with the knack of bestowing, attributing, or suggesting—praise so neatly conferred and so smoothly finished off that the object of it was all but convinced of deserving at least a part of it, *quelque exagération qu'il y ait.* Whatever dirty-shirted philosophers may say to the contrary, quoth the Chronicler of Clovernook, flattery is a fine social thing—the beautiful handmaid of life, he styles it, casting flowers and odoriferous herbs in the paths of men, who, crushing out the sweets, curl up their noses as they snuff the odour, and walk half an inch higher to heaven by what they tread upon.

Trompart is, on Spenser's showing, fit man for Braggadocchio, making it his one study to uphold "his ydle humour with fine flattery, and blow the bellows to his swelling vanity." Base is the slave that fawns, has been the motto of many a proud spirit, that so far did well to be proud. Dante was notably on his guard against ever making any approach to flattery; "a vice," says Cary, "which he justly held in the utmost abhorrence." In the eighth circle of *l'Inferno* he comes across Alessio of Lucca, who, "beating on his brain," thus bewails his gross indulgence in that vice:

> "Me thus low down my flatteries have sunk,
> Wherewith I ne'er enough could glut my tongue."

Hotspur thanks his stars he cannot flatter, and disdains the tongues of soothers. Gloster finds himself out of favour because he cannot flatter and speak fair, smile in men's faces, smooth, deceive, and cog, duck with French nods and apish courtesy. "My tongue could never learn sweet soothing word." Coriolanus would not flatter Neptune for his trident, or Jove for his power to thunder: he is one that would, as Menenius rates him, rather follow his enemy in a fiery gulf, than flatter him in a bower. Cassius is avowedly one that cannot fawn on men, and hug them hard; to his proud nature the humiliation is severe when Brutus tells him of his faults, and, to his deprecating protest that a friendly eye could never see such faults, replies, "A flatterer's would not, though they do appear as huge as high

Olympus." Hamlet doubles the value of his hearty praise of Horatio by the assurance, "Nay, do not think I flatter: for what advancement may I hope from thee?" Cordelia cannot flatter; and thereby loses her father's love and her share of his divided realm: unhappy that she is, she cannot heave her heart into her mouth; her love is richer than her tongue; she wants "that glib and oily heart to speak and purpose not." Kent is as true to Lear, in his way, as Cordelia in hers; as true a friend, as she a daughter. But he is plain and outspoken, and his duty dreads not to speak when power to flattery bows. What is afterwards said of Kent in disguise, though untrue of him, is a faithful enough portrait of some folks:

> "This is some fellow
> Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect
> A saucy roughness. . . . He cannot flatter, he!—
> An honest mind and plain—he must speak truth,
> An' they will take it, so; if not, he's plain."

Molière's Clitandre takes credit to himself for that "son cœur n'a jamais pu, tant il est né sincère," descend to *flatter* even the most charming of her sex. Swift's cringing knave, who seeks a place without success, thus tells his case: "Why should he longer mince the matter? He failed because he could not flatter." So again,

> "The chaplain vows he cannot fawn,
> Though it would raise him to the lawn: . . .
> But owns he had a stubborn spirit,
> That made him trust alone to merit."

For himself as well as for Horace is Pope speaking when he strenuously disclaims all ascription of praise undeserved—

> "And when I flatter, let my dirty leaves
> Clothe spice, line trunks, or fluttering in a row,
> Befringe the rails of Bedlam and Soho."

As Mégabate in *Le Grand Cyrus* is very upright, he is the avowed enemy of all flattery; he cannot praise what he deems undeserving of praise,—cannot debase himself to say what he does not believe; he likes much better to pass for severe among those who are ignorant of what true virtue is, than to

expose himself to the charge of adulation. So closely does the rest of the description tally with the lines in *Le Misanthrope*, "Plus on aime quelqu'un, moins il faut qu'on le flatte," etc., that M. Victor Cousin starts the note of interrogation, Had Molière read this passage of the *Cyrus?*—More than one or two great artists have piqued themselves, with better or worse reason for it, on their incapacity for flattering speeches. "Unknowing how to flatter the great," one of Caravagio's biographers says of that ill-starred genius, "he was driven from city to city in the utmost indigence, and might truly be said to paint for his bread." When the ambassador from Lucca chid Benvenuto Cellini for not acting the courtier better to his patron, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, "I made answer," quoth Ben, "that I wished well to my lord, was his affectionate and faithful servant, and could not stoop to the arts of flattery and adulation." Not Madame d'Arblay's Mr. Crutchley could more energetically repudiate such arts, all and sundry. "Me!" cried he; "no, indeed! I never complimented anybody: that is, I never said to anybody a thing I did not think, unless I was openly laughing at them, and making sport for other people." "Oh," cried Fanny Burney, (everybody cried in her days: at any rate, crying was "pretty Fanny's way," all her Diary through,) "if everybody went by this rule, what a world of conversation would be curtailed!"

When Henry Home, afterwards Lord Kames, was a young man, wily old Lovat, as Dr. Chambers tells the story, observed his talents, and conceiving, from his success at the bar, that he might, in the course of time, become serviceable to himself, resolved to make him his friend. He set about it by rushing out to embrace Home one day, in his fulsome style, and by pretending extreme admiration of his personal graces, and consequent ambition to become his intimate friend. "My lord," cried Home, struggling to extricate himself from the hug, "this is quite intolerable. I ken very weel I am the coarsest-looking fellow in the Court o' Session; so ye needna think to impose upon me wi' your fair-fashioned speeches. Hae dune—hae dune." "Henry," exclaimed Lovat, in an altered tone, "I was

only trying you. I'm truly glad to find that you can withstand flattery." "My dear lord," said Home, "I am glad to hear you say so." Lovat's purpose was accomplished. He had flattered his man upon his superiority to flattery; and that, as the sequel proved, was the way to win him.

> "Most crafty when no craft appear'd,
> When simple most, most to be fear'd . . .
> Wantonly cheating o'er and o'er,
> Those who had cheated been before."

The elder and worldly-wiser of Mr. Trollope's Bertrams cautions his son, who is chary of civil words to the churlish uncle that professes to disrelish them, not to "believe everything that everybody tells you in his own praise." When a man says that he does not like flattery, and that he puts no value on soft words, do not on that account be deterred, Sir Lionel advises, from making any civil speeches you may have ready: he will not be a bit stronger than another because he boasts of his strength.

Does one of Sam Slick's protesting listeners think that if the adroit Yankee wanted to "soft sawder" him, he'd take the white-brush to him, and slobber it on, "as a nigger wench does to a board fence, or a kitchen wall to home," and put his eyes out with the lime? "No, not I; but I could tickle you enough, and have done it afore now, just for practice, and you warn't a bit the wiser. I'd take a camel's-hair brush to you, knowin' how skittish and ticklesome you are, and doing it so it would feel good. I'd make you feel kinder pleasant, I know. . . . I wouldn't go to shock you by a doin' of it coarse; you're too quick and too knowin' for that. You should smell the otter o' roses, and sniff, sniff it up your nostrils, and say to yourself, 'How nice that is, ain't it? Come, I like that; how sweet it stinks!'" The other assures Mr. Slick that he overrates his own powers, and exaggerates his listener's vanity: "You are flattering yourself now; you can't flatter me, for I detest it." "Creation, man," said Mr. Slick, "I have done it now afore your face, these last five minutes, and you didn't know it," and the other, on consideration, has the candour to plead guilty,

and to say, "You took me in. You touched a weak point. You insensibly flattered my vanity, by assenting to my self-sufficiency in supposing I was exempt from that universal frailty of human nature." And Mr. Slick duly chuckles over the confession that he did "put the leake" into the Squire, that's a fact.

Decius can undertake to "o'ersway" Cæsar, by flattery the the most subtle and suasive; and this is how the expert goes about it,—

> "But when I tell him, he hates flatterers,
> He says he does; being then most flattered."

XXIII.

THE EARTH ABIDING.

ECCLESIASTES i. 4.

HE that preached vanity of vanities, all is vanity, opened that discourse with a contrast between fleeting man and the abiding earth. The sons of men come and go; they appear for a little while, and then vanish away; but the scene of their brief show is a fixture, and the stage they strut upon till the curtain falls is no mere vanishing quantity, no mere dissolving view, like themselves. "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever." The contrast seems almost a cruel one between the material dwelling-place and the spiritual dwellers therein; it abideth, but they abide not; the round world hath its foundations so sure that they cannot be moved, but the races that people it are hurried off the scene, and for them there is no stay. Even within their sorry space of existence they have time, some of them, to grow feeble and old, to outlive their own health and strength, to exchange comeliness for wrinkles, and bloom for decay. But the earth abideth as it was—its canopy of skies as blue as of yore, its rush of rivers as fresh

and free, its encompassing seas as buoyant as ever with the ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα it is so hard to translate.

Whatever poets may say to the contrary, urges one who might claim to be a prose-poet, Nature is not sympathetic: rather is she very insolent to us in her triumphant, durable beauty; and she loves to say to us, "Though you are weeping, my eyes are dry; though you are very sick and feeble, I am strong and fair; though you are most short-lived, here to-day and gone to-morrow, I am eternal, I endure." Generations come and go, live out their little life, and descend in common to dusty death, come like shadows, so depart; but the earth abideth. A *Cornhill* essayist loves to think that the air we breathe through our open window is the same that wandered through Paradise before Eve was there to inhale it; that the primroses which grow in our dear old woods are such as decked the banks before sin and death came into the world; and that our children shall find them, neither better nor worse, when our names are clean forgotten. Owen Meredith, in one place apostrophizing Nature, exclaims,

> "On the winds, as of old,
> Thy voice in its accent is joyous and bold;
> Thy forests are green as of yore; and thine oceans
> Yet move in the might of their ancient emotions."

As again in another place he calls the sun

> "changeless, as when,
> Ere he lit down to death generations of men,
> O'er that crude and ungainly creation, which there
> With wild shapes the cloud-world seems to mimic in air,
> The eye of Heaven's all-judging witness, he shone,
> And shall shine on the ages we reach not."

So Churchill, in very different metre and manner, sings of how the same stars keep their watch, and the same sun runs in the track where he from first hath run; "the same moon rules the night; tides ebb and flow; Man is a puppet, and this world a show." The saying of some people that there is no antiquity like that of nature, is disputed by Hartley Coleridge: Nature, indeed, has her antiquities, he says; but they

are not the sun, the moon, and the stars, nor the overflowing ocean, nor the eternal hills: these are all exempt from time, and are no older now than when angels sang hallelujahs at their creation. It is of *La Nature* that Charles Perrault smoothly and soothly sings or says,

> "Son être est immuable, et cette force aisée
> Dont elle produit tout, ne s'est point épuisée:
> Jamais l'astre du jour qu'aujourd'hui nous voyons,
> N'eut le front couronné de plus brillants rayons;
> Jamais dans le printemps les roses empourprées
> D'un plus vif incarnat ne furent colorées;
> Non moin blanc qu'autrefois brille dans nos jardins
> L'éblouissant émail des lis et des jasmins."

The passions of men may, as Gerald Griffin says, convulse the frame of society, and centuries of ignorance, of poverty, and of civil strife may succeed to ages of science and thrift and peace; but still the mighty mother holds her course unchanged: spring succeeds winter, and summer spring, and all the harmonies of her great system move on through countless æons with the same unvarying serenity of purpose. "God bless them!" cried Southey, of the lakes and mountains to which he got back in 1803: "I look with something like awe and envy at their unchangeableness." They say the Highlands are changed, exclaims Scott's Highland Widow, "but I see Ben Cruachan rear his crest as high as ever into the evening sky." Come, bids us one of Nature's poets,

> "Come, let us laugh at the old worldly modes,
> And seek new life in Nature's deathless power.
> We'll leave the dust upon the beaten roads,
> And in the meadows look upon the flower
> Fresh as it ever bloom'd in Eden's bower."

And then, star-gazing,—

> "Ye fixèd ones, what eye hath seen you stir
> Since mark'd by Chaldee old, your ancient chronicler?
>
> * * * * *
>
> Still are ye deathless beacon-lights to Pain,
> And watchful Sorrow. Thrones arise and sink,
> Earth is transform'd beneath you; ye remain,
> Clasping distracted man with Order's sacred chain."

Hood's ode to the Moon closes with an Amen, "So let it be:—Before I lived to sigh, Thou wert in Avon, and a thousand rills, Beautiful orb! and so, whene'er I lie Trodden, thou wilt be gazing from thy hills." Herr Teufelsdröckh, gazing upwards at the stars, muses on the thousands of human generations, all as noisy as our own, that have been swallowed up of Time, and of whom there remains no wreck any more; while Arcturus and Orion and Sirius and the Pleiades are still shining in their courses, clear and young, as when the shepherd first noted them in the plain of Shinar.

> " Fool'd was the human vanity that wrote
> Strange names in astral fire on yonder pole.
> Who and what are they—in what age remote—
> That scrawl'd weak boasts on yon siderial scroll?
> Orion shines. Now seek for Nimrod. Where?
> Osiris is a fable, and no more:
> But Sirius burns as brightly as of yore.
> There is no shade on Berenice's hair.
>
> * * * * *
>
> Man knows no more than this: that you are still,
> But he is moved: he goes, but you remain."

From Wordsworth's Churchyard among the Mountains we overhear at dusk the voice of a pensive gazer at the planet Jupiter, that hung above the centre of the vale: it said, "That glorious star, in its untroubled element will shine as now it shines, when we are laid in earth, and safe from all our sorrows." In like mood muses the Rydal bard himself at twilight, saying of his surroundings, Thus did the waters gleam, the mountains lower, to the rude Briton wandering in wolf-skin attire; and by him was seen the same vision of mighty barriers and enclosed gulf, "the flood, the stars,—a spectacle as old as the beginning of the heavens and earth!" A Somersetshire archæologist pictures for us a bit of local scenery from an unfathomable antiquity downwards, and during the later Pliocene bone-cave period we are instructed to feel ourselves at home, for the trees, and even the mosses, and probably also the wild flowers, are the same: even the main features of the landscape are identical: "The Quantocks, and the Mendips, and the Blackdowns are still

overlooking the level plain at their feet." It is a commonplace with sojourners in Rome to glorify the view shut in by the Alban mountains, looking just the same amid all the decay and changes of "the eternal city," as when Romulus gazed thitherward over his half-finished wall. So with the unshaken snow on the brow of Delphi,

> "High and eternal, such as shone
> Through thousand summers brightly gone,
> Along the gulf, the mount, the clime;
> It will not melt, like man, to time."

States fall, arts fade, but Nature doth not die, as Childe Harold has it. Leaning over a parapet and watching the flow of the Rhine, Walter in the *Golden Legend* exclaims,

> "Yes, there it flows, for ever, broad and still,
> As when the vanguard of the Roman legions
> First saw it from the top of yonder hill."

Much it strikes the youthful Gneschen as he sits by the Kuhbach, one silent noontide, and watches it flowing, gurgling, to think how this same streamlet had flowed and gurgled, through all changes of weather and of fortune, from beyond the earliest date of history. "Yes, probably on the morning when Joshua forded Jordan; even as at the midday when Cæsar, doubtless with difficulty, swam the Nile, yet kept his 'Commentaries' dry,—this little Kuhbach, assiduous as Tiber, Eurotas, or Siloa, was murmuring on across the wilderness, as yet unnamed, unseen; here, too, as in the Euphrates and the Ganges, is a vein or veinlet of the grand World-circulation of Waters, which, with its atmospheric arteries, has lasted and lasts simply with the World. Thou fool! Nature alone is antique, and the oldest art a mushroom; that idle crag thou sittest on is six thousand years of age." In silence lies Wordsworth's old Matthew, and eyes the stream beneath the tree, till he too finds voice in song:

> "No check, no stay, this streamlet fears:
> How merrily it goes!
> 'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
> And flow as now it flows."

Low they dug Lord Marmion's grave, even where he lay when he fell; but every mark of it, his minstrel tells us, is gone: Time's wasting hand has done away the simple Cross of Sybil Gray, and broke his font of stone;

> "But from out the little hill
> Oozes the slender springlet still."

Barry Cornwell's *Thought on a Rivulet* begins, "Look at this brook, so blithe, so free! Thus hath it been, fair boy, for ever—a shining, dancing, babbling river; and thus 'twill ever be.

> 'Twill run, from mountain to the main,
> With just the same sweet babbling voice
> That now sings out, 'Rejoice, rejoice!'
> Perhaps 'twill be a chain,
> That will a thousand years remain—
> Aye, through all times and changes last,
> And link the present with the past."

We talk of "old" ocean, hoary ocean; "I cannot associate age with it," protests one of America's foremost writers: "it is too buoyant, animated, living: its crest of foam is not hoariness, but the breaking forth of life." Ocean to him is perpetual youth. The sea, as another transatlantic man of genius describes it, drowns out humanity and time; it has no sympathy with either; "for it belongs to eternity, and of that it sings its monotonous song for ever and ever." He calls it a "great liquid metronome" that beats its solemn measure, steadily swinging when the solo or duet of human life began, and to swing just as steadily after the human chorus has died out and man is a fossil on its shores. Mr. Kingsley, in one of his studies on the coast of North Devon, has a similar rhapsody, but does not forget the Apocalypse in his finale: he pictures for us green columns of wave which rush mast-high up the perpendicular walls, and then fall back and outwards in a waterfall of foam, lacing the black rocks with a thousand snowy streams: there they fall, and leap, and fall again; and so they did yesterday, and the day before; "and so they did centuries ago, when the Danes swept past them, battle-worn, . . . from

the fight at Appledore. . . . Ay, and even so they leapt and fell, before a sail gleamed on the Severn sea, when the shark and the ichthyosaur paddled beneath the shade of tropic forests—now scanty turf and golden gorse. And so they will leap and fall, on, on through the centuries and the ages. Oh, dim abyss of Time, into which we peer shuddering, what will be the end of thee, and of this ceaseless coil and moan of waters? It is true, that when thou shalt be no more, then, too, 'there shall be no more sea.'" Meanwhile,

> "Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
> Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
> Thy waters wasted them while they were free,
> And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
> The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
> Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou,
> Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
> Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow,
> Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now."

The penultimate line was scarcely improved when expanded by Mr. Robert Montgomery into the couplet,

> "And thou, vast Ocean, on whose awful face
> Time's iron feet can print no ruin-trace."

In the journal that Francis Jeffrey kept during his voyage to America in 1813, we find reflections on man leaving no traces of himself on the watery part of the globe: he has stripped the land of its wood, and clothed it with corn and cities; he has changed its colour, its inhabitants, and all its qualities; and over it he seems, indeed, to have dominion; but the sea is as wild and unsubdued as on the first day of its creation. "It is just as desert and unaltered in all particulars as before its bed was created; and would be, after his race was extinct. Neither time nor art make any alteration here." Continents are worn down and consolidated, and the forests grow up or rot into bog, by the mere lapse of ages; but the great expanses of the ocean continue with the same surface and the same aspect for ever, and are, in this respect, to Jeffrey's thinking, "the most perfect specimen of antiquity,

and carry back the imagination the farthest into the dark abysses of time passed away." It is pleasant to see the old Scottish judge in retreat at Skelmorlie, an old castle on the Clyde, in after years, toying with "the shells and pebbles that engaged the leisure of Scipio and Lælius, in a world in which nothing was like our world but the said shells and pebbles, and the minds of virtuous men resting from their labours." So is it to see Dr. Channing, in decline and decay, writing gratefully from his dear native Rhode Island, when seeking rest there, and finding it: "Whilst the generation with which I grew up has disappeared, nature is the same; and even when a boy, it seems to me that my chief interest clung to the fields, the ocean, the beach." He is struck, during another visit, amid other so many and great changes, with the continuance of the order and beauty of the natural world, and sees in this a manifestation of the immutableness of God, and a pledge of the duration of "that principle which is nobler than nature, the human soul." Madame de Staël delights to recall the soul's "purest of emotions, religion," while gazing at that superb spectacle, the sea, on which man never left his trace. He may plough the earth, she says, and cut his way through mountains, or construct rivers into canals, for the transport of his merchandise; but if his fleets for a moment furrow the ocean, its waves as instantly efface this slight mark of servitude, and it again appears as it was on the first day of its creation. There is no writing a wrinkle on that brow, whether by man the mariner or Time the destroyer.

"Old Ocean was
Infinity of ages ere we breathed
Existence—and he will be beautiful
When all the living world that sees him now
Shall roll unconscious dust around the sun.
Quelling from age to age the vital throb
In human hearts, Death shall not subjugate
The pulse that swells in his stupendous breast,
Or interdict his minstrelsy to sound
In thundering concert with the quiring winds."

But perpetual youth is not the exclusive prerogative of Old

Ocean, perversely so-called. A traveller to Petra, exploring its ruins, turns from regarding the works of man there, all time-worn and decayed—statue and inscription, form, name, and story alike gone—to discourse upon the products of nature as alone perennial; for while the monuments of man are all spoiled, the delicate branches of the caper-plant hang down as fresh and beautiful from the chinks in the rock as they did two thousand years ago; and the foliage of the wild fig and tamarisk are as rich, we are told, "and the flower of the oleander as gaudy, as they were when the Princes of Edom dwelt in the clefts of the rocks, and held in pride the height of the hill." No wonder if poets love to identify the strain of song-birds in the dim past and the very present: thus Keats with the nightingale—

"Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown;
Perhaps the selfsame song that found a path
Through the sad tears of Ruth, when sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn."

And so Hood of the skylark, when he gladdens to think that, after ages of sorrow and wrong, the scorn of the proud, the misrule of the strong, and all the woes that to man belong,

"The lark still carols the selfsame song
That he did to the uncursed Adam."

Of the Earth herself, however, some poets incline to speak as if she were even past "a certain age"—which phrase may be taken to imply a certainly advanced age, but uncertainly how far advanced. Philosophers rather than poets should be the authority in such a question; and the doctors differ. Father Prout, indeed, contends that there is often more strict logic, and more downright common sense, in a poet's view of Nature and her works, than in the gravest and most elaborate disquisitions of *soi-disant* philosophy; and he cites with approbation Chateaubriand's protest against those who regard the earth as an old toothless hag, bearing in every feature the

traces of caducity; a protest followed up by a surmise (præ-scientific, or anti-scientific, or both) that the earth may have been designedly created with "the marks of age on its hoary surface." Did not the Creator, he asks, understand the effect and beauty of what we are agreed to call the picturesque? "Sans *cette vieillesse originaire* il n'y aurait eu ni pompe ni majesté dans l'univers." The present question concerns, however, not the positive geological age of our planet, or any amount of millions and billions of years more or less, but the "certain" or uncertain age she has reached in point of maturity; whether life and hope are as yet young with her, and the world all before her, and she still in her teens; or whether she is decaying and waxing old, and therefore more or less ready, as senescent, to vanish away. Several years ago, some person or other—"in fact, I believe it was myself," Mr. de Quincey quaintly says—published a paper from the German of Kant, on the age of our own little Earth—meaning, not the positive amount of years through which she may have existed, fifty millions for instance, but the period of life, the "stage," which she may be supposed to have reached. Is she a child, in fact, or is she an adult? Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, in one of her letters, affirms the world to be past its infancy, and no longer to be contented with spoon-meat. "I imagine we are now arrived at that period which answers to fifteen. I cannot think we are older, when I recollect the many probable follies which are still (almost) universally persisted in: I place that of war as senseless as the boxing of schoolboys, and whenever we come to man's estate (perhaps a thousand years hence) I do not doubt it will appear as ridiculous as the pranks of unlucky lads." M. Guizot reckons civilization to be as yet very young, and alleges of it and of society, that whatever the length of the road they have come, they have incomparably farther to go. Old-fashioned Owen Feltham opined, in *his* day, that the world had reached its middle age when it was "somewhat more than four thousand years old"—"though considering that there are promises that the latter days shall be shortened, we cannot expect that it

should endure for a like extent of time from that period." He knew not, he added, what certain grounds they had who pretended to foretell the particular time of the world's conflagration; but surely, in reason, and nature, the end could not be very far distant. "We have seen its infancy, its youth, its virility, all past; nay, we have seen it well advanced in declining years, the most infallible forerunner of a dissolution." He seems to see it as in the figure poetized by Lovel Beddoes, of

> "some aged, patient globe,
> Whose gaunt sides no summers robe,
> That like a prisoner through his grate,
> Shivering in despair doth wait
> For sunbeams broken, old, and pale."

Montaigne, on the other hand, ridiculed those who vainly conclude the decline and decrepitude of the world by the arguments we extract from our own weakness and decay: *Jamque adeo est affecta ætas, effœtaque tellus.* The opposite argument of Lucretius has been rudely Englished,

> "But sure the nature of the world is strong,
> Perfect and young; nor can I think it long
> Since it beginning took, because we know
> Arts still increase, and still politer grow."

Who shall say that this old earth is near its decadence? exclaims Dr. Wynter. "Why, it has only just been endowed with its nervous system; its muscles, if we may so term the steam-engine, have only been just set in motion; and its locomotive powers, the railway and steamship, have only just found out the full use of their legs. In brain, nerve, and limb, it is but just emerging from its helpless infancy." The American Autocrat of the Breakfast-table tells us he should have felt more nervous about the late comet, if he had thought the world was ripe: "But it is very green yet, if I am not mistaken; and besides, there is a great deal of coal to use up, which I cannot bring myself to think was made for nothing." The comet allusion reminds us of De Quincey's sportive speculation as to the comparative age of our planet:

whereas some think her in that stage of her life which corresponds to the playful period of twelve or thirteen in a spirited girl, *his* impression rather inclines him to represent the Earth as a fine noble young woman, full of the pride which is so becoming to her sex, and well able to take her own part, "in case that, in any solitary point of the heavens, she should come across one of those vulgar fussy Comets, disposed to be rude." He professes to perfectly abominate those who place our Earth in the catagory of decaying, nay, of decayed women—who absolutely fancy themselves to *see* hair like arctic snows, failure of vital heat, palsy that shakes the head as in the porcelain toys on our mantlepieces, and asthma that shakes the whole fabric. "They absolutely *hear* the tellurian lungs wheezing, panting, crying 'Bellows to mend!' periodically as the Earth approaches her aphelion." Elsewhere, again, he contends that if the Earth were on her last legs, we her children could not be very strong or healthy. "If our mother could, with any show of reason, be considered an old decayed lady, snoring stertorously in her arm-chair, there would naturally be some *aroma* of phthisis, or apoplexy, beginning to form about us, that are her children." But is there? He trows not. Is it likely, is it plausible, he asks, that we children of Earth should just begin to find out effective methods by steam of traversing land and sea, when the human race had a summons to leave both?

A writer in the *Times*, within the last decade, made a bit of a sensation at the time by announcing that age was beginning to tell upon the earth; that its crust had got very dry; that its mould was not what it used to be; that its natural covering had become very thin in some places, and had quite disappeared in others; in short, that, partly from having lived too fast, partly in the ordinary course of things, this poor old world of ours was rapidly becoming bald. It was an agricultural warning; and people were staggered at first. We all knew, as one of his critics conceded, that it would be nonsense to pretend our world was in the first bloom of its youth: even by its own confession, it was not by any means a chicken, if

that phrase can be applied to a member of the solar system: geology had hinted that it might be a good deal older than we suspected—that there was something wrong about the dates in the parish register; and, in short, every one was willing to admit that, as Falstaff puts it, "though not clean past its youth, it had some smack of age in it, some relish of the saltness of time." But we were not prepared for the statement that our world was breaking down, or getting ready for its "lait de poule et bonnet de nuit." We considered it, in the words of a Saturday Reviewer, to be "a globe that was wearing well—that might spin down the ringing grooves of change, take a part in the music of the spheres, and indulge generally in the amusements of planetary society for ages to come, without any imputation of levity unbecoming its years." And by general consent the idea of the earth's decrepitude seems to have been put aside. "I believe the world grows near its end," wrote Sir Thomas Browne, two centuries since; "yet is neither old nor decayed, nor will ever perish upon the ruins of its own principles"—that is, it will undergo mutation, not annihilation. La Bruyère favoured the notion of the world lasting "only," say, a hundred millions of years; and if so, it is yet in all its freshness, and is but just beginning. If one may judge of the future by the past, he went on to say, what novelties unknown are in store for us in the arts, in the sciences, in nature, and in history; what discoveries await us; what a variety of revolutions on the face of the earth, in states and in empires! What ignorance is ours, and how shallow the experience that only dates back some six thousand years! Montesquieu, in his *Lettres Persanes*, touches on current conjectures as to the decline of population, and the comparative barrenness of this earth. "Seroit-elle déjà dans sa vieillesse? et tomberoit-elle de langueur?" We see many regions exhausted of the power to yield sustenance to man, he says; and for all we can tell, the earth at large may be suffering from *causes générales, lentes et imperceptibles de lassitude.* Goldsmith's travelled Chinese, a sort of correlative or counterpart in idea and in action to Montesquieu's travelled

Persian, speculates with something of trepidation on the senescence of the solar system in full, and dreads as all too near the time when the motions of the planets may become so irregular as to need repairing; and a pang seems to afflict him in seeing that, as Byron puts it, the brow

> "Of Earth is wrinkled by the sins and tears
> Of—but Chronology best knows the years."

Old Scottish divines, of the time and the type of Rutherford and Binning, argued that the properly instructed, who saw Nature as she really was, knew that as she, for about five thousand years had been constantly on the move, her vigour was wellnigh spent, and her pristine energy had departed. "This is the world's old age; it is declining; albeit it seems a fair and beautiful thing in the eyes of them who know no better, and unto them who are of yesterday and know nothing, it looks as if it had been created yesterday; yet the truth is, and a believer knows, it is near the grave." "The creation now is an old rotten house that is all dropping through and leaning to the one side." Despite such doctrine, the first gush of spring is confessedly as balmy and as exhilarating to us as it was to Lucretius; and man walks from generation to generation with the same skies and stars over him, and the same gales of Eden breathing spring after spring on his face.

> "Nature surely never ranges,
> Ne'er quits her gay and flowery crown;
> But, ever joyful, merely changes
> The primrose for the thistle-down.
> 'Tis we alone who, waxing old,
> Look on her with an aspect cold,
> Dissolve her in our burning tears,
> Or clothe her with the mists of years."

Shaftesbury maintains of "this Mother-Earth, that though ever breeding, her vigour is as great, her beauty as fresh, and her looks as charming, as if she newly came out of the forming hands of her Creator." What though Samuel Rutherford assert that the lilies and roses had "more sweetness of beauty and smell, before the sin of man made them vanity-sick"? If

so, is not the change in man, not in them? Keble, in the *Christian Year*, remembering the Divine monition to consider the lilies, hails them as relics

> "of Eden's bowers,
> As pure, as fragrant, and as fair,
> As when they crown'd the sunshine hours
> Of happy wanderers there.
> Fall'n all beside . . . .
> But cheerful and unchanged the while
> Their first and perfect form they show,
> The same that won Eve's matron smile
> In the world's opening glow."

As of men, so of flowers, one generation cometh and another goeth, while the earth abideth for ever. It was once a favourite fallacy to infer man's renewed existence from analogy with the reflorescence, each returning spring, of the flowers of the field. One might apply to the fallacious analogy the words of the Man of Uz: "There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. . . . But man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" There is hope, in the case of the tree, of a fresh crop of leaves, while the trunk remains alive; but not of the same leaves. So there are ever appearing new human lives here on earth, while the human race itself, the original stock, continues in existence; but the same men, once dead and gone, do not reappear. It is a fresh set of men, as it is a fresh set of leaves. Not by such floral analogies is the resurrection of the dead to be plausibly maintained. A description of Esther Craven straying lonely in November along the "steaming tree-caverned wood-paths—the solemn charnels of the dead summer nations of leaves and flowers," expands into a reflection on Miss Broughton's part touching the fondness preachers show for drawing a parallel between ourselves and those forest leaves; telling us that, as in the autumn they fall, rot, are dissolved, and mingle together, stamped down and shapeless, in brown confusion, and yet in the spring come forth again fresh as ever; so shall we—who, in our autumn, die, rot, and are not—come forth again in

our distant spring, in lordly beauty and gladness. "So speaking, whether thinkingly or unthinkingly, they equivocate—they lie!* It is not the *same* leaves that reappear; others *like* them burst from their sappy buds, and burgeon in the 'green-haired woods;' but not they—not they! They stir not, nor is there any movement among the sodden earth-mass that was *them* [sic]." If the parallel be complete, she goes on to say, others like us,—others as good, as fair as we—but yet not *we*—"other than us, shall break forth in lusty youth, in their strong May-time; but *we* shall rot on!" Homer's similitude is as perennial as its subject—

> "Like leaves of trees the race of man is found,
> Now green in youth, now with'ring on the ground;
> Another race the following spring supplies,
> They fall successive, and successive rise."

Another race, not the same. But certainly both preachers and poets, preaching poets in particular and poetical preachers, have been, if they are not still, given to assume identity, in their analogical arguments. So Hurdis, when arguing from the return of spring a future resurrection for man: Will the great God, who thus by annual miracle restores the perished year, and youth and beauty gives by resurrection strange, where none was asked, leave only man to be the scorn of time and sport of death? So Beattie:

> "Shall I be left abandon'd in the dust,
> When Fate, relenting, lets the flower revive?
>
> * * * *
>
> No; Heaven's immortal spring shall yet arrive;
> And man's majestic beauty bloom again,
> Bright thro' th' eternal year of Love's triumphant reign."

And in his *Hermit* the same bard gives expression to the sombre utterance, involving the fallacy in question,—

> "Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn;
> Kind nature the embryo blossom will save.
> But when shall spring visit the mouldering urn?
> Oh, when shall it dawn on the night of the grave?"

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* The lady's lie-giving reminds one of Byron's,

> "I tell him, if a clergyman, he lies!"

With which plaint the note of a later minstrel, his theme the Mystery of Evil, is in tune:

> "And then 'Resurgam' on those tombs was writ,
> Though. when man once was hidden in their glooms,
> I saw him never with life's spark relit:
> Yet from their silken graves the very worms did flit."

Wordsworth's sonnet in Lombardy closes with a reverse of this last figure—an old man bent by a load of mulberry leaves being his theme, and Man and Worm compared and contrasted: erelong their fates do each to each conform: "both pass into new being,—but the Worm, transfigured, sinks into a hopeless grave; *his* volant spirit will, he trusts, ascend to bliss unbounded, glory without end." Hood falls in with the current notion of flower privilege, in his *Ode to Melancholy*:

> "Is't not enough to vex our souls,
> And fill our eyes, that we have set
> Our love upon a rose's leaf,
> Our hearts upon a violet?
> Blue eyes, red cheeks, are frailer yet;
> And, sometimes, at their swift decay
> Beforehand we must fret:
> The roses bud and bloom again;
> But love may haunt the grave of love,
> And watch the mould in vain."

Chateaubriand finishes a chapter of his *d'outre-tombe* memoirs with an apostrophe to a little wood-pink resting on his table among his papers: "Thou wilt spring forth again, little wood-pink—thou whose late blossom blooms among the heather"—but we, *nous autres*, "we shall not live again upon this earth as will the sweet and solitary flower." Delta (Moir) sings over his loved lost Casy Wappy that snows muffled earth when he left it in life's spring-bloom, but now "the green leaves of the tree return—but with them bring not thee":

> "'Tis so; but can it be—(while flowers
> Revive again)—
> Man's doom, in death that we and ours
> For aye remain?
> Oh, can it be, that, o'er the grave,
> The grass renew'd should yearly wave,
> Yet God forget our child to save?"

The same note of interrogation, of deprecation, almost of expostulation, rings through the closing stanzas of W. Caldwell Roscoe's lines written after his sister's death :

> "What ! shall the faithful God who leads
> The long revolving year—,
> Who in His bosom warms the seeds,
> And breathes on Nature's bier,—
> Let lapse in earth our mortal goal—
> This life, our seed immortal ?
> Or this diviner spring—our soul,
> Let freeze in Death's cold portal ?"

Abu Abdallah offered to his American visitor the rose of Jericho as a proof positive of man's immortality: in due season the rose withers and dies, but also in due time it—but what "it"?—revives: "The little shapeless mass became a miracle indeed. . . . The roots had expanded, the leaves had unfolded, life and breath had returned to the dead child of the Sahara, and the very blossoms began to show, and to rival the faint rosy tints of the evening sun.—I never," adds Mr. De Vere, "forgot that lesson of immortality—I never forgot that Rose of Jericho. On my return to Europe I learned that botanists called it 'Anastatica,' the flower of the resurrection."* But the analogy should be of individual man with each several flower; the root corresponds to the human stock or race. *That* abides, but the individual man dies off like the several leaves or blossoms of each succeeding year, and those several leaves or blossoms revive not with reviving spring.

> "Ah, friends ! methinks it were a pleasant sphere,
> If, like the trees, we blossom'd every year,"

sings Leigh Hunt. But what he sees, and presently goes on to say or sing, is applicable to our purpose :

> "Besides, this tale of youth that comes again,
> Is no more true of apple-trees than men.
> The Swedish sage, the Newton of the flow'rs,
> Who first found out those worlds of paramours,

---

* *Leaves from the Book of Nature*, by M. S. De Vere.

> Tells us, that every blossom that we see
> Boasts in its walls a separate family;
> So that a tree is but a sort of stand,
> That holds these filial fairies in its hand."

Young is within his right when he tells how day follows night, and gray winter gives place to soft spring, and all, to reflourish, fades: as in a wheel, all sinks, to reascend; "emblem of man, who passes, not expires." But man is here the stock, the race, not the individual. Young was verging on the misleading analogy when he proceeded to ask, Can it be that matter is immortal and that spirit dies, and

> "Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,
> No resurrection know? Shall man alone,
> Imperial man! be sown in barren ground,
> Less privileged than grain, on which he feeds, . . .
> Severely doom'd death's single unredeem'd?"

Redeunt jam gramina campis, Arboribusque comæ: . . . Nos, *ubi decidimus . . . Pulvis et umbra sumus.* Spring after winter is life coming back to a dead world: it is a resurrection. But all this species of analogy and illustration, valuable as it is in the way of suggestiveness, is, in Frederick Robertson's words, "worth nothing in the way of proof." It may be worth everything to the heart, in so far as it strengthens the dim guesses and vague intimations which the heart has formed already; but it is, he insists, worth nothing to the intellect; for the moment we come to argue the matter, we find how little there is to rest upon in these analogies. "They are no real resurrections after all: they only look like resurrections." To take a simile as much in favour as the flowers of the forest—the chrysalis only *seemed** dead, just as the tree in winter only seemed to have

* Lord Holland at a dinner-party at Bowood in 1819 objected to the stanza in a new poem of James Montgomery's which was being then and there discussed:

> "The dead are like the stars by day,
> Withdrawn from mortal eye,
> But not extinct—they hold their way
> In glory through the sky."

It begged the question, he objected in the first place; and next, the stars reappear continually, which the dead do not.

lost its vitality. What is wanted to show is a butterfly which has been dried and crushed, fluttering its brilliant wings next year again—or a tree that has been plucked up by the roots and seasoned by exposure, the vital force really killed out, putting forth its leaves again. We should then, it is admitted, have a real parallel to a resurrection. But not until then.

XXIV.

THE MORE KNOWLEDGE, THE MORE SORROW.

ECCLESIASTES i. 18.

WHAT came of the Preacher giving his heart to know wisdom? The invariable outcome, in his case: vexation of spirit. "For in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow."

Man's unhappiness, the Weissnichtwo philosopher takes it, comes of his greatness. His capacity of knowledge brings pains and penalties with it. Of almost all books that enlarge the experience and have something really of revelation in them, it may be said, as of that little book in the Apocalypse, that even though sweet as honey in the mouth, the after-taste, the abiding one, is bitter. Some books indeed, and to some students, lack the prelibation of sweetness; for, in a sense, all study is a weariness to the flesh, and the rhymed rhetoric of Shakspeare's Biron will apply:

> "Why, all delights are vain; but that most vain,
> Which, with pain purchased, doth inherit pain:
> As, painfully to pore upon a book,
> To seek the light of truth; while truth the while
> Doth falsely * blind the eyesight of his look:
> Light, seeking light, doth light of light beguile:
> So ere you find where light in darkness lies,
> Your light grows dark by losing of your eyes."

The aspirations of Manfred have been beyond the dwellers

* Dishonestly, treacherously.

of the earth, and they have only taught him that "knowledge is not happiness, and science but an exchange of ignorance for that which is another kind of ignorance." There was never a finer lesson read to the pride of learning, says a great critic, than the exclamation of Marlowe's Faustus, after his thirty years' study: "Oh, would I had never seen Wittenberg, never read book!" On the score of happiness, what comparison, asks a latter-day sage, can you make between the tranquil being of the wild man of the woods, and the wretched and turbulent existence of Milton, the victim of persecution, poverty, blindness, and neglect? "The records of literature demonstrate that Happiness and Intelligence are seldom sisters." Every new lesson, says an eastern proverb, is another gray hair. Sated latter-day pseudo-Solomons have echoed the prayer,

> "Take from me this regal knowledge;
> Let me, contented and mute, with the beasts of the field, my brothers,
> Tranquilly, happily lie,—and eat grass, like Nebuchadnezzar!"

It is in opposition to the doctrine of Pope's line, of "Happiness, our being's end and aim," that Mr. Carlyle asks, How comes it that although the gross are happier than the refined, the refined would not change places with them? Were that doctrine right, for what should we struggle with our whole might, for what pray to Heaven, if not that the "malady of thought" might be utterly stifled within us, and a power of digestion and secretion, to which that of the tiger were trifling, be imparted instead thereof? "O too dear knowledge! O pernicious learning!" is the regretful cry in one of Hood's serious poems. And in the same key is the note of Selred when taxing Ethwald with having spoilt a promising youth by his clerkly appliances:

> "For since he learnt from thee that letter'd art
> Which only sacred priests were meant to know,
> See how it is, I pray! His father's house
> Has unto him become a cheerless den,
> His pleasant tales and sprightly playful talk,
> Which still our social meals were wont to cheer,
> Now visit us but like a hasty beam
> Between the showery clouds."

Even the growing sense of ignorance is a depressing power.

It is the law of all human knowledge, that the more the rays of the light within us multiply and spread, the increasing circle of light implies an increasing circumference of darkness to hem it round. "Increase the bounds of knowledge, and you inevitably increase the sense of ignorance; at all the more points in a belt of surrounding darkness do you encounter doubt and difficulty." Goldsmith's Chinese philosopher opens an epistle with a grave expression of incipient misgiving as to the sufficiency of wisdom alone to make us happy: he begins to doubt whether every step we make in refinement is not an inlet to new disquietudes. "When we rise in knowledge, as the prospect widens, the objects of our regard become more obscure, and the unlettered peasant, whose views are only directed to the narrow sphere around him, beholds nature with a finer relish, and tastes her blessings with a keener appetite, than the philosopher whose mind attempts to grasp an universal system." But that is open to exception again, as tending to an inference as general as the one drawn by the toper in the *Golden Legend* is particular, viz., that

> "the friars who sit at the lower board,
> And cannot distinguish bad [wine] from good,
> Are far better off than if they could,
> Being rather the rude disciples of beer
> Than of anything more refined and dear."

Béranger, however, is free to adopt the travelled mandarin's philosophy; for he may be said to echo it in the lines,

> " Des sages m'ont ouvert les yeux ;
> Mais j'admirais bien plus l'aurore
> Quand je connaissais moins les cieux."

J'ai perdu ma douce ignorance, is the burden of his song. It harmonizes with Barry Cornwall's strain, on the text that ignorance is bliss: "Rains fall, suns shine, winds flee, Brooks run, yet few know how. Do not thou too deeply search," etc., for "Men mar the beauty of their dreams by tracing their source too well." One of his dramatic fragments is a more direct annotation on the Preacher's utterance:

> " What's knowledge?—Sorrow,—sorrow; little else.
> All the black units which make up the amount

> Of human life (sad sum of deeds and thoughts!)
> Together join'd, form knowledge. The great marks
> Which guide us onwards thro' tempestuous seas,
> Are beacons, currents, rocks. The sunny places
> Teach nothing, save that now and then we sink
> By trusting what looks fair."

To know nothing is the happiest life, says Sophocles: ἐν τῷ φρονεῖν γὰρ μηδὲν, ἥδιστος βίος,—of which the Latin adage is a close translation, *Nihil scire est vita jucundissima*, and the English saw an accepted paraphrase, "Fools and children lead a merry life." Montesquieu's travelled Persian soon comes to the conclusion, "Heureuse l'ignorance des enfants de Mahomet!" Balzac somewhere exclaims, to this effect, Frightful condition of our race! there is not a single one of our happinesses which is not due to some kind of ignorance. Giordano Bruno contends that ignorance is the mother of happiness, and that he who promotes sciences increases the sources of grief. The Admirable Crichton wound up his *dies mirabilis* at Padua with a declamation on the blessedness of ignorance. One point there is, as to which the wise of all ages are pretty well agreed, in praise of ignorance, however faithfully they may be represented on the main question by Wordsworth's philosophic moralist, when he exclaims, lamentingly,

> "But, after all,
> Is aught so certain as that man is doomed
> To breathe beneath a vault of ignorance—
> The natural roof of that dark house in which
> His soul is pent? How little can be known—
> This is the wise man's sigh."

Or again when, in his autobiographic poem, he counts highest among the many joys of youth the acquisition of knowledge:

> "But oh! what happiness to live
> When every hour brings palpable access
> Of knowledge, when all knowledge is delight,
> And sorrow is not there!"

The point of agreement referred to is with regard to the prying into forbidden mysteries, such as the Caliph Vathek is warned off from: "Woe to the rash mortal who seeks to know that of

which he should remain ignorant"—the sequel of the story containing Vathek's avowal to Carathis, "How much I ought to abhor the impious knowledge thou hast taught me!"—and the moral of it teaching professedly the chastisement of blind ambition, that would transgress those bounds which the Creator hath prescribed to human knowledge, and by aiming at discoveries reserved for pure intelligence, acquire that infatuated pride which recognizes not the condition appointed to man, "to be ignorant and humble." As the great churchman says in Sir Henry Taylor's "Anglo-Saxon" play, that

> "not in mercy,
> Save as a penance merciful in issue,
> Doth God impart that mournfullest of gifts
> Which pushes farther into future time
> The bounds of human foresight."

And such the drift of argument in Pope's Essay on Man—that in pride, in reasoning pride, our error lies, quitting our sphere to rush into the skies:

> "Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate,
> All but the page prescribed, their present state:
> From brutes what men, from men what spirits know;
> Or who could suffer Being here below?
> The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
> Had he thy reason, would he skip and play?
> Pleased to the last, he crops the flowery food,
> And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.
> Oh, blindness to the future! kindly given,
> That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heaven."

So again in the third epistle of the same didactic poem, we have an iterated enforcement of the same doctrine, that "blest" is the lot of the animal doomed to feast man, "which sees no more the stroke, or feels the pain, than favoured Man by touch ethereal slain;" and though Man does foresee his death, he cannot foretell the time of it—and previsions of that time are only what Milton calls visions ill foreseen.

> "To each unthinking being, Heaven a friend
> Gives not the useless knowledge of its end:
> To Man imparts it; but with such a view
> As, while he dreads it, makes him hope it too:

The hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear,
Death still draws nearer, never seeming near."

One of the Ingoldsby Legends takes up the strain, and rhymes it anew in longer but lighter-footed metre:

" The kid from the pen, and the lamb from the fold,
Unmoved may the blade of the butcher behold;
They dream not—ah, happier they!—that the knife,
Though uplifted, can menace their innocent life;
It falls;—the frail thread of their being is riven,
They dread not, suspect not, the blow till 'tis given."

Walter Savage Landor was for once writing in that metre, but touching on altogether a different theme, when he closed an epigram with the couplet, so far (and only so far) pertinent to our purpose,—

" In another six years I shall know all about it;
But some knowledge is vain, and we do best without it."

Sleep on, is the gazer's benison on Eden's "blest pair; and O, yet happiest, if ye seek no happier state, and know to know no more." Once having tasted the defended fruit, let them boast, if they will, or can, their knowledge of good lost and evil got; "happier, had it sufficed them to have known good by itself, and evil not at all." It was Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's philosophy to be young as long as she could, since there is nothing can repay one for that invaluable ignorance which is the companion of youth. "To my extreme mortification I grow wiser every day. I don't believe Solomon was more convinced of the vanity of temporal affairs than I am." *Je deviens vieux en apprenant toujours.* There was bitterness to Rousseau in his private interpretation and self-application of that old verse; for, said he, "c'est une bien triste science . . . l'ignorance est encore préférable. . . . Que ne suis je resté toujours dans cette imbécille mais douce confiance" in friendship and the like. "Oh, rather rest in ignorance,—

" Nor ask thou if thy friends be what they seem;
It is but misery too much to know
Amid this weary scene of life below—
It has its charms—that ignorance is one;
Nor is it wise its veil aside to throw,

> Till in the presence of the Eternal Throne
> It will be bliss to know even as we are known." *

If ignorance can ever be bliss, then where and wheresoever it is so blessed, Gray's conclusion is unimpeachable, that 'tis folly to be wise. And blessed ignorance there is in this weary world, of one sort and another, unless wearied experts bear false witness. Leontes curses his forfeiture of complacent ignorance; regrets the time when his knowledge was narrower:

> "Alack for lesser knowledge! How accursed
> In being so blest!"

So Othello's "I had been happy . . . had I nothing known!"† Hamlet congratulates Horatio on *not* knowing that "water-fly," the frivolous Osric: "Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him." No Hamlet on the one hand, and no Osric on the other, is the "respectable" hero who utters the respect-worthy prayer, "May the last knowledge I acquire be that knowledge of the world which induces mistrust and contempt of one's fellow-creatures." Gibbon congratulated "the arctic tribes" of Lapland, as "alone among the sons of men ignorant of war and unconscious of human blood: a happy ignorance, if reason and virtue were the guardians of their peace." Goldsmith accounted his ideal English peasant's "best riches, ignorance of wealth." Beattie's sage warns off a young inquirer with an

> "Alas! what comfort could thy anguish soothe,
> Shouldst thou the extent of human folly know?
> Be ignorance thy choice, where knowledge leads to woe."

After reading all that was to be found in the languages she was mistress of, the Lady Mary we have already quoted utters a lament over the decay of her eyesight by midnight studies,

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* Poems by C. F. Cornwallis.

† Compare a passage in the *Œdipus Tyrannus*, where Jocasta tells the too eagerly and fatally inquisitive king, "Thine ignorance is thy bliss."

> "*Œdip.* A bliss that tortures!
> *Jocasta.* Miserable man!
> Oh couldst thou never learn the thing thou art!"

and "I envy," she adds, "the easy peace of mind of a ruddy milkmaid, who, undisturbed by doubt, hears the sermon, with humility, every Sunday, not having confounded the sentiments of natural duty in her head by the vain inquiries of the schools, who may be more learned, yet, after all, must remain as ignorant." Madame de Motteville sounds a not unlike note when she writes, recalling the transgression of the mother of all flesh, "Il nous coûte si cher d'avoir voulu apprendre la science du bien et du mal, que nous devons demeurer d'accord qu'il vaut mieux les ignorer que de les apprendre, particulièrement à nous autres qu'on accuse d'être cause de tout le mal." To be restored to his happier state of ignorance is the pleading of Sydney Dobell's impassioned and sadly-enlightened Roman, "if the sad fruit of knowledge dwells for ever on the lip.

> "Take back this terrible sight,
> This sight that passeth the sweet boundary
> Of man's allotted world. Let me look forth
> And see green fields, hills, trees, and soulless waters.
> Give back my ignorance. Why should my sense
> Be cursed with this intolerable knowledge?"

Take them away, Monsieur Emanuel Paul's pupil exclaims, of the books lent and expounded by that exacting master: "Take them away, and teach me no more. I never asked to be made learned, and you compel me to feel very profoundly that learning is not happiness." The particular instance is of general significance. Churchill begins his now unread, if not unreadable, poem of *The Author* with something like an execration of letters and learning:

> "Much are the precious hours of youth misspent
> In climbing Learning's rugged, steep ascent;
> When to the top the bold adventurer's got,
> He reigns, vain monarch, o'er a barren spot;
> Whilst in the vale of Ignorance below,
> Folly and Vice to rank luxuriance grow;
> Honours and wealth pour in on every side,
> And proud Preferment rolls her golden tide."

Prior philosophizes in verse on happy obscurities in optics and obliquities in vision, and so comes to the conclusion,

"If we see right, we see our woes ;
Then what avails it to have eyes ?
From ignorance our comfort flows.
The only wretched are the wise."

Unthinking creatures, muses Richardson's Clarissa, have some comfort in the shortness of their views; in their unapprehensiveness, and that they penetrate not beyond the present moment; in short, that they *are* unthinking.

Speaking of the world as full of objects of sorrow, our capacities to take which in are enlarged by knowledge, "none but the wise man can know himself to be miserable," says Robert South, who shows how not Solomon himself could separate his wisdom from vexation of spirit, and who cites Aristotle's assertion, that there was never a great scholar in the world but had in his temper a dash and mixture of melancholy. *Nihil scire vita jucundissima est.* It is the empty vessel that makes the merry sound, argues the wittiest of our old Caroline divines; "which is evident from those whose intellectuals are ruined with frenzy or madness; who so merry, so free from the lash of care? their understanding is gone, and so is their trouble. It is the philosopher that is pensive, that looks downwards in the posture of the mourner. It is the open eye that weeps." Erasmus, in his Μωρίας Ἐγκώμιον, Stultitiæ Laudatio, *Praise of Folly*, affirms the different branches of science and learning (*disciplinæ*) to be in truth gifts of the dæmons, who should properly be called δαήμονες, or "knowing ones,"—and to have been without influence in that golden age when all talked one language, so there was no need of grammar; no one disputed, so logic was not required; rhetoric and jurisprudence would have been equally superfluous. But when the golden age had passed away, "learning came with other evils, one grammar alone being sufficient for the perpetual torture of life." It is consistent with the praise of folly and the consequent or concomitant deprecation or disparagement of science, that the witty scholar should declare idiots and maniacs to enjoy advantages unknown to the learned and the great: the swineherd was better off than πολυμῆτις Ὀδυσσεύς,

by Homer designated δύστηνος: let the sad, morose life of the wise man be compared with the career of a merry court-fool, and every advantage is claimed as indubitably apparent on the side of the latter. Richard Baxter's *Dying Thoughts* reverted to the text, "Much reading is a weariness of the flesh," and he bore corroborative testimony to the truth that whoso increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow. "How many hundred studious days and weeks, and how many hard and tearing thoughts, hath my little, very little knowledge cost me! And how much infirmity and painfulness to my flesh, increase of painful diseases, and loss of bodily ease and health!" In more than one or two of his letters to Temple, Boswell hesitates between the charms and the penalties of advancement in learning. Now he envies his friend's riper knowledge. But then again, "when I consider what vexations you suffer, from which I am free, I am inclined to quiet myself. 'Much study is a weariness to the flesh,' says the wise man; now, if there is on the whole more pain than pleasure in advancing far into literature, would you advise me to do it?" "Men of delicate nerves may at times suffer from their knowledge, but they would suffer from something else, and even their enjoyments from knowledge counterbalance their sufferings." Considerable as are the pleasures of studying logic and metaphysics, such pleasures, in the opinion of modern thinkers, are alloyed by the inseparable conviction that they are barren as far as all result is concerned, and that such seductive inquiries, if pursued in a spirit of remorseless logic, are discomfiture and uncertainty after all. This also is vanity. As Shenstone echoes the sigh of Ecclesiastes,—

> "Ah! what is science, what is art,
> Or what the pleasure these impart?
> Ye trophies, which the learn'd pursue
> Thro' endless, fruitless toils, adieu!
> What can the tedious tomes bestow
> To soothe the miseries they show?"

XXV.

ENVIED MERIT.

ECCLESIASTES iv. 4.

FOR every "right work," the Preacher, having considered all travail, found that a man is "envied of his neighbour." The envy is at once the penalty paid by, and the homage paid to, merit.

> "Envy doth merit as its shade pursue;
> And yet the shadow proves the substance true."

The heart of Artemidorus, in Shakspeare, laments that virtue cannot live out of the teeth of emulation. To apply the words of Othello, "Yes, 'tis the plague of great ones; 'tis destiny unshunnable, like death." Alcides, whose stalwart arm had conquered all besides, found Envy too strong for him, and to be overcome only by death: *Compèrit invidiam supremo fine domari.*

> "All human Virtue, to its latest breath,
> Finds Envy never conquered, but by Death.
> The great Alcides, every labour past,
> Had still this monster to subdue at last.
> Sure fate of all, beneath whose rising ray
> Each star of meaner merit fades away."

The "every labour past," is a phrase that recalls the "I considered all travail" of Ecclesiastes.

The French Academician who penned the admired *Essai sur les Éloges,* tracing the omnipresence here below of Envy, which strives to sully what is beautiful, and to lower what is exalted, says that "at the very moment when Merit appeared in the world, Envy too was born, and began her persecution." A Chinese proverb runs: Towers are measured by their shadows, and great men by their calumniators. It seems a hard case, to Shenstone's thinking, that envy should be the consequence of merit, at the same time that scorn so naturally attends the want of it; but he takes it to be perhaps in some measure an unavoidable, if not useful, passion in all the most

heroic natures, where, refined through certain strainers, it takes the name of emulation. "It is a pain arising in our breasts, on contemplation of the superior advantages of another; and its tendency is truly good, under some certain regulations." But the instances of its perversion he allows to be obvious to every one's observation; insomuch, indeed, that it might be quite safe to fix our esteem on those whom we hear some people depreciate. "Merit is to them as uniformly odious, as the sun itself to the birds of darkness." And Shenstone would as implicitly give his applause to one whom they pull to pieces, as the inhabitants of Pegu worship those who have been devoured by apes.

> "Is there a bard whom genius fires,
> Whose every thought the god inspires?
> When Envy reads the nervous lines,
> She frets, she rails, she raves, she pines;
> Her hissing snakes with venom swell;
> She calls her venal train from hell:
> The servile friends her nod obey,
> And all Curll's authors are in pay.
> Fame calls up Calumny and Spite:
> Thus shadow owes its birth to light."

John Gay knew what he was here writing about. And it was a familiar topic with his friend Swift, with whom such utterances as these abound:

> "At highest worth dull malice reaches,
> As slugs pollute the fairest peaches;
> Envy defames, as harpies vile
> Devour the fruit they first defile."

Balzac, of the seventeenth century, not the nineteenth, asserted his delight at the number of libels published against him,—"a heap of stones that envy has cast at me without doing me any harm," he called them, alluding to those cairns or monuments of the eastern nations, which were mountains of stones raised upon the dead body by travellers, that used to cast every one his stone upon it as he passed by. It is certain, says Addison, that "no monument is so glorious as one which is thus raised by the hands of envy." It appears, to Landor's

Eubulides, to be among the laws of Nature that the mighty of intellect should be pursued and carped by the little, as the solitary flight of great birds is followed by the twittering petulance of many smaller. His Boccaccio maintains that seldom are we envied, until we are so prosperous that envy is rather a familiar in our train than an enemy who waylays us. "If we saw nothing of such followers and outriders, we might begin to doubt our station." No crime, it has been said, is so heavily visited as that of being successful: it is the sale of your picture, or the success of your book, that first makes people find out your faults to the full. Little Tidd, of novel note, made it the business of his life to go about maligning every one who was successful, and endeavouring, when he came across them personally, to put them out of conceit by hints and innuendos. Names that lie upon the ground, as Anaxagoras tells Aspasia, are not easily set on fire by Envy, but those quickly catch it which are raised up by fame, or wave to the breeze of prosperity: every one that passes is ready to give them a shake and a rip; for there are few either so busy or so idle as not to lend a hand at undoing. That Sophocles escaped the ordinary persecutions of envy, one of his critics ascribes to that laxity of principle which "made him thought so agreeable a fellow. People lose much of their anger and envy of genius, when it throws them down a bundle or two of human foibles by which they can climb up to its level." Plutarch's Lives iterate the truism that envy delights in the disgrace of great men, and loses a part of her rancour by their fall. He says it of Themistocles; and of Publicola he remarks, "What is the fate of all great men, to be persecuted by envy, was also his;" while of Plutarch himself biography records that, like other men of renown, he found envy conquered but by death. Not that death itself invariably conquers that conqueror. To apply Béranger's lines,

> "Le laurier devient cendre,
> Cendre qu'au vent l'Envie aime à jeter."

Vivien tells Merlin, the Fame that follows death is nothing to us:

> "And what is Fame in life but half-disfame,
> And counterchanged with darkness? You yourself
> Know well that Envy calls you Devil's son,
> And since you seem the Master of all Art,
> They fain would make you Master of all Vice."

The shadow proves the substance. "So in the light of great eternity, Life eminent creates the shade of death; The shadow passeth when the tree shall fall." It is old Madame Pernelle's firm creed that

> "La vertu dans le monde est toujours poursuivie;
> Les envieux mourront, mais non jamais l'envie."

Non minus periculi ex magnâ famâ, quam ex malâ,—the aphorism is terse as becomes Tacitus. South had the start of Pope in alleging that shadows do not more naturally attend shining bodies, than envy pursues worth and merit, always close at the heels of them, and like a sharp blighting east wind, still blasting and killing the noblest and most promising productions of virtue in their earliest bud, and, "as Jacob did Esau, supplant them in their very birth." Envy is always caused by something either good or great, for "no man is envied for his failures, but his perfections." It is not safe for any man to be "borne upon the wings of fame, and ride in triumph upon the tongues of men; for the tongues of some do but provoke the teeth of more; and men, we know, do much more heartily detract than they use to commend." Milton hails in H. Lawes one greeted "with praise enough for Envy to look wan;" as again George Wither sees true Poesy encompassed with

> "Mists of envy, fogs of spite,
> 'Twixt men's judgments and her light."

De Quincey speaks of that happy exemption from jealousy which belongs *almost* inevitably to conscious power in its highest mode; it is where he describes Bentley reposing calmly on his own supremacy, content that pretenders of every size and sort should flutter through their little day. So Boileau declares of "ces basses jalousies, des vulgaires esprits malignes rénésies," that

"Un sublime écrivain n'en peut être infecté ;
C'est un vice qui suit la mediocrité."

It is in tracking the rise and progress of one whom France at least accounts a great man, altogether one of her greatest, that Mr. Carlyle incidentally remarks: "Numerous enemies arise, as is natural, of an envious venomous description; this is another ever-widening shadow in the sunshine." *Du mérite éclatant une sombre rivale,—sombre* as becomes *ombre*. As with Mr. Savage's too versatile hero: "Detraction was of course very busy. Envy began to nibble at his reputation, when it was yet green, by way of earnest of what she would do hereafter, when it should attain its full growth." Ben Jonson's big-voiced burly Roman talks his burliest and biggest when he designates the object of his admiration one for whose virtue

"Earth cannot make a shadow great enough,
Though envy should come too."

Racine is complimented by Boileau on the amount and the degree of envy his genius has stirred into life and strife; the prerogative of genius, this, and to be cancelled only by death, as so many others have said before and since.

"Et son trop de lumière, importunant les yeux,
De ses propres amis lui fait des envieux.
La mort seule, ici-bas, en terminant sa vie,
Peut calmer sur son nom l'injustice et l'envie."

Handsomely enough the poet contrasts his own comparative freedom from envious attacks with the unlimited liability of Racine: "Moi-même, dont la gloire ici moins répandue Des pales envieux ne blesse point la vue," etc. Persons of eminent virtue, when they are advanced, are less envied, says Bacon, who might have remarked however, as Whately suggests, that in one respect a rise by merit exposes a man to more envy than that by personal favour, through family connection, private friendship, etc.,—the individual being more envied in the former case, because his advancement is felt as an affront to all who think themselves or their own friends more worthy. In the latter case, the unpromoted are left free to think, "If

it had gone by merit, I should have been the man." The annotating archbishop goes on to add, that when any person of really eminent virtue becomes the object of envy, the clamour of abuse by which he is assailed is but the sign and accompaniment of his success in doing service to the public; and that if he is a truly wise man, he will take no more notice of it than the moon does of the howling of the dogs. Her only answer to them is "to shine on." One of a thousand in the rare privilege of immunity from envy, as well as in the gifts and graces that mark him so pre-eminently a man of men, is that Marquis Posa, of whom Schiller makes his sovran admiringly exclaim,

> "What sort of man is this,
> Who can deserve so highly, yet awake
> No pang of envy in the breasts of those
> Who speak his praise? The character he owns
> Must be of noble stamp indeed, or else
> A very blank. I'm curious to behold
> This wondrous man."

XXVI.

OBVIOUS DUTY DONE WITH MIGHT.

ECCLESIASTES ix. 10.

"WHATSOEVER thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Behold, exclaims another lay Preacher, the day is passing swiftly over, and the night cometh, wherein no man can work. "The night once come, our happiness,* our unhappiness,—it is all abolished; vanished, clean gone; a thing that has been: 'not of the slightest consequence' whether we were happy as eupeptic Curtis, as the fattest pig of Epicurus, or unhappy as Job with potsherds, as

* "The only happiness a brave man ever troubled himself with asking much about was, happiness enough to get his work done."—Carlyle, *Past and Present*, book iii., ch. iv.

musical Byron with Giaours and sensibilities of the heart; as the unmusical Meat-jack * with hard labour and rust. But our work,—behold, that is not abolished, that has not vanished: our work, behold, it remains, or the want of it remains;—for endless Times and Eternities, remains; and that is now the sole question with us for evermore. Brief brawling Day, with its noisy phantasms, its poor paper-crowns tinsel-gilt, is gone; and divine everlasting Night, with her star-diadems, with her silences and her veracities, is come! What hast thou done, and how?" At his Church-Porch holy George Herbert meets us with the monition—

> "When thou dost purpose aught (within thy power),
> Be sure to do it, though it be but small."†

Act well your part; there all the honour lies. It has been said of St. Paul's injunction to slaves to do service with good will, "as to the Lord, and not unto men," that it shows how entirely he felt the meanest occupation to be sanctified by and

* An old story, familiar to all Mr. Carlyle's familiars.

† *Though it be but small.* Contrasting the stage in England (where the actor who represents Laertes or Horatio is considering himself all the while as a degraded man, because he is not the Hamlet of the evening) with that of France, where there is, or was, a race of actors who never aspire to more than secondary parts, or, if they have any hope of so aspiring, endeavour to recommend themselves by the superior manner in which they discharge the subordinate characters meanwhile entrusted to them; the *Quarterly* Reviewer of the "Life of Kemble" cites the mention by that distinguished actor of his once observing in Paris, while behind the scenes at the Comédie Française along with Talma, one of the company conning his part with great attention, rehearsing it with different tones and gestures, and, in short, so sedulous in his rehearsal, that it seemed he had some most important part to perform. Interested in this actor's assiduity, Kemble asked what weighty character this hard student had to represent. Talma informed him that the man had only five words to say, "Madame, the coach is ready;" and that, notwithstanding the brevity and seeming unimportance of his part, whatever it might be, the actor in question uniformly spent much time in studying and adjusting the action, tone, and manner of delivering himself. In short, as Sir Walter Scott says, "the English actor thinks himself positively sunk and injured when obliged to perform a part of little consequence; the Frenchman, with happier vanity, considers that he may exalt any part by *his* mode of playing it."

to a religious heart; and that if he were exhorting us moderns, he would enlarge the precept to embrace our several professions. We are referred to the exalting examples of those of the great Italian painters who, from mere love of their art, spent on a picture labour tenfold of what the set price required, preferring to live in extreme self-denial, rather than not execute it in their highest style. "This seems to typify the unworldly spirit, in which, when we are more perfect, we shall follow our ideas or our professions, of whatever kind." But to George Herbert again:

> "Art thou a Magistrate? then be severe:
> If studious; copy fair what time hath blurr'd;
> Redeem truth from his jaws: if Soldier,
> Chase brave employments with a naked sword
> Throughout the world. Fool not; for all may have,
> If they dare try, a glorious life, or grave."

The manly part, says Emerson, is to do with might and main what you can do; and he laments over a world full of fops who never did anything, and who have persuaded beauties and men of genius even to wear their fop livery, and to deliver the fop opinion that it is not respectable to be seen earning a living; that it is much more respectable to spend without earning. For the brave workman, it is "no matter whether he make shoes, or statues, or laws."* Molière's woodcutter

* The disposition in some quarters to magnify one's office, to a positive, or comparative, or even superlative degree of exaggeration, has evoked the temperate remonstrance, or reminder, that although it may be in some respects desirable to do all sorts of things on the highest principles, it is not the less true that to sell figs in the name of the Prophet is a proceeding which has an absurd and injurious as well as a dignified aspect. It is quite true, the objector concedes, that a remarkable man, or a number of remarkable men, may be called upon by circumstances to be cobblers or jobbing tailors; and equally true that, if they are, it is their duty, and ought to be their pride and pleasure, to stick to their wax-ends and finedrawing like men, and to produce neater patches than any former generation of the same craft; but it does not follow, he submits, that the patching of old shoes and coats is in itself a very important or dignified pursuit; the importance of a vocation depending upon a set of considerations altogether distinct from those which make it imperative upon every man, no matter what his vocation may be, to pursue it with as much vigour, and to attain

piques himself on his supremacy in that line of things: "Il est vrai, messieurs, que je suis le premier homme du monde pour faire des fagots. . . . Je n'y épargne aucune chose, et les fais d'une façon qu'il n'y a rien à dire." Shakspeare's Timon would have even a villain thorough in his villany, workmanlike about it while he *is* about it:

> "Do villany, do, since you profess to do't,
> Like workmen."

One may apply what Shakspeare's Launce says, in his soliloquy to, or almost colloquy with, his dog: "I would have, as one should say, one that takes upon him to be a dog indeed, to be, as it were, a dog at all things." The late Mr. Assheton Smith's biographer tells us of him that *quicquid vult valde vult* was his motto in every business he undertook; and that whether it was the chase,* or the improvement of ship-building, or the development of his quarries, or the bettering of the condition of his Welsh labourers, whatsoever his hand found to do, he did it with his might.

While it was Washington Irving's counsel to Prince Dolgorouki to fix his attention on noble objects and noble purposes,

as much excellence in it as he can. "It matters infinitely to a crossing-sweeper whether he is a good or a bad one, but it matters very little to the public whether his crossing is swept well or ill; and though, for his own sake, he ought to pursue his calling in a healthy and vigorous spirit, he is greatly mistaken if he supposes that he alters the state of society by doing so." The reflection is suggested as specially applicable to those members of a large number of professions who habitually look upon themselves as underrated by the public.

* Upon this topic a *Saturday* Reviewer observes that, granting the chase to be a good thing in itself, and that it is for the interest of England that the dwellers in the country should learn the art of riding, and acquire confidence and self-possession in the hunting-field, a man must have been doing a great public service who, carrying the love of fox-hunting to its utmost, showed how well it could be done, how much science it might exhibit, how many moral qualities it could develop, and who gave the sport he loved the countenance of an honoured name. "If the thing at which a man works is good, it must be an advantage to the public that he should do it extremely well, and set the pattern of a recognized excellence." (vi. 302.)

sacrificing all temporary and trivial things to their attainment, he was strenuous in urging him to mark one line in which to excel, and to bend all his thoughts and exertions to advance towards perfection in that line. In this way he would find his views gradually converging towards one point, instead of being distracted by a thousand objects. Bessel the astronomer says of himself, in the preface to his *Untersuchungen*, that he kept one idea continually present to his mind—that of always working up to an immediate and definite object. The author of the *Conduct of Life* makes a grand point of stopping off decisively our miscellaneous activity, and concentrating our force on one or two objects; as the gardener, by severe pruning, forces the sap of the tree into one or two vigorous limbs, instead of suffering it to spindle into a sheaf of twigs. "The one prudence in life is concentration; the one evil is dissipation." You must elect your work, he insists,—taking what your brain can, and dropping all the rest: only so can that amount of vital force accumulate which can make the step from knowing to doing. With money as with genius, according to the Caxton Essays, the wise master of his art will say, "There is one thing I can do well; that one thing I will do as well as I can." Money, like genius, it is added, is effective in proportion as it is brought to bear on one thing at a time: money, like genius, may comprehend success in a hundred things—but still, as a rule, one thing at a time: that thing must be completed or relinquished before you turn to another. The man who succeeds above his fellows is the one, says Lord Lytton, who, early in life, clearly discerns his object, and towards that object habitually directs his powers.*

The most popular writer of his day, in admitting how very fortunate he had been in worldly matters—many men who had worked much harder, not having succeeded half so well—affirmed that he could never have done what he did, without the

* "Thus, indeed, even genius itself is but fine observation strengthened by fixity of purpose." To observe vigilantly and resolve steadfastly, is, in this sense, to grow unconsciously into genius.

determination to concentrate himself on one object at a time, no matter how quickly its successor should come upon its heels. "Whatever I have tried to do in life, I have tried with all my heart to do well; whatever I have devoted myself to, I have devoted myself to completely; in great aims and in small, I have always been thoroughly in earnest. . . . Never to put one hand to anything, on which I could throw my whole self; and never to affect depreciation of my work, whatever it was; I find, now, to have been my golden rules." He who thus writes could not have been without something of admiring sympathy with one of the most consummate scoundrels of his own creation, just in so far at least as that intensified rascal did everything with intensity and concentration—did each single thing, as if he did nothing else—a pretty certain indication in a man of that range of ability and purpose, that he is doing something which sharpens and keeps alive his keenest powers. Mrs. Schimmelpenninck, again, ascribes a main portion of her success in literature and life to her observance of the principle her "intellectual father" was so fond of inculcating on all his children—to be deeply earnest in whatever they did, and, whether it were great or little, to give their whole mind and being to it. "Whether in play or study, there is no pursuit, even in childhood, so trivial, but that numbers of useful things may be made to cluster around it." Lavater, in the practice of his art, not a little pleased Windham by declaring him to be a man who did not choose to do anything which he was not conscious of doing well.

Confucius compares the path of duty to the going a long journey, where you must begin at the nearest point; and to the climbing of an eminence, where you must begin with the lowest step. *Perge modo, et, quà te ducit via, dirige gressum.* It is the part of practical wisdom, as expounded by Sir A. Helps, to be for ever reminding us where we are, and what we can do, not in fancy, but in real life. It does not, he says, permit us to wait for dainty duties, pleasant to the imagination; but insists upon our doing those which are before us. He does not refer to, but he may have had in mind, perhaps, the lines in Milton touching the trick that fancy has of roving,

> "Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn
> That, not to know at large of things remote
> From use, obscure and subtle ; but to know
> That which before us lies in daily life,
> Is the prime wisdom."

Even so Emile and his tutor, instead of vexing themselves to no purpose, disquieting themselves in vain, with their inability to imitate Telemachus and Mentor in playing benefactors to their fellow-men, strive to do good in their humbler career, and with this result—that even were they kings, more beneficent they could not be. In one of his letters Emile adverts to the folly of a fussy quest of outlying duties, as if duties did not lie close at hand in every one's instance, as if they did not follow one whithersoever one goes, and claim as their right the law of first come, first served. As for doing fine things, says Mr. Kingsley, in his Winter-garden musings, he has learnt to believe that he is not set to do fine things, simply because he is not able to do them ; and as for seeing fine things, he has learnt to see the sight, as well as to try to do the duty, which lies nearest him. "In any life, in any state, however simple or humble, there will be always sufficient to occupy a Minute Philosopher ; and if a man be busy, and busy about his duty, what more does he require, for time or for eternity?" Religion consists, in the language of the Port-Royal Memoirs, not in the doing of extraordinary things, but in the doing of common things extraordinarily well. Not every one doth it beseem, as Schiller's Wallenstein has it, to question

> "The far-off high Arcturus. Most securely
> Wilt thou pursue the nearest duty."

We must not, says Milverton, so bring in the immensities about us and within us as to crush our endeavours : "Here we are ; let stars, or bygone times, or the wrecks of nations, say or show what they will, there is something also to be done by us : we have our little portions of the reef of coral yet to build up." The wild dreamer in the last of Hawthorne's Twice-told Tales wakes up to find a very homely solution of his visionary riddles ; and the moral is, that were all who cherish the like wild wishes

to look around them, they would oftenest find their sphere of duty, of prosperity, and happiness, within those precincts, and in that station, where Providence itself has cast their lot. "Happy they who read the riddle, without a weary world-search, or a lifetime spent in vain!" It is Romola's belief, when hasting away from home, that once beyond the last fringe of Florence, the skies will be broader above her, and life richer in results worth the living for. But Fra Girolamo warns her, in after-days, against thus blindly seeking the good of a freedom which is lawlessness. She ought to feel that Florence is the home of her soul as well as her birthplace, in seeing the work that is given her to do there. "My daughter, every bond of your life is a debt: the right lies in the payment of that debt; it can lie nowhere else. In vain will you wander over the earth; you will be wandering for ever away from the right."

It is in praise of Friedrich Wilhelm minding his own business, in 1720,—"a most small sphere, but then a genuine one,"—that Mr. Carlyle, in his History of a greater Friedrich, exclaims, "Wise is he who stays well at home, and does the duty he finds lying there!" Some fourscore pages later the historian finds occasion to reflect, that, "Truly, if each of the Royal Majesties and Serene Highnesses would attend to his own affairs,—doing his utmost to better his own land and people, in earthly and in heavenly respects, a little,—he would find it infinitely profitabler for himself and others." A subsequent chapter in the same history opens with a glance at the Crown Prince's enforced daily observance of drill-duties. "'This, then, is the sum of one's existence, this?' Patience, young 'man of genius,' as the Newspapers would now call you: it is indispensably beneficial nevertheless! To swallow one's disgusts, and do faithfully the ugly commanded work, taking no counsel with flesh and blood: know that 'genius,' everywhere in Nature, means this first of all; that without this, it means nothing, generally even less."*

* History of Frederick the Great, vol. i., pp. 496, 568; vol. ii., p. 6.

The earlier works of Mr. Carlyle might be drawn upon largely for parallel passages. Here, for instance, is the counsel of Herr Teufelsdröckh to him who gropes painfully in darkness or uncertain light: "Do the Duty which

Hic Rhodus ; hic salta. Do not, as Julius Hare paraphrases the proverb, do not wait for a change of outward circumstances ; but take your circumstances as they are, and make the best of them. Luther, says he, moved the world, not by waiting for a favourable opportunity, but by doing his daily work, by doing God's will day by day, without looking beyond. Says Romney Leigh to Aurora, in Mrs. Browning's poem—

> "Oh cousin, let us be content, in work,
> To do the thing we can, and not presume
> To fret because it's little." *

Wordsworth records with complacency how, at a turning-point in his career, ambitious projects pleasing him less, he sought for present good in life's familiar face, and built thereon his

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lies nearest thee," which thou knowest to be a Duty. Thy second Duty will already have become clearer. "The situation that has not its Duty, its Ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Yes here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal : work it out therefrom ; and working, believe, live, be free." That is founded on the celebrated passage in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*,—"Here or nowhere is America"—the America of Lothario's quest. The thing thou seekest is already with thee, "here or nowhere," couldst thou only see. "Produce ! Produce !" is therefore the Herr Professor's cry. "Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it in God's name ! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee : out with it then. Up, up ! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy whole might. Work while it is called To-day ; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work."

Again, in *Past and Present*, the seeker after a "New Religion" is told he needs none, nor is like to get any. He has already more "religion than he makes use of. "This day, thou knowest ten commanded duties, seest in thy mind ten things which should be done, for one that thou doest. *Do* one of them ; this of itself will show thee ten others which can and shall be done." (Chapter xv.)

* " 'Set me some great task, ye gods ! and I will show my spirit.' 'Not so,' says the good Heaven ; 'plod and plough, vamp your old coats and hats, weave a shoestring ; great affairs and the best wine by-and-by !' Well, 'tis all phantasm ; and if we weave a yard of tape in all humility, and as well as we can, long hereafter we shall see it was no cotton tape at all, but some galaxy which we braided, and that the threads were Time and Nature."—*Conduct of Life*, chapter ix.

hopes of good to come. And elsewhere he writes as one, called like the rest, each after his sort and according to his ability, to exercise his skill,

> "Not in Utopia,—subterranean fields,—
> Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where!
> But in the very world, which is the world
> Of all of us,—the place where, in the end,
> We find our happiness, or not at all!"

Mrs. Gaskell in various of her works is strenuous in enforcing the law of minding the nearest duty. In one, she describes Margaret Hale as more successful than her father, the vicar, in a poor widow's disordered household, newly fatherless: "The children seeing their little duties lie in actions close around them, began to try each one to do something that she suggested towards redding up the slatternly room." In another, we overhear this bit of homely advice from a shrewd good doctor to an over-worked and over-anxious factory girl: "I'll tell you what; never you neglect the work clearly laid out for you by either God or man, to go making work for yourself, according to your own fancies. God knows what you are most fit for. Do that. And then wait; if you don't see your next duty clearly. You will not long be idle in this world, if you are ready for a summons." In a third, the speaker and actor is an old maid-of-all-work, who makes a resolve—as honourable to her, in her poor way, as was any of Owen Feltham's to him, in his—that she will try and make a pudding well, not only for her young master to like it, but because everything may be done in a right way and a wrong; the right way being to do it as well as we can, as in God's sight. She is ready with a lecture on bed-making to one who needs it. "You sighed so, you could not half shake the pillows; your heart was not in your work; and yet it was the duty God had set you, I reckon; I know it's not the work parsons preach about; though I don't think they go so far off the mark when they read, 'whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, that do with all thy might.' Just try for a day to think of all the odd jobs as to be done well and truly as in God's sight, not just slurred over anyhow, and you'll

go through them twice as cheerfully, and have no thought to spare for sighing or crying." Having said which, Sally bustles off to set the kettle for tea, and feels half ashamed, in the quiet of the kitchen, to think of the oration she has made upstairs.

In no one instance, asserts one of Hannah More's good people, do we deceive ourselves more than in fancying we can do great things well, which we are never likely to be called to do at all; while, if we are honest, we cannot avoid owning how negligently we perform our own little appointed duties.

Charming old Grand'mère, in Miss Tytler's Huguenot story, professes to believe, for her part, that the doing of a thing well or ill, and not the special sanctity of the deed, is the proof of the hero, the saint, and "above all, the Huguenot;" and that the question is not so much whether he erects a temple, or shapes a pair of pantaloons, as the world and the Church of Rome will have it. "Let the potter turn but one cup in fair proportion, or let the painter reproduce one true image, and the world of homely men and women is so much the better for him." A Christian should never, says John Newton, plead spirituality for being a sloven: "if he be but a shoe-cleaner, he should be the best in the parish." The question how far what we have done, or are doing, or what comes before us to do, is "worth while," is justly said to sound so reasonable and philosophical, that one is apt to think those ought to be the wisest persons who ask it oftenest, and act solely by the conclusions arrived at. But, urges an essay-writer on this very subject of Things that are worth while, the question in question is, in fact, the one moral hindrance to all exertion, hampering not only questionable activity, but all activity whatever. "To think things worth while is not only a sign, but a great promoter of cheerfulness, and, as opposed to giving in, is almost always wise." A good solid bit of work lasts—is Adam Bede's* creed

* Adam Bede was the sort of man to appreciate the self-made Sir Roger, in *Doctor Thorne;* and therefore to appreciate the author's suggested comment on the monument set up *in memoriam* of that hard-working baronet, in Barchester Cathedral. Sir Roger was there portrayed as smoothing a block of granite with a mallet and chisel; while his eagle eye, disdaining

of labour: "if it's only laying a floor down, somebody's the better for it being done well, besides the man as does it." Adam's work is essentially part of his religion; from very early days he has seen clearly that good carpentry is God's will—is that form of God's will which more immediately concerns him.

Profitably suggestive is the fact in the old poem of *Piers Plowman*, that when after some time Truth reveals herself to Piers, it is to command him to stay at home, and tend his plough. Of the young peasantry, she instructs him, industry in their calling is the highest duty. Let them do it, in that state of life to which, and not out of which, it has pleased God to call them. The biographers tell us of Rahel von Ense, with all her innate capacities, that she "was not appointed to write or to act, but only to live." Call her not unhappy on that account, urges one of them, call her not useless; nay, he would incline to call her happier and usefuller. "Blessed are the humble, are they that are *not* known. It is written, 'Seekest thou great things, seek them not:' live where thou art, only live wisely, live diligently." And of those who write, a very different writer has said, that not every one need write for distant places and ages; that it is far better for ordinary men to write for their nearest neighbours, and at most seek to act upon posterity through their influence upon the lives and manners of such people. Duty is well said to be coextensive with life itself, and human society a sort of body corporate, made up of different members, each having its own special function. Whence it follows that "whoever contributes to the full and proper discharge of these functions is contributing to

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such humble work, was fixed upon some intricate mathematical instrumen above him. "Could Sir Roger have seen it himself, he would probably have declared that no workman was ever worth his salt who looked one way while he rowed another." He might have taken up his parable with the Bridge in the Biglow Papers—

> "I'm older'n you, an' I've seen things an' men,
> An' here's wut my experience hez ben:
> Folks that worked thorough was the ones thet thriv,
> But bad work follers ye ez long's ye live;
> You can't get rid on't; jest ez sure ez sin,
> It's ollers askin' to be done agin."

the general good of the whole body; so that a person occupied in them is doing good in the strictest sense of the words,"—that is, he is forwarding and preserving the happiness of the society of which he is a member. Human society is thus compared to a vast and intricate machine, composed of innumerable wheels and pulleys. "Every one has his special handle to grind at—some with great and obvious effects, others with little or no assignable result; but if the object ultimately produced by the combined efforts of all is in itself a good one, it cannot be denied that whatever is essential to its production is good also."

Mendelssohn writes in one of his letters from Rome, "I love any one who adopts and perseveres in some particular pursuit, prosecuting it to the best of his ability, and endeavouring to perfect it for the benefit of mankind." This he says by way of apology for an otherwise tedious and unattractive personage, with whom he was then consorting. No doubt he could have found it in him to admire, after a sort,—in the old grammatical, if not in the vulgar, sense of the word,—the earnestness of Elia's Mrs. Battle at the card-table; to admire her never conniving at miscellaneous conversation during a game; admire her emphasized observation that cards were cards, and her impatience at having "her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties," considered in the light of a mere amusement. "It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do,—and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards, over a book." She could have entered into the gamester's stanzas in Mr. Browning's lyric—as well the counter as coin, he submits, when your table's a hat, and your prize a dram.

> "Stake your counter as boldly every whit,
> Venture as truly, use the same skill,
> Do your best, whether winning or losing it,
>
> If you choose to play—is my principle!
> Let a man contend to the uttermost
> For his life's set prize, be it what it will."

Think earnestly upon any subject, investigate it sincerely, and you

are sure to love it, Sir A. Helps assures us: "There have been enthusiasts about heraldry. Many have devoted themselves to chess." The occasion for this remark is, a querist's alleged perplexity what to choose as his point of action, and still more how to begin upon it. The answer is another query. Is no work of benevolence brought near to you by the peculiar circumstances of your life? If there is, follow it at once. If not, still you must not wait for something apposite to occur. "Take up any subject relating to the welfare of mankind, the first that comes to hand: read about it: think about it: trace it in the world, and see if it will not come to your heart." That many have devoted themselves to chess—to say nothing of the unique Sarah Battle's lifelong devotion to whist—suggests the question, Is the welfare of living, thinking, suffering, eternal creatures, less interesting than the knight's move, and the progress of a pawn?

But opportunities of doing good, the author of *Organization in Daily Life* insists, "though abundant, and obvious enough, are not exactly fitted to our hands: we must be alert in preparing ourselves for them." Benevolence, on his showing, requires method and activity in its exercise. Whatsoever the hand findeth to do, is to be done with the right hand's might; but that right hand must owe its cunning to the brain, its energy of impulse to the heart.

XXVII.

PENAL PANEGYRIC.

PROVERBS xxvii. 14.

IT stands written in the Proverbs of Solomon, that whoso "blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him." Save me from my friends, of that sort. The blessing roared forth in boisterous tones at that unseasonable hour, and at that unreasonable pitch of a stentorian voice, startling the object of it from his slumbers,

and stirring the neighbourhood to protest, comes in no sense as a blessing in disguise. It is a crying evil. There is such a thing as—Pope has made classical the expression—to damn with faint praise. But it is only too possible to produce the like result with loud praise. So loud, that the echo rebounds with a vengeance, almost cracks the ear-drum, and quite frets and lacerates the aural nerve. Such loud blessing is in effect a malison, not a benison; no boon, but a bane.

Mendelssohn laments, in one of his letters from Switzerland, his inability to form any judgment of his new compositions—to tell whether they are good or bad,—his alleged reason for this incompetency being, that all the people to whom he had played anything for the last twelve months, forthwith glibly declared it to be wonderfully beautiful. "And that will never do," exclaims Felix, reviewing his position. "I really wish that some one would let me have a little rational blame once more, or what would be still more agreeable, a little *rational* praise, and then I should find it less indispensable to act the censor towards myself, and to be so distrustful of my own powers." Certainly moderate praise, writes Lord Bacon, used with opportunity, and not vulgar, is that which doeth the good. "Too much magnifying of man or matter doth irritate contradiction, and procure envy and scorn." Owen Feltham holds it a greater injury to be over than under valued. "There is no detraction worse than to over-praise a man; for if his worth prove short of what report doth speak of him, his own actions are ever giving the lie to his honour." Churchill shrewdly says of the poet in general, but with a particular application to himself:

> "Greatly his foes he dreads, but more his friends;
> He hurts me most who lavishly commends."

The art of praising has been described by an accomplished French critic as one of the rarest proofs of literary talent,—a much surer and more delicate indication of it than is the gift of supreme excellence in satire.

Of the two evils, an excess of ridicule and an excess of flattery, there can be no doubt, rules a home authority, that ridicule is

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by far the least damaging to a man of merit who is working his way.

Praise undeserved is censure in disguise; and even at a public dinner one may now and then see, it is allowed, that the object of a thoroughgoing piece of flattery is not smirking, but is really annoyed at the folly and impudence of his eulogist. "The more a man appreciates his own services to science or adventure or letters or anything else. the less likely he is to endure with patience the clumsy and misplaced praises of the man who knows nothing of the subject except what he has learnt by hastily looking out his victim's name in *Men of the Time*," but who ladles out masses of hot, greasy. steaming adulation, —like the pancakes in the ballad that were "egged on" till enough to poison poor Jack.

The worst detractor, writes an essayist on "Laurels," is less of an enemy than the unflinching panegyrist, though the sugariness of panegyric on the palate makes men whom it would be absurd to call weak cry out that there is nothing so delicious, nothing so proper,—albeit an hour of candid reflection would convince them irresistibly that there is nothing so ruinous, or so destructive of anything like free growth. Swift likens praise to ambergris; a little whiff of it, and by snatches, is very agreeable; but "when a man holds a whole lump of it to his nose, it is a stink, and strikes you down." La Bruyère is intolerant of the affected superlatives of eulogy with which some folks overrate some books; and after enumerating some of the exaggerated phrases in vogue, "nuisibles à cela même qui est louable, et qu'on veut louer," he demands, why can't they simply say, *Voilà un bon livre.*

> "A vile encomium doubly ridicules:
> There's nothing blackens like the ink of fools.
> If true, a woful likeness; and if lies.
> Praise undeserved is scandal in disguise."

If Horace speaks slightingly of Plautus, as of Ennius, it must be said. with Dean Liddell, that he was provoked by the fashion which in his day prevailed of overrating the old Roman writers. It is a sort of dead-weight incumbrance, as the Greek proverb

runs, to be praised overmuch: *Βάρος τι καὶ τὸ δ' ἐστιν αἰνεῖσθαι λίαν.* Dryden says in one of his University of Oxford prologues, that,

> "When our fop gallants, or our city folly,
> Clap over-loud, it makes us melancholy;
> We doubt that scene which does their wonder raise,
> And, for their ignorance, contemn their praise."

The grandson of his Achithophel, another Shaftesbury, after inveighing against the satire of the day as scurrilous and witless. adds: "Our encomium or panegyric is as fulsome and displeasing, by its prostitute and abandoned manner of praise. The worthy persons who are the subjects of it, may well be esteemed sufferers by the manner." The ridiculous exaggeration of the praise lavished on Racine, not only "revolted" the admirers of Corneille, but did Racine harm with moderate men, and made the judicious grieve. When Italian comedy was introduced into France, under the auspices of Cardinal Mazarin, the enthusiasm affected by such supple courtiers as Mortemart and Grammont, and the hyperboles of laudation in which they indulged, soon made the newly imported attraction a veritable bore to people of temperate tastes,—such as Madame de Motteville, sober of speech herself, and confessedly *ennuyée* by *si fortes exagérations.* It was sage counsel that Fontenelle gave to Lassonne—to do his best to keep his friends from praising him in excess; "for the public is apt to treat with utter severity those of whom their partisans make too much." Sainte-Beuve taxes M. Aimé Martin with drawing an ideally romantic portrait of Bernardin de St. Pierre, and in fact writing one of those "impossible biographies" which at once put a reader of good sense on his guard. Macaulay observes of Johnson's extravagant estimate of a well-known and "noble passage" in Congreve's *Mourning Bride*, which the Doctor, both in writing and in conversation, extolled above any other in the English drama, —that it "has suffered greatly in the public estimation from the extravagance of his praise." The same critic, in his strictures on Mr. Gleig's "puerile adulation" of Warren Hastings, is confident that the Governor-General would have preferred a

likeness of himself, though an unfavourable likeness, to a daub at once insipid and unnatural. "Paint me as I am," said Oliver Cromwell, while sitting to young Lely. "If you leave out the scars and wrinkles, I will not pay you a shilling." And Macaulay contends that if men truly knew their own interest, it is thus they would wish their minds to be portrayed. We should choose, it has been said, in reference to friends, that they should see one's failings, know their scope, and yet think little of them when weighed in the balance with one's recommending qualities. As the writer of an essay on Appreciation puts it, an author or an artist who demands that every admirer shall be an adulator, unconscious of this or that defect in the clay of which his idol is composed, unconscious that the idol is other indeed than supernaturally refined gold, may be very sure that his vanity will rob him of the kind of friends who are best worth having.

Lord Grenville declared it to have been his fate all through life to be more injured by the press in his favour than by that which had been pretty unsparingly employed against him. A biographer of Lord St. Vincent says of Nelson, that to his truly noble and generous nature nothing was ever more disgustful than the attempts of that tribe, the worst kind of enemies (*pessimum inimicorum genus, laudatores*)—the mean parasites who would pay their court to himself by overrating his services at St. Vincent in 1797, and ascribing to him, instead of to Jervis, the glory of that memorable day.

De Quincey contends that in the case of the first appearance of a man of really splendid attainments, it is a mistaken policy which would deprecate the raising of great expectations. On the contrary he maintains them to be of real service, pushed even to the verge of extravagance, as tending to make people imagine the splendour of the actual success even greater than it was. "Many a man is read by the light of his previous reputation. Such a result happened to Bentley." The same author enforces the same doctrine in one of those characteristic novelettes which he wrote for *Blackwood*. He there again assails the commonplace maxim—that it is dangerous to raise

expectations too high; a maxim true only conditionally, on his contention; which is, that in any case where the merit is transcendent of its kind, it is always useful to rack the expectation up to the highest point; in anything which partakes of the infinite, the most unlimited expectations will find ample room for gratification; while it is certain that ordinary observers, possessing little sensibility, unless where they have been warned to expect, will often fail to see what exists in the most conspicuous splendour.

But the commonplace maxim holds its own as a rule, which exceptions but help to prove. Boileau prefaces his tenth Satire by a deprecation of the mischief done him by friends who preluded its appearance with a flourish of trumpets too blaring by half. Says Leatherhead to Littlewit, in Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, "Sir, do not you breed too great an expectation of your play among your friends; that's the hurter of these things." After telling us that F. Bayham's criticisms on Clive Newcome's first portrait-paintings were tremendous, so that you would have thought there had never been such drawings since the days of Michael Angelo, Mr. Thackeray adds that, in fact, F. B., as some other critics do, clapped his friends so boisterously on the back, and trumpeted their merits with such prodigious energy, as to make his friends themselves sometimes uneasy. If, observes Mr. Slick, you want a son not to fall in love with any "splendiferous gal, praise her up to the skies, call her angel, say she is a whole team and a horse to spare, and all that: the moment the crittur sees her, he is a little grain disappointed, and says, 'Well, she *is* handsome, that's a fact; but she is not so very *very* everlastin' pretty arter all.' Then he criticizes her; . . . and the more you oppose him, the more he abuses her, till he swears she is misreported, and ain't handsome at all." Mrs. Thrale was cut short in her high praise of Mr. Dudley North, by Johnson's summary disparagement of him. The Doctor told her he knew nobody who blasted by praise as she did; for wherever there is exaggerated praise, everybody is set against a character, and is provoked to attack it. There was Weller Pepys, for instance: she praised that man with such

disproportion, that Johnson was avowedly incited to lessen him more than he deserved. "His blood be upon your head," said the Doctor to the dame. We are suggestively told at the close of the first of the *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, that,

> "Soon as the story reached its end,
> One, over-eager to commend,
> Crowned it with injudicious praise ;
> And then the voice of blame found vent,
> And fanned the embers of dissent
> Into a somewhat lively blaze."

He that, as South puts it, should celebrate a captain that had the good fortune to worst the enemy in a skirmish, to the degree of a Cæsar or an Alexander, would render the poor man ridiculous instead of glorious ; and every one that measures his actions by the superlatives of the panegyrist, sets his reputation upon stilts, which is not the surest way of standing. The flatterer "greatens and advances everything beyond the bounds of its real worth ; describing all in hyperboles, high strains, and words of wonder, till he has puffed up the little thing that he commends, as we see men do a bladder, which owes all its bulk only to air and wind, upon the letting out of which, it returns and shrinks into a pitiful nothing." Windbags are a standing text with Mr. Carlyle ; and what they mean is, collapse.

Pope warned the inconsiderate of the possibility of some kinds of work being not impaired by storms alone, but feeling the approaches of too warm a sun :

> "For Fame, impatient of extremes, decays
> Not more by envy than excess of praise."

Scott told Miss Seward, then engaged on a life of Dr. Darwin, that to himself, biography, the most interesting perhaps of every species of composition, lost all its interest when the lights and shades of character were not accurately and faithfully detailed ; and he took that opportunity of expressing his want of patience with such "exaggerated daubing as Mr. Hayley has bestowed upon poor Cowper. I can no more sympathize with a mere eulogist, than I can with a ranting

hero upon the stage; and it unfortunately happens that some of our disrespect is apt, rather unjustly, to be transferred to thesubject of the panegyric in the one case, and to poor Cato in the other." Cowper, *le pauvre homme* in this instance, had long before, with emphasis and discretion, penned his protest against profuse panegyric, in lines designedly imitative of Shakspeare :

> "Trust me, the meed of praise, dealt thriftily
> From the nice scale of judgment. honours more
> Than does the lavish and o'erbearing tide
> Of profuse courtesy. Not all the gems
> Of India's richest soil at random spread
> O'er the gay vesture of some glittering dame,
> Give such alluring vantage to the person,
> As the scant lustre of a few, with choice
> And comely guise of ornament disposed."

XXVIII.

COUNTING HEADS AND WEIGHING BRAINS.

ECCLESIASTES ix. 15, 16.

THERE came a great king, once upon a time, against a little city, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it. "Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man." Is it not written in the words of the Preacher, the son of David, king of Jerusalem? "Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength; nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised." Little city or big, the story is of constant application. Wisdom is better than strength; but then again majorities are strong; and the unwise majority take small account of the wise unit. He has more brains than they all; and if influence were recognized and merit appraised by the weighing of brains, one man's against a multitude's, the one man would weigh down the scale, and the multitude would kick the beam. But counting heads is a more popular

arithmetic, and an easier, than weighing brains; and so numbers are apt to have it all their own way.

As in casting account, says Sir Thomas Browne in his *Religio Medici*, "three or four men together come short in account of one man placed by himself below them, so neither are a troop of these ignorant Doradoes [gilt-heads] of that true esteem and value as many a forlorn person whose condition doth place him below their feet." A troop of them? nay, say with Young, albeit not in his sense,—

> "Ten thousand add; add twice ten thousand more;
> Then weigh the whole; one soul outweighs them all."

Mr. Carlyle tells us, in his plainest spoken fashion, that a million blockheads looking authoritatively into one man of what is called genius, or noble sense, will make nothing but nonsense out of him and his qualities, if they look to the end of time. "He understands them, sees what they are; but that they should understand him, and see with rounded outline what his limits are,—this, which would mean that they are bigger than he, is for ever denied them." Then again, the mass of men consulted at hustings, upon any high matter whatsoever, our Latter-day Pamphleteer pronounces as ugly an exhibition of human stupidity as this world sees. What though there be such things as multitudes all full of beer and nonsense, who by hypothesis cannot be wrong? *He* sees no safety in "a thousand or ten thousand brawling potwallopers, or blockheads of any rank whatever," (such, for instance, as the Doradoes, or gilt-heads, of old Sir Thomas Browne,) if the Fact be against them. Prompt is he to answer the objection, Are not two men stronger than one; must not two votes carry it over one? Prompt, with a plump No, nor two thousand, nor two million. "Many men vote; but in the end, you will infallibly find, none counts except the few who were *in the right*. Unit of that class, against as many zeros as you like!" Simple addition enough! exclaims old Bartle Massey, in *Adam Bede*, scornfully and shrewdly, in deprecation of a scheme that affronts his philosophy of life: "Add one fool to another fool, and in six years' time six fools more—they're all of the

same denomination, big and little's nothing to do with the sum." The sum total is of no more value, by such an estimate, than that of the best integer in it: ciphers in such a case go for nothing—go for nought, or for naught—spell it how you will.

One of what Ben Jonson calls his "Discoveries" is, that suffrages in Parliament are numbered, not weighed; "nor can it be otherwise," says he, "in those public councils, where nothing is so unequal as the equality: for there, how odd soever men's brains or wisdom are, their power is always even and the same." Hobbes quotes, approvingly, and in a spirit of complacent self-application, the case of a certain Roman senator who, having propounded something in the assembly of the people "which they, misliking, made a noise at, boldly bade them hold their peace, and told them he knew better what was good for the commonwealth than all they; and his words are transmitted to us as an argument of his virtue." He would have subscribed his *ex animo* assent and consent to the poet's reply to an objector's *argumentum ad verecundiam*, "You must be wrong; the World is in the right."

> "What is this World?—A term which men have got
> To signify, not one in ten knows what;
> A term, which with no more precision passes
> To point out herds of men than herds of asses;
> In common use, no more it means, we find,
> Than many fools in same opinions join'd."

And therefore is our poet resolved, unawed by numbers, to follow reason, once found, and recognized, however untrodden the route; rather than cast in his lot with the unreasoning many:

> "Rather stand up, assured with conscious pride,
> Alone, than err with millions on his side."

La tête d'un chef en pèse plusieurs milliers, writes Agrippa d'Aubigné. Montaigne calls it sad work to be at that pass, that the best trial of truth must be the multitude of believers, in a crowd where the number of fools so far exceeds that of the wise. "For my part, what I should not believe from one,

I should not believe from a hundred and one." Le Comte de Crillon said one day to M. d'Allonville, "If all the world and I professed one opinion, and M. Necker propounded a contrary one, I should straightway be convinced that all the world and I were mistaken." *Le public! le public!* exclaims Chamfort —*combien faut-il de sots pour faire un public?* Coleridge's computation is applicable, that a million of insulated individuals is only an abstraction of the mind, and but one told so many times over without addition, as an idiot would tell the clock at noon—one, one, one. *La médiocrité de la foule* does not cease to be mediocrity because the numbers of the *foule* are raised to however high a power. Grant the component members of the crowd to be stolid, and stolidity is the outcome of the imposing throng *en masse.* Put them together, as Luther once said, "and they have not wit enough to cure a spavined horse. What are they? What the wolf said of the nightingale,—a voice, and nothing else." Washington Irving somewhere has his fling at certain orators who are described in conventional phrase as "speaking the sense of the meeting"—said meeting generally consisting of men whose quota of sense, taken individually, would make but a sorry figure. And this is suggestive of the curious fact discussed by Whately in his *Elements of Rhetoric*, that a sensible man can express his sentiments in private to a sensible friend with perfect facility, who yet is either completely struck dumb, or greatly embarrassed, when he tries to address a large audience in the same words. It cannot, urges the Archbishop, be from any superior deference which the speaker thinks it right to feel for the judgment of the hearers; for it will often happen that the single friend, to whom he is able to speak fluently, shall be one whose good opinion he more values, and whose wisdom he is more disposed to look up to, than that of all the others together. "The speaker may even feel that he himself has a decided and acknowledged superiority over every one of the audience; and that he should not be the least abashed in addressing any two or three of them separately; yet, still, all of them, collectively, will often inspire him with a kind of

dread." Mr. Browning's apologetic Bishop supposes himself chargeable with undue resort to "grosser estimators" than he needs—knowing, as so well he knows, that

> "One wise man's verdict outweighs all the fools',—
> I pine among my million imbeciles
> (You think), aware some dozen men of sense
> Eye me and know me."

There is more irony than humility in Hajji Baba's profession of faith, after an interview with a great man of the Board of John Company,—"I will not conceal from you my belief, and perhaps in my ignorance I am wrong, that the head of one wise man would be worth the collected knowledge of the twenty-four chair-sitters, if they were all like the fat merchant with whom I happened to converse." Shaftesbury marvels at the moderns who have no better knowledge of truth than by counting noses,—satisfied if they can poll an indifferent number out of a mob. These would be the sort of "people" to form the finale to La Fontaine's fable:

> "Le peuple s'étonna comme il se pouvait faire
> Qu'un homme seul eût plus de sens
> Qu'une multitude de gens."

All mankind, by the verdict of Samuel Butler, in his miscellaneous thoughts, is a rabble, silly and unreasonable, with whom

> "all the reasons that prevail
> Are measured not by weight, but tale."

Quantum, not *quale*, is their desiderated quotient. "Pour moi," says Montaigne, "de ce que je n'en croirois pas un, je n'en croirois pas cent uns;" and it might be, if it has not been, plausibly contended that since everybody is rather prone to error, the more people hold to an opinion the likelier it is to be ridiculous. Mr. Emerson would away with the hurrah of masses, and let us have the considerate vote of single conscientious men. He refers approvingly to ancient Egypt, where it was established law that the vote of a prophet be reckoned equal to a hundred hands. He thinks it was much underestimated. "Clay and clay differ in dignity," as we discover

by our preferences every day. Pairing off man against man in political tactics he scouts as a vicious practice. Suppose the three hundred heroes at Thermopylæ had paired off with three hundred Persians; would it have been all the same to Greece and to history? "Napoleon was called by his men *Cent Mille.* Add honesty to him, and they might have called him Hundred Million." Mr. Emerson's countrymen are the subject of Mr. J. S. Mill's remark, that all being nearly equal in circumstances, and all nearly alike in intelligence and knowledge, the only authority which commends an involuntary deference on their part is that of numbers: the more perfectly each knows himself the equal of every single individual, the more insignificant and helpless he feels against the aggregate mass, and the more incredible it appears to him that the opinion of all the world can possibly be erroneous. "Faith in public opinion," says M. de Tocqueville, "becomes in such countries a species of religion, and the majority its prophet." Racy as usual is the penman of the *Biglow Papers* when touching on the national worship of numbers:

> "More men? More Man! It's there we fail;
> Weak plans grow weaker yit by lengthenin';
> Wut use in addin' to the tail,
> When it's the head's in need o' strengthenin'?"

Four hundred in number were the complaisant prophets whom Ahab gathered together, all as one man to humour him in his designs. But well might Jehoshaphat ask, "Is there not a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might inquire of *him?*" Edmund Burke charged the revolutionary doctrinaires of his day with reducing men to loose counters, merely for the sake of telling, and not to figures whose power is to arise from their place in the table: the elements of these gentry's own metaphysics should, he thinks, have taught them better lessons: "the troll of their categorical table might have informed them that there was something else in the intellectual world besides *substance* and *quantity.*" The votes of a majority of the people cannot alter the moral, any more than they can alter the physical, essence of things. *Ponderanda sunt testimonia, non numeranda.*

People are not, in Landor's figure, like bars of iron, to be mended and magnified by adding one to another. Chateaubriand, speaking of men of genius, adds, "dont le moins savant a plus de sagesse que tous les hommes ensemble." The height of a crowd of a thousand people is confessedly no more than the height of the tallest man in it. One of the greatest of English poets says of, or to, the shade of one of the greatest of Italian,—

> " Each year brings forth its millions ; but how long
> The tide of generations shall roll on,
> And not the whole combined and countless throng
> Compose a mind like thine ! Though all in one
> Condensed their scatter'd rays, they would not form a sun."

If Newton had not solved the problem of gravitation, some one else, it is pretty safely alleged, would have done it a little later; but no combination of commonplace intellects would avail to keep science up to its level—no such combination would "discover the differential calculus, or solve the problem of planetary motion, or be even capable of attacking the difficulties involved in them, any more than a million scribblers of poetry could produce a Shakspeare, or a dozen bad generals produce one Napoleon." In the ideal and pleasurable arts, as Dr. John Brown has it, quality is nearly everything. "One Turner not only transcends ten thousands Claudes and Vanderveldes; he is in another sphere. You could not thus sum up his worth." "Tous les *grands médiocres*"—the phrase is due to Marivaux, himself one of them—"entasseraient grain sur grain pendant des siècles pour s'élever et se guinder en se concertant jusqu'à cette sphère supérieure, ils n'en sauraient venir à bout." A great number of finites does but make up a great number of finites, and by no means avails to make up the infinite ; just as, again, *l'être parfait ne peut être la collection de tous les êtres imparfaits.*

A discourser on "Catholic infallibility" accepts as something intelligible the notion of an infallible man; but when told of an infallible assembly of men, he tries in vain to conceive of what separate atoms of inspiration the collective miracle is

made up. Every individual member in his separate capacity, and before he entered the assembly, is perfectly fallible; when there, he utters the very opinions which he brought there, and tenders the vote which he previously designed; yet "the aggregate of these fallibilities is inspiration!" As ten millions of circles can never make a square, so, argues Dr. Primrose, the united voice of myriads cannot lend the smallest foundation to falsehood. Reasoners on the doctrines of the New Academy have unreasonably enough alleged that, although no single sense does actually convey to us a correct impression of anything, nevertheless we are enabled so to confirm or modify the report of one sense by the report of another sense, that the result of the whole activity of the five senses is a true impression of the external Thing. This is a curious fallacy, observes one of their critics: it pretends that "a number of *false* impressions are sufficient to constitute a true one!" Southey, in the well-known imaginary conversation with Porson, cites as too self-evident for argument the truism, that the opinion of a thousand millions who are ignorant or ill-informed,* is not equal to the opinion of only one who is wiser. Hamlet sets off the judgment of the single judicious spectator against that of the "unskilful" and overbearing throng; "the censure of which one, must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others." *Non numero hæc judicantur sed pondere.*

* An able dissertator on Taste shows that it is not from the greatest number of voices, but from the opinion of the greatest number of well-informed minds, that we can establish, if not an absolute standard, at least a comparative scale, of taste. And while he freely admits that the greater the number of persons of strong natural sensibility or love for any art, and who have paid the closest attention to it, who agree in their admiration of any work of art, the higher do its pretensions rise to classical taste and intrinsic beauty; so. on the other hand, he urges that, as the opinion of a thousand good judges may outweigh that of nearly all the rest of the world, there may again be one individual among them whose opinion may outweigh that of the other nine hundred and ninety-nine; that is, one of a still stronger and more refined perception of beauty than all the rest, and to whose opinion that of the others and of the world at large would approximate and be conformed, as their taste advanced in culture.

XXIX.

MARTHA AND MARY.

St. Luke x. 38 *seq.*

OLSHAUSEN observes that the account given in St. Luke's gospel of the two sisters of Bethany marks them, though in few touches, so strikingly and clearly, that they are often chosen as the exemplars of the peculiarities of two distinct religious tendencies: Martha being the recognized type of a life busily devoted to externals; and Mary of quiet self-devotion to the Divine as the one thing needful. "Among the apostles, Peter corresponded to Martha; John, on the other hand, to Mary." * The same commentator, while affirming that to a certain extent both tendencies will be combined in each believer, is careful not to overlook the existence of different vocations, or the fact of many being better fitted for busy outward labours than for an inner comtemplative life, although the most active must cultivate a real spirit of devotion, and the most contemplative must consecrate his energies to a practical service of God. Although Mary, as Jeremy Taylor says, was commended for choosing the better part, yet Mary had done worse, if she had been at the feet of her Master when she should have relieved a perishing brother. "Martha was troubled with much serving; that was more than need,

* Dr. Newman somewhere calls attention to the fact that Simon remained at his nets, while his brother Andrew followed John the Baptist; and that Andrew first recognized the Messiah among the inhabitants of despised Nazareth, and brought his brother to Him; yet to Andrew, Christ spake no word of commendation which has been allowed to continue on record, whereas to Simon, even at his first coming. He gave the honourable name by which he is now designated, and afterwards put him forward as the typical foundation of His Church. Nothing, indeed, can hence be inferred, one way or other, concerning the relative excellence of the two brothers. "Andrew is scarcely known, except by name, while Peter has ever held the place of honour all over the Church; yet Andrew brought Peter to Christ." *Suum cuique* is at times an ideal law, rather than a practical or plainly practicable one, in this busy world of ours.

and therefore she was to blame; and sometimes hearing, in some circumstances, may be more than needs; and some women are *troubled with overmuch hearing*, and then they had better have been serving the necessities of their house."

The address of Jesus to Martha is justly held to refer less to household activity in itself (for that must be cared for) than to the state of mind in which she went about it, and the comparison she instituted in this respect between herself and Mary. Busying herself to provide the best entertainment she could for the beloved Guest, she exaggerated the relative value of her household diligence; and from the gratification she felt in διακονία—a term comprising "all domestic services in which Martha lost herself in needless bustle"—from the enjoyment she felt in her congenial occupations, arose the reproving speech directed against her sister.* Martha's implied rebuke of Mary, whom indeed she desires our Lord implicitly to rebuke, is itself rebuked in His reply. He rebukes first the μεριμνᾶν and τυρβάζειν—the being careful and troubled, *turbari*, about many things—that is, her "restless spirit of action, as moved by the impulses of creature affection;" and next, He contrasts the trivial many things, πολλά, with the indispensable one thing, ἕν,—intimating at the same time that for the sake of the former she was losing the latter; though the many things might be dispensed with, the one thing not.

There is something of gentle chiding too, or mild rebuke, in our Lord's "Said I not to thee . . . ?" addressed to Martha, at her brother's grave. He had just bidden them take away the stone; and the doing so would, as Dr. Hanna puts it, at once expose the dead, and let loose the foul effluvium of the advanced decomposition. "The careful Martha, whose active spirit ever busied itself with the outward and tangible side of

* "Perhaps conscience stirred her up and testified that Mary had more of Jesus than she. But as her craving for the heavenly was not sufficiently strong and pure, she suffered herself to be fettered by external activities, which in reality were more agreeable to her, and out of this state of mind may have arisen her speech. Jealous of Mary, she wished her to be as she herself was."—*Olshausen.*

things, at once perceives this, and hastens to interpose a check." Let us, however, be prompt to remember, with Bishop Hall, that "it was Martha who went to meet Jesus." So was it—to recall the assumed affinity between Martha and Peter on one side, Mary and John on the other,—so was it Peter who "went into the sepulchre" of his risen Lord. John had outrun Peter, when to the sepulchre they ran both together. John came first to the sepulchre; yet went he not in.

Modern criticism is caustic on Bishop Fisher's elaboration of a parallel between the Lady Margaret and Martha of Bethany, in four respects. First, nobility of person; second, discipline of her body; third, in ordering her soul to God; fourth, in hospitality and charity. "Now," urges the author of the *Biographia Borealis*, "unless there be, as in all probability there is, a traditional history of Martha, containing many particulars not recorded by the evangelists,* it would puzzle a herald to prove her *nobility*, except it consisted in her descent from Abraham, which made her akin to the kings of Israel and Judah." He adds that neither does it appear in Scripture that she disciplined her body in the sense here meant; while, as to the third and fourth conformities, it is observable that "in the only passage of the gospel wherein much is said about Martha, she is rather reproved for *not* turning her soul to God, and for being too intent upon her hospitality. But it had long been a commonplace to represent Martha and Mary as the types or symbols of the active and the contemplative † duties, and every good woman was compared to one or the other."

* On which point a foreign divine, already cited, observes, in reference to Martha's being described as owner of a house in the κώμη of Bethany, that whether she was a widow, or lived unmarried with her sister and Lazarus, cannot be determined, the evangelists being "remarkably sparing in their historic notices of the persons mentioned by them. They confine themselves to what is simply necessary, and are intent rather on the delineation of their spiritual life."

† Mr. E. S. Dallas, in his elaborate treatise on the science of criticism, glances casually but effectively at this symbolism. He is showing that ours is a chequered life, in which the moral forces cross and counteract each other, and in which no one of them can be regarded as by itself per-

Hartley Coleridge himself compares a good woman to them both; or, at least, exhorts, in a hortatory sonnet, a winsome Martha of his acquaintance to emulate the excellence of each.

> "Thou bear'st a name by Jesus known and loved;
> And Jesus gently did the maid reprove
> For too much haste to show her eager love.
> But blest is she that may be so reproved.
> Be Martha still in deed and good endeavour,
> In faith like Mary, at His feet for ever."

Of pure devotionality, more common in Roman Catholic countries than in England, Arthur H. Clough had this to say, in his review of Professor Newman's book on the Soul,—that the religionist who practises it simply ignores the exterior world; all that is done is merely mechanical, and absorption in the contemplation of the Deity is the whole life: to sit at the feet of an Unseen Visitant, to gaze on a celestial countenance, visible to the entranced one alone, and to listen to words spiritually discerned, inaudible to the carnal,—this is the one thing needful with which Martha must not interfere, however much Mary be needed for the many things of service. "In this life, except perhaps that the beatified Mary of necessity postulates the existence of the unblest Martha, there is at least consistency and unity. But, obliged as most people must be to mix with things earthly, and be cumbered and careful and troubled, they have to settle the question of reconciling the world and the Spirit, they have to make themselves holy friendships out of the unrighteous Mammon, to serve God in the world and in their generation." It is of millennial days that Doctor Hopkins

fect. Justice without mercy, for instance, becomes hateful, and the gentleness of doves may fail if divorced from the wisdom of serpents. There may be too much of a good thing: the moral not less than the physical earth needs change of weather, and could not thrive either in eternal sunshine or in eternal showers. So it is absurd, he argues, to speak of poetry and the fine arts as if they had not their weak side. "Religion itself has its weak side; and Mary, who sits at the feet of Jesus, knows not how much she owes to Martha, who takes the burden of the household cares." The life poetical and the life practical—this is his conclusion—may have each its virtues; but evidently they are virtues that, carried to certain, or uncertain, lengths, encroach upon each other.

is speaking when he significantly tells his hearers that "All the careful Marthas in those days will have no excuse for not sitting at the feet of Jesus; there will be no cumbering with much serving; the Church will have only Marys in those days." Meanwhile the Marthas have their day. Where there are sisters in a family, a Mary sometimes seems almost to imply a Martha. We read in the Autobiography of old Dr. Lyman Beecher that the young lady he married, Roxana Foote, had thought herself converted at five or six years of age, though far from satisfying the exactions of an apostle of absolute election; but at least she was the Mary among the three granddaughters of General Andrew Ward, who used to say that when the girls first came down of a morning, Roxana would put some thoughtful question, suggestive of study and meditation, while Harriet's voice would be heard briskly calling out, "Here! take the broom; sweep up, make a fire, make haste!" Harriet's namesake, Dr. Beecher's more celebrated daughter, is fond, like other American lady-novelists, of referring to the Bethany sisters, as often as not in a vein of humour; where, for instance, Mrs. Twitchel characterizes her indispensable "help," Cerinthy Ann, as "one of the most master hands to turn off work; she takes hold and goes along like a woman. . . . Deacon was a-sayin', if ever she was called she'd be a Martha, and not a Mary: but then she's dreadful opposed to the doctrines. . . . She was a-tellin' me yesterday, when she was a-hangin' out clothes, that she never should get reconciled to Decrees and 'Lection." So with Aunt Ildy in Mrs. Whitney's *Hitherto*, whom it made restless only to see a person reading a book, or sitting at a window to watch the sunset, so long as she could possibly find anything for them to do. "I never could help thinking of her when I read in the Bible of Martha of Bethany." There is a touch of the sisterly distinction in the Varnah and Ainah of Sir Arthur Helps's *Realmah*: spiritual things were not in the domain of the former; to be thriving and comfortable was the real object of life as she viewed it; but she was conscious of her inferiority to Ainah as a soothing companion and comforter, gentle, and considerate, and sympathetic.

The elder of the maiden sisters in Mrs. Oliphant's *Whiteladies* tells the younger, "I am Martha, and you are Mary." "If I am earthly while you are heavenly, you must put up with me; for, after all, there are a great many earthly things to be looked after." This elder sister would pause in the midst of a hundred real and pressing occupations, a hundred weighty cares, to condole with or support her sister in her more "spiritual" yet somewhat trifling pursuits; as for Susan's own serious cares, she could not look for Augustine's sympathy or interest in regard of them; she knew, indeed, that she would rather be disapproved of, perhaps censured, for being engrossed by the affairs of this world. Miss Augustine "was the ideal nun of romance and poetry, not the ruddy-faced, active personage who is generally to be found under that guise in active life." If Augustine in one room planned alms and charities for the expiation of the guilt of the family, which had made itself rich by church lands, with the deepest sense that her undertaking was of the most pious character,—Susan, in another, set herself to ponder how to retain possession of these lands, with an underlying sense of practical piety too.

No scene could have been more peaceful than that of our first introduction to Mrs. Poyser and Dinah Morris in *Adam Bede*, if the former very notable housewife had not been making such a frequent clinking with her iron, in "ironing a few things that still remained from Monday's wash," and moving to and fro whenever she wanted it to cool; carrying the keen glance of her blue-gray eye from the kitchen to the dairy, where Hetty was making the butter, and from the dairy to the back-kitchen, where Nancy was taking the pies out of the oven. And then we are told that the family likeness between her and Dinah, with the contrast between her keenness and Dinah's seraphic gentleness of expression, "might have served a painter as an excellent suggestion for a Martha and Mary."

There is a touch of Martha in Scott's Dame Glendinning, when scrupulous not to let her grief for a heavy loss interfere with her housewifely hospitality. A visitor must be considered, first of all. Her barley-bread had been toasted, her choicest

cask of home-brewed ale had been broached, her best butter had been placed on the hall-table, along with her most savoury ham and her ripest cheese, ere she abandoned herself to the extremity of her sorrow; and it was not till she had arranged her little repast neatly on the board, that she sat down in the chimney-corner, threw her checked apron over her head, and gave way to the current of tears and sobs. "In this there was no grimace or affectation. The good dame held the honours of her house to be as essential a duty . . . as any other pressing call upon her conscience; nor until these were suitably attended to did she find herself at liberty to indulge her sorrow for her departed friend."

In Longfellow's *Divine Tragedy*, this is Mary's address to the Master, at whose feet she sits, while Martha bustles about, muttering "She shows her love by words, and I by works":—

"O Master! when Thou comest, it is always
A sabbath in the house. I cannot work:
I must sit at Thy feet; must see Thee, hear Thee!
I have a feeble, wayward, doubting heart,
Incapable of endurance or great thoughts,
Striving for something that it cannot reach,
Baffled and disappointed, wounded, hungry;
And only when I hear Thee am I happy,
And only when I see Thee am at peace.

Stronger than I, and wiser, and far better
In every manner, is my sister Martha.
Thou seest how well she orders everything
To make Thee welcome; how she comes and goes,
Careful and cumber'd ever with much serving,
While I but welcome Thee with foolish words!
Whene'er Thou speakest to me, I am happy;
When Thou art silent, I am satisfied.
Thy presence is enough. I ask no more.
Only to be with Thee, only to see Thee,
Sufficeth me. My heart is then at rest."

XXX.

DAYLIGHT AND DAY'S WORK.

St. John ii. 9.

THE Master's avowed intention of going again into Judæa, where so lately the Jews had sought to stone Him, moved the disciples to remonstrate in the form of a question: "Goest Thou thither again?" thither, where enmity is so active and unrelenting, and threatens a too speedily fatal issue. That question He met, and dismissed, by another, that has the terse import and tone of an adage: "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" The day's work must be done by daylight, while it is called to-day. Walking by day, a man stumbles not, for light is above him and about him; but if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, for want of light. The night cometh when no man can work; and therefore must He that is sent do the work of Him that sent Him while it is day.

Yet a little while, He told the people later, should the light be with them. Let them walk while they had the light, lest darkness come upon them; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." So exhorted them He in whom was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. And He would have us walk in the light, as He is in the light, and as He walked by daylight; walked and worked while His day upon earth lasted, leaving us an example that we should so walk, in His steps.

Upon the dial-plate of his watch Dr. Johnson had the Greek inscription engraved, Νὺξ γὰρ ἔρχεται*—night cometh; to

* It was also chosen by Sir Walter Scott as a text to be engraved on the dial-stone which used to stand in front of his old cottage, but afterwards in the centre of the garden at Abbotsford.

A warning stroke in the autumn of 1831 made Sir Walter resist every

remind him with the lapse of every hour that the daylight of this life was waning and waning, and the darkness of the grave gathering and gaining upon him—the night wherein no man can work.

Marcus Antoninus "meditates" how much it concerns us to push forward, and make the most of our matters, because death is continually advancing. "Do not," he elsewhere bids himself, "manage as if you had ten thousand years to throw away: look you, Death stands at your elbow; make the most of your minute, and be good for something while yet you may." To suffer and to do, says De Quincey, was the portion in this life of Joan of Arc; and not for a moment was it hidden from herself: life, she felt, was short, and the sleep which is in the grave so long: let her use that life, so transitory, for the glory of those heavenly dreams destined to comfort the sleep which is so long. "Never once did this holy child relax from her belief in the darkness that was travelling to meet her." The voice that called her to death, she heard for ever.—What more particularly impressed those who were most intimate with Mendelssohn was, that in every pursuit he was so thoroughly in earnest—that with him the business of the hour was no trifling play, no filling up of idle spare time. To his friends' entreaties, towards the last, that he would spare himself, his resolute reply would be, "Let me work while it is yet day. Who can tell how soon the bell may toll?" Within a few days of his death, he seems to have rather intensified than abated in energy, because he felt, he said, "as if some one were lying on the watch for me, and crying, Stop! no farther! [*Halt! nicht weiter!*]" As with the toiling parish priest in Miss Broughton's first story, whose poor fragile body might be sick, and weary, and full of aches and pains; no matter; it must perform all

importunity to keep him away from work, just when he was least fit for it. The Lockhart brothers strove in vain to keep him with them awhile; he would listen to no persuasions: "I must home to work while it is called day," he said; "for the night cometh when no man can work. I put that text, many a year ago, on my dial-stone; but it often preached in vain."—Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, ch. lxxx.

the task the brave stout spirit laid upon it; the time for resting was not come yet. "There's so much work for me to do, and such a little day to do it in. We cannot, any of us, tell how soon the night may come, and I sometimes fancy my night is getting very near;" though he owns this may be only a superstitious fancy: still he would like to be getting on with his work "against it does come." So with the Wanderer, by that name known and read of many men,—whose prayer is,

> "Lord, imbue me
> With will to work in this diurnal sphere,
> Knowing myself my life's day-labourer here,
> Where evening brings the day's work's wages to me."

And whose confession is, in another place:

> "Knowing that night of all is creeping on
> Wherein no man can work, I sorrow most
> For what is gain'd, and not for what is lost;
> Nor mourn alone what's undone, but what's done."

* * * * *

It was the practical philosophy of Horace to account each new-born day his last, how far soever he may have been, in any devout or Christian sense, from living each day as if his last. *Omnem crede diem tibi diluxisse supremum.* Who knows whether the gods above will add a morrow to the day that now is? he asks in one of the Odes: *Quis scit an adjiciant hodiernæ crastina summæ Tempora Dî superi?* Seneca, philosopher of another school, budge doctor of another fur, argues from the uncertainty as to when and where death awaits us, the expediency of our awaiting it every where and when: *Incertum est quo te loco mors expectet; itaque in omni loco illam expecta.* Emerson scouts as one of the illusions we should get rid of, that the present hour is not the critical, decisive hour. Write it on your heart, he bids us, that every day is the best day in the year. "No man has learnt anything rightly, until he knows that every day is Doomsday." A thousand pities it is that Petronius Arbiter had not a better meaning to put upon his boast, that always and everywhere he had so lived, that he might consume the passing light as if it were not to return:

Ego sic semper et ubique vixi, ut ultimam quamque lucem, tamquam non redituram, consumerem. So in the *Alkestis* of Euripides: the passing day esteem thine own, and all beyond as Fortune's:

Τὸν καθ' ἡμέραν
Βίον λογίζου σου, τὰ δ'ἄλλα τῆς Τύχης.

Dr. South would adopt, but refine into a voice becoming a Christian, the note of the merry epicure, Τὸ σήμερον μέλει μοι, τὸ δ'ἄυριον τίς οἶδε; I will take care for to-day, who knows to-morrow? He that would live for ever, let him look upon himself as living but to-day: let this be secured, and whatsoever comes afterwards, let him reckon it as an overplus, and an unexpected gain. A severe illness taught Rousseau to number his days in this manner—if not so as to apply his heart unto wisdom, in the Scriptural sense, yet so as to live more wisely than before: "Tout en regardant chaque jour comme le dernier de mes jours," he tells us, of this period, he studied with as much ardour as if he had endless life before him. On another page he writes that he could veritably say he never began really to live until he had thus come to look on himself as a dead man. At ninety, Bishop Burgess, who had long lived in the constant anticipation of death, used every night to compose himself to sleep as to his very last. Speaking of danger as a most effective counter-irritant in cases of mental suffering, Dr. Holmes describes a perturbed spirit who, in circumstances of daily peril, learnt to endure the trials of each day better by dwelling in imagination on the possibility that it might be the last for him. There is a flavour of Horace's *omnem crede* in Dr. Channing's avowal when life was all but over with him, that he welcomed and was grateful for every simple pleasure of homely daily life, "perhaps the more because I do not look forward to them. I live as in the midst of death." *Grata superveniet quæ non sperabitur hora.*

Cowley was treading closely in the footsteps of Horace when he wrote,—

"Thus would I double my life's fading space,
For he that runs it well, twice runs his race.
And in this true delight, . . .
I would not fear nor wish my fate,
But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let my sun his beams display,
Or in clouds hide them; I have lived to-day."

Ille potens sui Lœtusque deget, cui licet in diem Dixisse, Vixi. On all-important time, says Dr. Young, through every age,—

"Though much, and warm, the wise have urged; the man
Is yet unborn, who duly weighs an hour.
'I've lost a day!' the prince who nobly cried,
Had been an emperor without his crown."

The *Amici, diem perdidi,* (Friends, I have lost a day,) of the Emperor Titus, that "Delight of the human race," is said by Dr. Merivale to have obtained higher appreciation than the phrase seems, when taken with the context, to deserve. It was on remembering one evening at supper that he had made no present to any one since the morning, that Titus uttered this celebrated exclamation of self-reproach. The context is forgotten, and *Perdidi diem* has for ages been accepted as a saying worthy of all acceptation, and pregnant with moral force,—as indeed not unworthy of the epithets applied to it by Victor, of *divinum et celeste.* Here and there, however, an admirer recognizes, whether in prose or verse, or, like John Oldham, in prosy verse, the occasional cause of the immortalized utterance: "Brave Titus!" runs the apostrophe, in a cacophony of consonants,—

"Thou heretofore deservedst such praise,
When acts of goodness did compute thy days,
Measured not by the sun's, but thine own kinder rays.
Thou thoughtest each hour out of life's journal lost,
Which could not some fresh favour boast,
And reckonedst bounties thy best clepsydras."

So Boileau: *Tel fut cet empereur*

"Qui soupirait le soir, si sa main fortunée
N'avait par ses bienfaits signalé la journée."

Titus himself *loquitur,* or *ipse dixit,* in Racine—

> "Depuis huit jours je règne . . .
> D'un temps si précieux quel compte puis-je-rendre?
> Où sont ces heureux jours que je faisais attendre?
> Quels pleurs ai-je séchés? dans quels yeux satisfaits
> Ai-je déjà goûté le fruit de mes bienfaits?
>
> * * * *
>
> Sais-je combien le ciel m'a comté de journées?
> Et de ce peu de jours, si longtemps attendus,
> Ah malheureux! combien j'en ai déjà perdus!"

One of the three regrets specified by Cato was that he had let a day pass without doing anything. Apuleius tells us of the Brachmani, a sect of Gymnosophists, that every disciple was required at the close of each day to give proof of some good thing done by him in the course of it, or his doom was to go supperless—in effect dinnerless, or more speakingly still, breakfastless—and serve him right. *Nulla dies sine lineâ* is a healthy law of life when healthily understood and carried out. A man may write too much, as Heywood did in penning a sheet a day. But one respects his diligence, as one does that of Manuel Souza penning daily forty-eight pages of thirty lines each; of Thion de la Chaume carefully noting down every night whatever that was noteworthy he had seen by day; of Navarrete letting no day go by without searching into something; of Sotheby in old age daily adding lines upon lines "without fail" to his translations; of Dr. Prout, exciting wholesome emulation by the amount of extra-professional labour he achieved by economy of spare minutes and seconds, day by day continually. On the principle of keeping up his earlier studies, amid the distractions of a busy professional career, Sir Henry Holland records his having devoted a certain time each day to some one or other of these subjects; well knowing that the continuity of pursuit here, once thoroughly broken, can rarely be recovered. "At the time when my medical practice most pressed on other occupations, I maintained these studies by methods . . . simple indeed in kind; . . . but a steady perseverance has given to them the force of habit—that strongest of all forces." He resolved "never to let the day pass wholly without" some taste of Greek and Latin reading,

were it but for ten minutes. "Every day, even the busiest, will yield its ten minutes over and over again, if they are well looked after and taken up at the time." He speaks of having much aided himself in using these "fractions" of time by the practice, of more than forty years' standing, of transcribing into a volume all the finest passages of Greek and Latin poetry and prose which had come under his notice: "This practice I have kept up to the present moment, having added even to-day some lines from the *Andromache* of Euripides." So with the physical sciences: as in the case of classical reading, a very short time regularly applied suffices, in his experience, to fulfil the purpose; at any rate had enabled *him* to "keep pace with all the greater discoveries of the day." Leigh Hunt was fond of urging, from his own example, that by dint of doing a little, or even a very little, every day, not a lover of letters but might in the course of a few months be deep as a bee in some of the sweetest flowers of other languages.

A poetaster was taunted the other day with attempting to justify the enormity of foisting so much worthless and unmeaning rubbish upon the public, by alleging *Nulla dies sine lineâ* to be his motto, and that "one line—at least one" he "must needs write, before the sun goes down with an angry glare to tell the ocean of a wasted day." His critics could not help thinking, for his own sake, that he had better have braved the worst consequences of the anger of the sun than have exposed "such stuff as this" to the daylight. Their advice therefore was that he be bold enough to hold his hand, and not mind what that tell-tale luminary may have to say.

One of the entries in John Foster's Journal runs thus: "Saturday night. Must I exclaim, '*Diem perdidi*'? Whether I have lost *this* or not, I believe I have not saved so many as the man who uttered that regretful sentiment. . . . I hope the last great day will have better days than this to disclose, in the account of my life." And in his essay on the Improvement of Time, he speaks of the regret which would be felt by a man prosecuting some grand scheme of ambition, for the loss of a day or an hour, if it were possible for him to have been

betrayed into such a remissness, as commanding with justice our admiration and reproaching our indolence, however much we may reprobate the grand schemer's designs. While *he* is adjusting an immense complexity of concerns, even in the time given by others to perhaps needless sleep, "how many men of talents, with some pretensions to virtue, and with a considerable scope for efficient activity before them, are absorbing their days in idle musings, or dissipating them in a trifling kind of social intercourse?" etc. A more recent essayist, after describing how the day of an English girl in town is apt to be made up,—of a little riding, namely, a little reading, a little dabbling with the paint-brush, a little strumming on the piano, a little visiting, a little shopping, a little dancing, and a general trivial chat scattered over the whole,—declares that Woman can always say with Titus, "I have wasted a day," but the confession wears an air of triumph rather than regret. "A world of trivial occupations, a whole system of social life, has been laboriously invented, that the day might be wasted gracefully and without boredom." If the idle, says Coleridge, are described as killing time, the man of methodical industry and honourable pursuits may be justly said to call it into life and moral being, while he makes it the distinct object not only of the consciousness but of the conscience: he organizes the hours, and gives them a soul; and that, the very essence of which is to fleet away, and evermore to have been (*fuisse*), he takes up into his own permanence, and communicates to it the imperishableness of a spiritual nature. "Of the 'good and faithful servant' whose energies, thus directed, are thus methodized, it is less truly affirmed that he lives in time than that time lives in him." For his days, months, and years, it is added, as the stops and punctual marks in the records of duties performed, will survive the wreck of worlds, and remain extant when time itself shall be no more.

There are some who account a day lost in which they have not done something silly or mischievous. There are those we read of in the Book of Proverbs who sleep not except they

have done mischief; and whose sleep is taken away unless they cause some to fall.

> "Clara, with Titus, thinks she's lost a day,
> Which some new source of scandal don't display."

Cliton tells Dorante, in Corneille's one comedy that lives, *Votre humeur sans emploi ne peut passer un jour.* Montesquieu's Persian Letter-writer cites an "honest citizen" of his acquaintance, who cannot, in these troublesome times, betake himself to rest unless he can say, "I have ruined a whole family to-day; I'll ruin another to-morrow." Chamfort declares the most utterly lost of all days to be that which had gone by without a good laugh. This was in his prose *maximes et pensées;* he could essay the heroic style in his *poésies*, as where he sings the praises of those "mortels magnanimes" and "bienfaiteurs fameux," who have taken for their model

> "Ce Titus, qu'à genoux tout un peuple environne,
> Pleurant au pied du trône
> Le jour qu'il a perdu sans faire des heureux."

Dr. Armstrong is said to have designed by Thomson been in his *Castle of Indolence* portrait of the splenetic solitary who would brook no company, and quite detested talk,

> "Ne ever uttered word, save when first shone
> The glittering star of eve—'Thank heaven! the day is done!'"

Done, and no good done it by him. Gone, and left no pleasant memory to him, whether of beneficence or even of benevolence. Shelley contrasts with the sting which retributive memory implants in the hard bosom of the selfish man, the

> "ecstatic and exulting throb
> Which virtue's votary feels when he sums up
> The thoughts and actions of a well-spent day."

In one of Longfellow's narrative poems we have a sombre man who counted each day as lost on which his feet no sacred threshold crossed. In one of his lyrics we have a village blacksmith who goes through life toiling, rejoicing:

> "Each morning sees some task begin,
> Each evening sees it close;
> Something attempted, something done,
> Has earn'd a night's repose."

Fly idleness, is George Herbert's exhortation,

> "which yet thou canst not fly
> By dressing, mistressing, and compliment.
> If these take up thy day, the sun will cry
> Against thee; for his light was only lent."

And one verse of that, *par excellence*, Country Parson's "Even-song" runs thus:

> "What have I brought Thee home
> For this Thy love? have I discharged the debt
> Which this day's favour did beget?"

Very solemn, to Archbishop Trench's thinking, as being far deeper than at first sight it might seem, is the Arabian proverb, "Every day in thy life is a leaf in thy history"—a leaf which shall once be turned back to again, that it may be seen what was written there; and that whatever was written may be read out in the hearing of all. *To-day* is the theme of a copy of verses by Mr. Carlyle, such as make one wish that even that master of quaint, rugged, picturesque, graphic, grotesque, and sometimes most eloquent and sonorous prose, had written more such, and many more:

> So here hath been dawning another blue Day:
> Think wilt thou let it slip useless away.
>
> Out of Eternity this new Day is born;
> Into Eternity, at night, will return.
>
> Behold it aforetime no eye ever did:
> So soon it for ever from all eyes is hid.
>
> Here hath been dawning another blue Day:
> Think wilt thou let it slip useless away."

XXXI.

GALLIO.

ACTS xviii. 12—17.

GALLIO was deputy of Achaia what time the Jews in Corinth made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment-seat, charging him with

persuading men to worship God contrary to their law. Without waiting to hear the defendant, Gallio dismissed the charge. It was altogether a matter outside of his function. He would have nothing to do with it. Had the matter been one of wrong, or wicked lewdness, he would of course have entertained it. But as it simply turned on verbal distinctions and Judaic doctrines, let them settle it among themselves; *he* would be no judge of such matters. And so saying, the proconsul summarily dismissed them (ἀπελαύνειν need not indicate the violence implied in "he drave them") from the judgment-seat.

Whereupon the Gentiles, perhaps instigated to the attack by a wish to please Gallio, as well as by their spite to the Jews, laid hands on Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment-seat. "And Gallio cared for none of these things." His allowing his tribunal to be abused to such an extent as this, even his apologists or admirers are scarcely able to defend. Contempt of court so flagrant, his own official self-respect might have forbidden or denounced. But with regard to the earlier procedure, the refusal to take cognisance of the case against Paul, the men of this generation are disposed to eye it with something at least of complacent interest and even approval, very different from the spirit in which it was common to stigmatize Gallio as the odious type of all that is coldly apathetic and systematically irreligious.

As the man who cared for none of these things, Gallio was practically bracketed and branded together with Pilate, who asked, What is truth? Bible-readers looked at him from a somewhat narrow point of view—their own standpoint of Christian creed and life—and condemned him accordingly as a heartless and professed worldling, representative of that cynical indifferentism which pooh-poohs not only all religions together, but religion itself. In which light the deputy of Achaia is marked out for emphatic and universal reprobation. From a thousand pulpits have fervid declaimers rolled the thunder of their rhetoric against him. From almost as many periodicals have the pens of ready writers discharged their blackest ink upon him. But the thoughts of man are widened with the

process of the suns. And Broad Church is one of the issues of this widening process; and with greater breadth of vision comes the perception that something is, from his own standpoint, to be said for Gallio after all.

An old Dissenting minister, simple, grave, sincere, whose good name for simple piety is still cherished in Wellingborough, made even his Independent congregation stare a little, when, at the commencement of his pastorate there, he prayed that "our rulers may be like Gallio, caring for none of these things." The aspiration was that of a consistent adversary of the union of Church and State; but there was an "independent" originality about the manner of it that might naturally make lifelong "independents" and confirmed congregationalists wonder what might come next. But the day was not to be very far off when a Frederick Robertson at Brighton would commend from the pulpit as "exceedingly wise" the conduct of Gallio in caring for none of these things. "He took no notice. He would not see." The preacher admits that the affair of the beating of Sosthenes was doubtless illegal and tumultuous, "a kind of contempt of court—a great offence in Roman law." But what ensures his approval of Gallio is, that the proconsul preferred permitting a wholesome outburst of healthy indignation, to carrying out the law,—knowing, as the deputy did, that in that popular riot human nature was throwing off an incubus; it was a kind of irregular justice, excusable because of its provocation. "And so Gallio would not see. He *covered* the transaction in a wise and wilful blindness."

Coleridge was regarding him from the conventional, if also from a correct, point of view, when he observed incidentally, in the *Aids to Reflection*, "Many there be of Gallio's temper, who 'care for none of these things,' and who account all questions in religion, as he did, but matter of words and names." Renan remarks that the total absence of religious and philosophical proselytism among the Romans of this epoch made them regard devotion to truth as a chimæra: such discussions annoyed them, and appeared to them devoid of meaning; all their displeasure fell upon those who asked them to inflict punishment

for what to them seemed vain subtleties. "Until the fall of Jerusalem, the rule which the Romans adopted in administration, was to remain completely indifferent to these sectarian quarrels." *Tros Tyriusve* they were for treating *nullo discrimine.* We might apply the spirit, if not quite the letter, of a couplet in one of Dryden's dramatic prologues:

> "Jove was alike to Latian and to Phrygian;
> And you well know, a play's of no religion,"—

(upon which last clause, may be, Dean Close would put an assenting construction, all his own). Gibbon writes that the innocence of the first Christians was protected by ignorance and contempt, the tribunal of the Pagan magistrate often proving their most assured refuge against the fury of the synagogue. In the case of Paul of Samosata the same historian observes: "As a Pagan and as a soldier, it could scarcely be expected that Aurelian should enter into the discussion, whether the sentiments of Paul or those of his adversaries were most agreeable to the standard of the orthodox faith," though the emperor's decision has the praise of being founded on the general principles of equity and reason. Again, Gibbon describes Constantine, in A.D. 324, as being "yet ignorant of the difficulty of appeasing the quarrels of theologians," and accordingly addressing to Alexander and to Arius a moderating epistle, in which he attributed the origin of the whole controversy to a trifling and subtle question concerning an incomprehensible point of the law, and lamented that the Christian people, who had the same God, the same religion, and the same worship, should be divided by such inconsiderable distinctions. Constantine turned over a new leaf anon, and came to regard the support of the orthodox faith as the most sacred and important duty of the civil magistrate; and we have to turn over many leaves in the history of the empire's decline and fall, without often coming upon an emperor of the type of Michael the Stammerer (A.D. 821), who treated image-worship with such contemptuous impartiality, declaring that he knew nothing of these ecclesiastical quarrels, and that he would maintain the

laws and enforce an equal toleration. Caviare to the general was doctrine, and practice, such as this. The general are apt to regard such rulers much as Rufus Lyon's housekeeper regarded that fine gentleman, whose "air of worldly exaltation unconnected with chapel," was painfully suggestive to Lyddy of Herod, Pontius Pilate, or the "much-quoted Gallio." And if from George Eliot we are off at a tangent to Sir Walter Scott, it is for the sake of his reference to the Covenanters' distrust of Henry Morton, whose prudence they termed a trusting in the arm of flesh, and whose avowed tolerance for those of religious sentiments and observances different from his own, "obtained for him the nickname of Gallio," as caring for none of these things. The age of the Covenanters might be one in which there was a rising school of rational theology, and in which latitudinarianism was of active force as well as passive weight; but the accepted and approved feeling towards Gallio was that indicated by Robert South, when in one of his sermons he took that "much-quoted" man for an exact type of "that temper of mind, that indifference in things spiritual," which is begotten in the minds of its worldly-wise followers by "policy, the great idol of a carnal reason," insensibly working the soul to "a despisal of religion." Few things can better mark the distinction with a difference between the theological tone of the seventeenth century and of the nineteenth, than the style in which Gallio is discussed, in either age, by the leaders of opinion. From the pages of one potent Review alone, in our own day, might be culled, at frequent intervals, repeated notices of Gallio, always more or less commendatory or sympathetic. These recurrent references betoken the sort of charm that is nowadays felt in the man, or in the subject. At one time he is made the theme of an elaborate essay, with his name for the title of it,—the writer deeming it strange that, in this time of civil and religious liberty, "nobody should have a good word for Gallio," whose hard lot has been to be set forth as a type of carelessness and scepticism, to be scouted by name as a byword of reproach—his sole crime appearing to consist in his having refused to listen to the accusations against the Apostle

Paul, and having looked on with profound unconcern at a bastinado inflicted upon the chief ruler of the synagogue. The possibility is conceded that a modern magistrate would have felt it his duty to interfere to prevent any and every breach of the peace; but a beating is not a serious matter among Oriental communities, and when inflicted upon a Jew would be deemed a bagatelle; and at all events, as far as the Apostle was concerned, Gallio "can claim the posthumous credit of having released him from his captors without even waiting to call on him for his defence." His decision was grounded on the principle of the non-interference of the State in matters of purely religious discipline and controversy,—"Libera chiesa in stato libero,"—and such being his decision, it became wholly unnecessary for him to hear the prisoner at all. "We do not even know that the Apostle wished to be heard, but in any case Gallio did nothing beyond what the strictest and most orthodox Bow Street magistrate of the nineteenth century would have done." The sole point, it is urged, to be plausibly alleged against his character seems to be his appearing not to have been converted to Christianity before the Apostle opened his mouth to convert him, while the opportunities of religious investigation which he enjoyed were not extensive; whence the plea in his behalf, that, provided he discharged with propriety the only secular duty he was called on to perform, he does not merit the opprobrium of being a careless thinker, any more than that of being an unjust judge.—At another time, another apologist for Gallio in the same Review is less thoroughgoing, and affirms his real fault to have been a gross breach of his duty as a magistrate; inasmuch as a shameful disturbance and assault happened in court before his own eyes, and he did not do his duty in putting it down. At another, it is submitted that even supposing the point at issue between St. Paul and the Jews to have been "a petty sectarian squabble," the particular matter which Gallio cared not to take cognizance of was the public beating of the Jewish Rabbi before the judgment-seat. At another, the reviewer of some Chinese correspondence on the rights and claims of missionaries, spoke of diplomatists as

seldom required to discuss the supposed conflict of spiritual and temporal duties, and of our Foreign Secretary as habitually emulating the statesmanlike neutrality of Gallio, whose "determination to confine himself to his proper functions has been persistently misunderstood for eighteen centuries." Arguing that the charge against the deputy, of indifference to religious truth, must be considered as not proven, his ablest advocate further contends that the charge is singularly inconsistent in the mouths of those who prefer it against him; it being illogical in ecclesiastical commentators to upbraid the Executive of the Roman Empire at one time for interfering, and at another for not interfering, in the early controversy between Christianity and its assailants. "One of two things is obvious—either that the Imperial Government was lax or not lax upon subjects of Pagan orthodoxy; but it is idle to accuse its agents simultaneously of scepticism and of tyranny." In point of fact, the line drawn by Gallio between what was and what was not a matter for State inquiry, is shown to have been conformable to the principles of Imperial Rome, which could not afford, with her enormous frontier and her system of outlying province, to be anything else but tolerant. And we are reminded that if Gallio had chosen to investigate the Apostle's orthodoxy, he would have had to investigate it not merely from a Jewish point of view, but so as to decide whether his opinions were consistent or not with allegiance to the Roman Emperor: Gallio's "abstinence from unnecessary inquisitiveness was therefore rather a political virtue than a theological vice." Dean Stanley, indeed, goes so far as to take Gallio for his model statesman, on the ground that, however often and vehemently reviled as a careless libertine, he showed the true judicial attitude towards petty sectarian squabbles of which he could take no cognizance.

XXXII.

A LAST PARTING.

ACTS xx. 36—38.

FROM Miletus, bound for Jerusalem, St. Paul sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. He was to take leave of them there and then, and it was to be a last parting. He told them how well he knew that not one of them all, among whom he had gone preaching the kingdom of God, should see his face again. Bound for Jerusalem, he knew not what should befall him there, beyond the bonds and afflictions that assuredly awaited him. But this one thing he did know, and he would have his friends from Ephesus know it equally well, that they, all of them, should see his face no more. And when he had spoken to them all his farewell charge, given them his last counsel, warning, comfort,—he kneeled down and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him,—sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more.

And was not he too moved? There is emotion instinct in every sentence of his farewell words. The Apostle was also a man, a man of like passions with themselves, with a heart none the less warm that it was the great heart of so great a man. The record of the parting is told with touches of nature that make the whole world of readers kin. This Jew of Tarsus was one of ourselves in the ties of human affection, in the bonds of our common humanity. Except these bonds? Nay, there was no such exception here. He would be both almost, and altogether, such as we are, *not* excepting these bonds.

Hath not a Jew eyes?—eyes to fill at the prompting of emotion, to shed tears as copious as those of any Ephesian elder that fell on his neck, and kissed him, before accompanying him to the ship. Hath not a Jew hands? hands to grasp, and press, and hold fast those of his fellows, Jewish or Christian or both. Hath not a Jew organs, dimensions, senses,

affections, passions, in common with his kind? If you prick him, does he not bleed? Cut him to the heart with the pangs of a last parting, and it is with a bleeding heart he will feel the bitter-sweets of that final embrace, that sore weeping, those farewell kisses. In all their affliction he is afflicted, and for this the sorrowing most of all holds good on either side, that they shall see one another's faces no more.

From Scripture to Shakspeare, the transit is often easy; an ease that may come of second nature. And seldom is Shakspeare more severely yet serenely dignified in his pathos than in the words of Brutus on the eve of Philippi:

> "And whether we shall meet again, I know not;
> Therefore our everlasting farewell take:—
> For ever, and for ever, farewell, Cassius!
> If we do meet again, why we shall smile;
> If not, why then this parting was well made.
> *Cassius.* For ever, and for ever, farewell, Brutus!
> If we do meet again, we'll smile indeed;
> If not, 'tis true, this parting was well made."

After that noble valediction, it is a clear descent to the otherwise not ignoble valediction of Addison's Cato:

> "Once more farewell!
> If we e'er meet hereafter, we shall meet
> In happier climes, and on a safer shore,
> Where Cæsar never shall approach us more."

But neither in Shakspeare himself were it easy to find a valedictory passage on the same high level as that of the two last of the Romans. Else we might cite, as pitched in the same key, or in the minor key to that major one, such passages as Salisbury's, "If we no more meet, till we meet in heaven, Then, joyfully," to "warriors all, adieu!"—and the leave-taking scene between Bagot, Green, and Bushby (in *King Richard II.*): "Farewell: if heart's presages be not vain, We three here part, that ne'er shall meet again." "Farewell at once; for once, for all, and ever." "Well, we may meet again." "I fear me, never." Or again Hotspur's leave-taking of his friends before the battle of Shrewsbury, when he bids sound all the lofty instruments of war, "And by that music let us all em-

brace: For, heaven to earth, some of us never shall A second time do such a courtesy." Even the fantastic Le Beau might claim a hearing, in his last words to Orlando:

> "Sir, fare you well;
> Hereafter, in a better world than this,
> I shall desire more love and knowledge of you."

Le Beau may have been a frivolous courtier only, but his words effect a lodgment in the soft corner of one's heart; and one recalls them in reading so simply grave and feeling a passage as that of Dr. Johnson's account of his last parting with that dear old family friend, Catherine Chambers: "I then kissed her. She told me that to part was the greatest pain that she had ever felt, and that she hoped we should meet again in a better place. I expressed, with swelled eyes, and great emotion of tenderness, the same hopes. We kissed and parted. I humbly hope to meet again, and to part no more."

Varied enough are the instances at which we might glance of one kind or another of last partings, oral or written. At William of Orange throwing his arms around Egmont, and holding him for a moment in a close embrace: tears fell from the eyes of both, and they parted, never to meet again on earth. At the last interview of Frederick the Great with his mother, which closes at once a chapter and a book of Mr. Carlyle's great history: "'Adieu, Madam; Adieu, O Mother!' said the King, in royal terms, but with a heart altogether human. 'May God above bless you, my Son!' the old Lady would reply;—and the Two had seen one another for the last time; Mother and Son were to meet no more in this world." At exiled Bolingbroke's written farewell to Swift: "Adieu, dear friend; may the kindest influence of heaven be shed upon you. Whether we may ever meet again, that heaven only knows." "In heaven we may, on earth ne'er shall we meet," is the utterance of Marlowe's Edward II. to his adherents. And we recall the query of the Lady of the Lake,

> "Why else that solemn warning given,
> 'If not on earth, we meet in heaven'?"

and the Rokeby "Adieu for evermore, my love! and adieu for evermore;"—and the strain of Ruggiero in Sir Henry Taylor's *Sicilian Summer:*

> "My eyes shall never more behold your face
> Till, looking through the grave and gate of death,
> I see it glorified, and like to His
> Who raised it."

And we recall Jean Paul's Firmian holding fast the form of his departing friend, with the entreaty, "We will look at one another only once more;" and they bent back, with their faces channelled by sorrow, and looked at one another for the last time, as the night-wind, like the arm of a stream, mingled with the deep river, and both, united, murmured in larger billows, and as the wide mountains of creation trembled beneath the dim radiance of tearful eyes. But this is becoming too Richter-esque. So we glance aside at Thackeray's Virginians, one of whom tells how the "truest of friends and fondest of brothers accompanied me to my boat, which lay waiting at the river-side. We exchanged an embrace at parting, and his hand held mine yet for a moment ere I stepped into the barge which bore me rapidly down the stream. 'Shall I see thee once more, dearest and best companion of my youth?' I thought. . . . He stood on the shore till his figure grew dim before me. There was that in my eyes which prevented my seeing him longer." May it not, must it not, have been so too with those elders from Ephesus who sorrowed most of all for the words of a last parting that Paul had spoken, and who accompanied him unto the ship?

Glancing hither and thither, in directions historical and unhistorical, illustrious and obscure, classical and romantic, we see Atticus and Cicero taking leave of each other at Tusculum, with "all possible marks of the most sincere and tender affections," and with saddening previsions of a darken-ing, sundering future. We see Lord Kames in the act, as his end drew near, of taking a public farewell of his brethren of the bench, and we hear that able and philosophic but

eccentric judge use for the occasion the pet phrase which, as one apologist candidly allows, "is only legitimately applicable to the female of the canine species;" for Dr. Robert Chambers was informed by an ear-and-eye witness, who was certain that he could not be mistaken, that after addressing his fellow lords of session in a solemn and affecting speech, and shaking their hands all round, in going out at the door of the court-room he turned about, and casting on them a last look, cried, in his usual familiar tone—"Fare ye a' weel, ye" plural feminine of dogs. He died eight days later.—Then again we turn to that parting of Napoleon with the aged King of Saxony in 1813, which Alison describes as "a noble and touching interview worthy of dramatic representation in future times." Or to that final embrace of Napoleon and Murat, in the same year, when the Emperor was possessed by a melancholy presentiment, and a true one, that he should never see his too brilliant kinsman again. Or to his embracing the Empress and his son for the last time, in the opening month of the following year, when he set out for the army,—with little right, and perhaps as little inclination, to adopt the style of Braganza, in making a like exit:

> "Now to our stations. Yet, ere we depart,
> This honest pledge, the soldier's short embrace:
> The sweet remembrance, if we fall for freedom,
> Will more than soften half the pains of dying;
> But if we meet, in stronger clasps renew'd,
> Will double all the joys of victory."

Whither or whence away again to John Howard's farewell interviews with his chosen friends—the last words spoken by him on several of which occasions have been religiously observed; as, for instance, to one friend: "I am persuaded that I shall not return and be permitted to lay my bones in my native land;"—to another, "You will probably never see me again; but, be that as it may, it is not matter of serious concern to me whether I lay down my life in Turkey, in Egypt, in Asia Minor, or elsewhere;"—to another, "We shall soon meet again in heaven,"—and then, after a pause, "The

way to heaven is as near from Grand Cairo as from London." Or we glance at the farewell mention in Chalmers' diary of his final parting with Edward Irving: "We parted from each other with great cordiality, after a prayer which he himself offered with great pathos and piety"—on that October morning in 1830 when, as Irving's biographer words it, the two made everlasting farewells, so far as this world was concerned, and parted in life, spirit, and career, each retaining a longing love for the other.

> "We in another world shall meet again;
> For our long friendship, this a brief farewell,"

is Lionel's leave-taking of dying Talbot in Schiller's *Jungfrau von Orleans.* We might collate with it an utterance of the Marquis in *Don Carlos;* the injunction against over-grief is Pauline in tone:

> "Promise me, not by unavailing sorrow,
> Unworthy of great souls, to aggravate
> The pangs of parting. I am lost to thee,
> Carlos, for many years—fools say, for ever."

In which remonstrant tone, so far as it pleads for self-restraint and deprecates self-indulgence in sorrow, Schiller's model statesman comes much nearer to the parting apostle, in precept and in protest, than does the gushing veteran in Rowe's tragedy:

> "I'm summon'd hence; ere this, my friends expect me.
> There is, I know not what of sad presage,
> That tells me, I shall never see thee more;
> If it be so, this is our last farewell,
> And these the parting pangs which nature feels
> When anguish rends the heartstrings. . . ."

XXXIII.

A PLEA FOR THE WEAKLY.

ROMANS xv. 1; 1 THESSALONIANS v. 14.

IT is, upon apostolic authority, the duty of the strong to bear the infirmities of the weak. And in another epistle, the brethren are exhorted to "comfort the feeble-minded" and to "support the weak." Whatever the special drift of either passage may have been, there is obviously in the general spirit of both of them a plea for the weakly. And we may be allowed to take the spirit of them as opposed to what once threatened to become the predominant tone of, so-called, Muscular Christianity,—in that phase of it, at least, which developed muscle at the expense of Christianity, and so may be said to have made more of the gift than of the altar which sanctifieth the gift—to have made more of the gold than of the temple which sanctifieth the gold. In pride of muscle there were certain Christians who seemed to wax so strong, that they could not bear, could not put up with, the infirmities of the weak. And instead of supporting the weak, they seemed inclined to suppress them. Instead of comforting the feeble, they seemed disposed to make away with them altogether.

Heathen philosophy, even Plato's own, had taken up this strain long before. It was systematically hard upon the weakly. It anticipated modern theories and practice in such matters as the struggle for existence, survival of the fittest, and happy despatch. In the exercise of the art of medicine, for instance, what was Plato's teaching? It might serve to cure the occasional distempers of men whose constitutions are good; but as to those who have bad constitutions, let them die; and the sooner the better: such men are unfit for war, for magistracy, for the management of their domestic affairs, for severe study and speculation; and the best thing that can happen to such wretches is to have done with life at once. Contrasting Bacon's view of the matter with Plato's,

Lord Macaulay observed, that the humane spirit of the English school of wisdom altogether rejected the notion that a valetudinarian who took great pleasure in being wheeled along his terrace, who relished his boiled chicken and his weak wine and water, and who enjoyed a hearty laugh over the Queen of Navarre's tales, should be treated as a *caput lupinum* because he could not read the Timæus without a headache. And as Plato had cited the religious legends of Greece to justify his contempt for the more recondite parts of the art of healing, Bacon vindicated the dignity of that art by appealing to the example of Christ, and reminded men that the great Physician of the soul did not disdain to be also the Physician of the body. Hawthorne somewhere asserts that most men—nor would he always claim to be one of the exceptions—have a natural indifference, if not an absolutely hostile feeling, towards those whom disease, or weakness, or calamity of any kind, causes to falter and faint, amid the rude jostle of our selfish existence. The education of Christianity, he owned, the sympathy of a like experience, and the example of women, may soften, and possibly subvert, this ugly characteristic of the less gentle sex; but it is originally there, and has its analogy in the practice of our brute brethren, who hunt the sick or disabled member of the herd from among them, as an enemy. *Mort aux faibles!* "Si quelque volatile est endolori parmi ceux d'une basse-cour, les autres le poursuivent à coup de bec, le plument et l'assassinent." Faithful to which code of action, the world at large, says Balzac, in his *Études Philosophiques*, is lavish of hard words and harsh conduct to the wretched who dare come to spoil the gaiety of its fêtes and to cast a gloom over its pleasures: whoever is a sufferer in mind or body, or is destitute of money and of power, is to it a pariah. "Ainsi le monde honore-t-il le malheur: il le tue ou le chasse, l'avilit ou le châtie." Is there not Spartan precedent for such sharp practice? The weakly or deformed child of a Spartan was thrown by order into the cavern called *apothetæ*,—in the belief that its life could be of no advantage either to itself

or to the State. The worst of charity is, complains Emerson, that the lives you are asked to preserve are not worth preserving.

> "History can tell of early ages dim,
> When man's chief glory was in strength of limb;
> Then the best patriot gave the hardest knocks,
> The height of virtue was to fell an ox:
> Ill fared the babe of questionable mould,
> Whom its stern father happen'd to behold;
> In vain the mother with her ample vest
> Hid the poor nursling on her throbbing breast;
> No tears could save him from the kitten's fate,
> To live an insult to the warlike state."

In the great school of the world it is as in those others of which Cowper wrote in his *Tirocinium:*

> "The rude will scuffle through with ease enough,
> Great schools suit best the sturdy and the rough."*

A disposition to despise weakness, observed the late Mr. Fonblanque, seems to be a law of nature, which humanity prevails against with effort, by urging the sympathies, and stimulating them by the imagination. Poor Boswell again and again makes piteous record of Johnson's unimaginative contempt for the sufferings of frailer constitutions; and he philosophizes on the fact that, in full health, men can scarcely believe their ailing neighbours suffer much, "so faint is the image of pain upon our imagination," and so difficult is it to make allowance for sensations in others which we ourselves have not at the time. Thus, in May 1763, when Boswell shivered in the night air on the Thames as they returned together from Greenwich, "Johnson, whose robust frame was not in the least affected by the cold, scolded me, as if my shivering had been a paltry effeminacy, saying, 'Why do you shiver?'"†

* "Rassemblez-vous des enfants dans un collége? Cette image en raccourci de la société, mais image d'autant plus vraie qu'elle est plus naïve et plus franche, vous offre toujours de pauvres ilotes, créatures de souffrance et de douleur, incessamment placées entre le mépris et la pitié: l'Évangile leur promet le ciel."—*Le Peau de Chagrin*, § iii.

† When Perthes was engaged at Böhme's book-warehouse in Leipzig, the first winter left his feet frost-bitten. Böhme himself had never been ill

"At your age, sir, I had no headache," snapped the Doctor at Sir William Scott once, when the future Lord Stowell ventured to complain of one.

With equal point and tenderness Madame de Sévigné writes, "Il faut aimer ses amis avec leurs défauts; c'en est un grand que d'être malade." When poor Fanny Burney fell ill at Court, and got no sympathy on that score, but sour looks rather, and chilly words, she wrote in her Diary: "Illness here, till of late, has been so unknown, that it is commonly supposed it must be wilful, and therefore meets little notice, till accompanied by danger, or incapacity of duty. This is by no means from hardness of heart—far otherwise; . . . but it is prejudice and want of personal experience." It is when the nerves are somewhat weakened that the senses of sympathy become more keen; for, as a distinguished essayist on the subject of ill-health remarks, that impetuous and reckless buoyancy of spirit which mostly accompanies a hardy and iron frame, is not made to enter into the infirmities of others. How can it sympathize with what it has never known? he asks. We seldom find men of great animal health and power possessed of much delicacy of mind; their humanity and kindness proceed from an overflow of spirits—their more genial virtues are often but skin-deep, and the result of good-humour. Mrs. Gore's Hardynge was so happy in himself, that he was not to be tamed into serenity: the stirring, prosperous activity of the world he lived in seemed to allow no leisure for people to fall sick, and die, and be buried. Time enough when they grew old and gray and useless. For shattered nerves, these boisterous demonstrations of his were sadly too much. "Indisposition he could not compre-

in his life, and scorned the indulgence of a stove, for he could keep himself comfortably warm by dint of stamping his feet and rubbing his hands. He saw young Frederick's distress, but took no notice of it till the lad could no longer stand upon his feet, and a surgeon had to be called in, who at once declared that the lapse of another day would have meant amputation. Now Böhme, for his part, had no notion of such weakling ways, and small patience with them. But,

> "When men in health against physicians rail,
> They should consider that their nerves may fail."

hend." Lord Beaconsfield tells us of Count Mirabel; "he had never been ill in his life, even for five minutes." Squire Western's notion of helping on a sick friend was by bouncing into his room with a view-halloo, and boisterously greeting him in stentorian tones,* whether he found him asleep or awake. Like one of Richardson's characters, "'Tis a shocking creature, and enjoys too strong health to know how to pity the sick." There is a stalwart country rector of Anne Brontë's painting, who, being a great despiser of tea and such slops, and a lover of malt liquors, bacon and eggs, ham, hung beef, and other strong meats, which agreed well enough with his digestive organs, maintained them to be good and wholesome for everybody without exception, and confidently recommended them to the most delicate convalescents or dyspeptics, who, if they failed to derive the promised benefit from his prescriptions, were told it was because they had not persevered, and if they complained of inconvenient results from the experiment, were assured it was all fancy. Even thus did Cato the elder write an essay on medical treatment for the use of his family: his own iron constitution bade defiance alike to physician and quack; but, as Plutarch drily remarks, both Cato's wife and their only son died at an untimely age. Stoical and muscular Christian as Samuel Johnson was, and, like Cato Censor, impatient of weakly folk and their ways, he was not, like Cato, proof against dumps. Macaulay writes of him, "Though his own health was not good, he detested and despised valetudinarians." He lacked the imagination that can make allowances. Miss Yonge's Theodora, in *Heartsease,* is an almost "awful example" of such an embodiment in the feminine

* A critical dissertator on Voices refers to certain men who do a good deal by a hearty, jovial, fox-hunting kind of voice, eloquent of a large volume of vitality and physical health; and declares this to be a good property for a medical man, as it gives the sick a certain fillip, and reminds them pleasantly of health and vigour—provided it is not overpowering. But it is agreed that a voice of this kind has a tendency to become insolent in its assertion of vigour, swaggering and boisterous; and then it is too much for invalided nerves, just as mountain winds or sea breezes would be too much.

gender: Violet's weakly health she "could neither understand nor tolerate"—and she took all unclassified ailments as fine-lady nonsense. For a weak man to sympathize with weakness, is easy, said John Sterling, as for a strong man to sympathize with strength; but it is hard for the weak to sympathize with the strong, and far harder for the strong to sympathize with the weak. Mr. Stuart Mill reckoned it as one of the disadvantages of Jeremy Bentham, that from his childhood to his old age he had never had a day's serious illness: his unbroken health helped to incapacitate him for sympathy with his fellows, and weakened his powers of insight into other minds. The remark has been taken to suggest that a certain degree of functional derangement is not so unmitigated an evil as we are apt to consider it. Not that it would be easy to define the limits within which so equivocal an advantage is really desirable; but, say, "a slight touch of liver complaint, a liability to disease of the lungs, or a constitutional tendency to disease of the heart, may perhaps lend a certain charm to the character," and, at any rate, tone down the exuberant spirits which are apt to disgust us in perfectly healthy men. We recall Churchill's lines, and line of thought,—

> "The surest road to health, say what they will,
> Is never to suppose we shall be ill. . . .
> If Rupert after ten is out of bed,
> The fool next morning can't hold up his head;
> What reason this which me to bed must call,
> Whose head, thank Heaven, never aches at all? *
>
> * * * * *
>
> The gods,—a kindness I with thanks must pay,—
> Have form'd me of a coarser kind of clay."

* Richardson's Honourable Miss Byron has heard her grandpapa say, that men of strong health, and of a jovial turn, ought, for mere compassion's sake, never to keep company with men of feeble constitution, and make them the companions of their excess. In his *Confessions of a Drunkard*, Elia avowed a belief in the existence of constitutions, robust heads and iron insides, whom scarcely any excesses can hurt, and on whom his warning voice would be wasted: they would but laugh at a weak brother, who trying his strength with them, and coming off foiled in the contest, would fain persuade them that such agonistic exercises are dangerous.

Reflecting on the fact that by the constitution of society the bold, the vigorous, and the buoyant rise and rule, and that the weak, the shrinking, and the timid fall and serve, Mr. Walter Bagehot deems it idle to expect that this will not give great pain, and that the rough and strong will not often consciously inflict grievous oppression—will not, still more often, without knowing it, cause to more tremulous minds a refined suffering which their coarser texture could never experience, which it does not sympathize with, nor comprehend. We may say with the poet, though not as he meant it,

> "The law of the one is still to absorb:
> To be absorb'd is the other's lot:—
> The lesser orb by the larger orb,
> The weak by the strong . . . why not?"

When the young man called John disposed of a deformed acquaintance by the curt verdict, "A fellah's no business to be so crooked,"—"Yes," said the Professor at the Breakfast-table, thoughtfully, "the strong hate the weak. It's all right. The arrangement has reference to the race, and not to the individual. Infirmity must be kicked out, or the stock run down. Wholesale moral arrangements are so different from retail!—I understand the instinct, my friend,—it is cosmic,—it is planetary,—it is a conservative principle in creation." But the Professor's irony was thrown away upon the young fellow, whose face gradually lost its expression as he listened, until it became as blank of vivid significance as the countenance of a gingerbread rabbit with two currants in the place of eyes.

> "But what, said I, still laughing at the view,
> Have these weak creatures in the world to do?" *

A cruel query; for if, as Shakspeare's Isabella urges, it is excellent to have a giant's strength, still it is tyrannous to use it like a giant, and to take no account of dwarfs. A humaner query is that of the laureate's plain John, who walks to meet the mail:

> "What know we of the secret of a man?
> His nerves are wrong. What ails us, who are sound,

* Crabbe, *The Widow's Tale.*

> That we should mimic this raw fool the world,
> Which charts us all in its coarse blacks or whites,
> As ruthless as a baby with a worm,
> As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows
> To Pity—more from ignorance than will."

That is a pregnant line of Pope's, in which he speaks of men "in all the madness of superfluous health." So Cowper is constitutionally and legitimately impatient of men

> "With mouths made only to grin wide and eat,
> And minds that deem derided pain a treat,
> With limbs of British oak, and nerves of wire," etc.

Theodore Hook somewhere avows his inability to endure a man who is always boisterously mirthful, with a self-satisfied grin stereotyped on his face, and a trombone voice of self-gratulation perpetually sounding in one's ear; men whom nothing can move to tenderness or pity, and who live confident in their prescriptive immunity from broken health and spirits. As to Cowper, *he* had another species of this genus to deal with, in the stalwart person of John Newton, whose robust frame could bear a severity of discipline that to Cowper, so fragile, sensitive, and morbidly susceptible, was all but fatal. Not of John Newton's physique (nor of his sound divinity) was the poet thinking when he penned the stanza,

> "O why were farmers made so coarse,
> Or clergy made so fine?
> A kick that scarce would move a horse,
> May kill a sound divine."

There was not much about Newton of that Doctor Amboyne who, recognizing the abnormal sensibility of a patient, tells an inquiring friend, "Tough folk, like you and me, must begin by putting ourselves in his place before we prescribe for him, otherwise our harsh hands may crush a too tender flower." And in this respect might be bracketed with Mr. Charles Reade's sympathetic physician the Dr. Kittredge of *Elsie Venner*, who knew so well what a nervous woman is, and how to manage her: "He could tell at a glance when she is in that condition of unstable equilibrium in which a rough word

is like a blow to her, and the touch of unmagnetized fingers reverses all her nervous currents." Byron's friend, Charles Skinner Matthews, was fain to own in one of his letters, "I found my shivering and invalid frame so perpetually annoyed by the thoughtless and tumultuous health of every one about me, that I heartily wished every soul in the house to be as ill as myself." Matthews is known in literature as the author of a very readable book, the *Diary of an Invalid*. And invalids are the subject of an essay by one of our best essay-writers, who dilates on the social wrongs to which they are exceptionally exposed; for, whereas there are certain conventional forms of illness which are privileged,—a broken limb, or any bodily wound that is visible to the eye, or any such disorder as rheumatism or gout that requires sharp treatment,—on the other hand, the merely though thoroughly ailing man who has nothing very definite to show, is denied any such privilege, either in kind or even degree. "Any ailment which forces you to keep your bed, is presumed to be genuine; and very tolerant persons believe in the existence of consumption. But this is the limit beyond which toleration is not allowed to go. In every kind of ill-health which is not expressed by some term well known to the popular vocabulary, society—or at least the robust portion of it—utterly refuses to believe. No man in good health will listen to the suggestion that there can be delicacy without illness, weakness and depression of nerves without absolute disease, and a necessity for care even in the absence of fatal symptoms." And the writer goes on to assert that there is no bigotry in existence so complacent, so absolutely self-satisfied, as the bigotry of robustness,—looking as it does on the professing invalid either as a hypocrite of the basest sort, or else as the victim of a strange delusion, which it is the mission of the robust person to dispel, by gentle remonstrance, if possible, or, if that be unavailing, by taunts, importunities, and rough practical jokes. It is allowed to be not unnatural that the robust should regard the invalid with contemptuous unbelief: such a sceptical attitude of mind conveys with it several very consolatory and complacent reflections to the robust

man himself; for whereas it would be little to gratify in the belief that nature had given him a strong nervous system which she had denied to his friend, it is very pleasant for him to reflect that his superior condition is entirely owing to his own greater energy and firmer will, and that his friend would be quite as strong "if he would only just try and exert himself a little."

There is a separately published essay on taking things coolly, which we perhaps owe to the same anonymous writer, and which demonstrates how very materially the ability so to take things depends on the physical temperament. Of two men, for instance, one shall be cool and steady—in short, he shall have all his wits about him—the other in a hopeless state of fluster; yet for the one to rebuke the other would be as shabby as for the pilgrim with boiled peas to scoff at the limping gate of his less fortunate companion. "The two are unequally matched. It is often a mere affair of the pulse. So many beats more or less make a man a fidgety ne'er-do-weel or a tranquil hero." Of course it is conceded that the mental power and the earnest will are not to be ignored, for they come distinctly into play, and modify or override man's natural tendencies and infirmities; yet the man who has not naturally a clear head, stolid nerves, and a pulse beating with the dogged equanimity of a kitchen clock, is heavily weighted for the race of life, and may claim generous consideration from the world at large. "More especially may he claim it from those to whom kind nature has imparted the useful faculty of taking things coolly, in cloud or sunshine, in tempest or in calm." Mr. Feeble-mind, in Bunyan, made as if he would linger behind, when the other and healthier pilgrims were starting from the house of Gaius: they were all lusty and strong, he said, when invited to accompany them, and he was weak, and would be upset by that which others made nothing of. He felt unequal to keep up with them, and he dreaded their inability to make allowances for him. For "he that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease." Whereupon Mr. Greatheart, tender and

true, sought to reassure him by the reply, that he, the guide of the pilgrims' progress, had it in commission to comfort the feeble-minded, and to support the weak.

XXXIV.

THE UNTEMPTED THAT STAND, AND THE TEMPTED THAT FALL.

GALATIANS vi. 1.

ST. PAUL would have his brethren restore in the spirit of meekness a man overtaken in a fault, each of them, the while, considering himself, lest he also be tempted.

It is easy, said a heathen poet, to be virtuous when one is not exposed to temptation: *Esse bonum facile est, ubi quod vetet esse remotum est.* But no soul is absolutely impeccable; and, in Frederick Robertson's words, it seems as if all we can dare to ask even of the holiest is how much temptation he can bear without giving way.

> "'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus,
> Another thing to fall;"

but the distinction comes with sorry grace from one who fell so low as Angelo. Who, asked Rogers, can say, "In such circumstances I should have done otherwise"? Who, did he but reflect by what slow gradations, often by how many strange concurrences, we are led astray; with how much reluctance, how much agony, how many efforts to escape, how many self-accusations, how many sighs, how many tears,—who, did he but reflect for a moment, would have the heart to cast a stone? Byron was the subject of his lines beginning,

> "Thou art gone;
> And he who would assail thee in thy grave,
> Oh, let him pause! For who among us all,
> Tried as thou wert—even from thy earliest years,
> When wandering, yet unspoilt, a highland-boy—
> Tried as thou wert, and with thy soul of flame;

> Pleasure, while yet the down was on thy cheek,
> Uplifting, pressing, and to lips like thine,
> Her charmèd cup—ah, who among us all
> Could say he had not erred as much, and more?"

To Byron himself once turned Sheridan at a dinner-party, in tears, and said, "It is easy for my Lord G. or Earl G. or Marquis B. or Lord H., with thousands upon thousands a year, to boast of their patriotism and keep aloof from temptation; but they do not know from what tempation those have kept aloof who had equal pride, at least equal talents, and not unequal passions, and nevertheless knew not in the course of. their lives what it was to have a shilling of their own." And Byron, could he ever have forced himself to quote Wordsworth, might for once have used lines of the derided Lake poet's, and have reassured his fellow-guest, so far as *he* was concerned, by the assurance,

> "I am not of the world's presumptuous judges,
> Who damn where they can neither see nor feel,
> With a hard-hearted ignorance."

Said Johnson once, "You may not have committed such crimes as some men have done; but you do not know against what degree of light they have sinned." But the Judge who, as Thackeray puts it, sees not the outward acts merely, but their causes, and views not the wrong alone. but the temptations, struggles, ignorance of erring creatures, has, we know, a different code to ours—to ours, who fall upon the fallen, who fawn upon the prosperous so, who administer our praises and punishments so prematurely, who now strike so hard, and, anon, spare so shamelessly.

> "Who made the heart, 'tis He alone decidedly can try us;
> He knows each chord—its various tone, each spring—its various bias:
> Then at the balance let's be mute, we never can adjust it;
> What's done we partly may compute, but know not what's resisted."

Was Lord Nelson, it has been asked, a better or a worse man than a clerk in a London bank who passed his life in a sort

of moral torpor, without sufficient energy or temptation to do anything very right or very wrong? *Et combien semblent purs qui ne furent qu'heureux!* exclaims Victor Hugo. It is all very easy for a man to talk of conquering his appetites, when he has none to conquer, says Charles Kingsley's first hero. We owe all to Heaven, even our virtues, muses the Vicar in metaphysical William Smith's *Gravenhurst;* and he professes to have always felt a certain timidity in dealing out the requisite censures against men who have been led into error by hot impetuous temper, who probably thirsted after pleasures and excitements which to him and others were no temptations at all. The Countess Brunella of Dr. Moore's *Zeluco* "was chaste, without being virtuous; because in her it proceeded from constitution, not principle. Guarded by the breastplate of frigidity, which, like the ægis of Minerva, repels the shafts of love, she walked through life erect, and steady to the dictates of decorum and self-interest, without a slip or a false step." In his Inquiry concerning Virtue, Shaftesbury accepts as the greatest proof imaginable, that a strong principle of virtue lies at the bottom, and has possessed itself of the natural temper, when ill passions or affections are evidently and firmly seated in one part of the temper, whilst in another part the affections towards moral good are such as absolutely to master those attempts of their antagonists: "Whereas, if there be no ill passions stirring, a person may be indeed more cheaply virtuous, . . . without sharing so much of a virtuous principle as another." To apply a couplet of Corneille's Pauline,—

> "Ce n'est qu'en ces assauts qu'éclate la vertu,
> Et l'on doute d'un cœur qui n'a point combattu."

Leonard Fairfield may admire as a definition wiser and simpler than any in the most elaborate sermon by Parson Dale, Helen's question and answer, What is the difference between being good and bad? The good do not yield to temptation, and the bad do. But it is too epigrammatic to be exhaustive. Dr. Boyd accounts it fearful to think what malleable material we are in the hands of circumstances: "the graceful vase that

stands in the drawing-room under a glass shade, and never goes to the well, has no great right to despise the rough pitcher that goes often and is broken at last." The image recalls one that follows Frederick Robertson's apostrophe to the proud Pharisee of a woman, who passes by an erring sister with a haughty look of conscious superiority, ignorant, it may be, of what temptation is, with strong feeling and mastering opportunity: "Shall the rich-cut crystal which stands on the table of the wealthy man, protected from dust and injury, boast that it has escaped the flaws, and the cracks, and the fractures which the earthen jar has sustained, exposed and subjected to rough and general uses?" Gibbon is sneering, as usual, when he remarks that the virtue of the primitive Christians, like that of the first Romans, was very frequently guarded by poverty and ignorance.

How is it, asks Crabbe, that men, when they in judgment sit

> "On the same fault, now censure, now acquit?
> Is it not thus, that here we view the sin,
> And there the powerful cause that drew us in?
> 'Tis not that men are to the evil blind,
> But that a different object fills the mind.
> In judging others we can see too well
> Their grievous fall, but not how grieved they fell;
> Judging ourselves, we to our minds recall,
> Not how we fell, but how we grieved to fall."

Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. There is something applicable in Ovid's line, *Etsi non cecidit, potuit cecidisse videri.* A commentator on the two Bacons, referring to the spotless descent to posterity of Roger's name, while that of Francis has come down to us darkened with more spots than time can efface, deems it hard to say how much difference of position had to do with this difference of moral purity. If Lord Bacon had lived in his study, we might have had nothing but praises for his name. In judging such an Edgar Poe-like German romancer as Ernst Hoffmann, if we are forced to condemn him, let it be without forgetting, pleads

Mr. Carlyle, that for a mind like his, the path of propriety was difficult to find, still more difficult to keep: moody, sensitive, and fantastic, he wandered through the world like a foreign presence, subject to influences of which "common natures have happily no glimpse." The American romancer, Charles Brockden Brown, modestly referred his abstinence from coarser indulgences to his constitutional infirmities, and consequent disinclination to excess: the benevolence of Nature, he used to say, set him free from many of the temptations which beset others in their hot youth. Had he been furnished with the nerves and muscles of his comrades, his career, he believed, might have been the reverse of temperate and intellectual. "Who has assayed no danger, gains no praise," is a sententious line of Prior's. How can the proud Pharisee, as Dr. South words it, that shall reprove a publican in terms of insultation and boasting, tell but what, in the same circumstances and opportunities of sin, he should have done the same "for which, with so much arrogance, he reproves or rather baits another? Was it not the mercy of Providence that cast the scene of his life out of the way of temptation? that placed the flax and the stubble out of the reach of the fire?" Prescott pleads for Pizarro that his lot was cast among the licentious inmates of a camp, the school of rapine; and argues that the amount of crime does not necessarily show the criminality of the agent; and though history is concerned with the former, to be recorded as a warning to mankind, it is He alone who knoweth the heart, the strength of temptation, and the means of resisting it, that can determine the measure of the guilt.

> "The life of the man—can you tell where it lies?
> In the effort to sink, or the power to rise?
> Can you guess what the thirst is the man quenches thus?"

As Gordon says to Butler of their great leader, in Schiller's *Wallensteinstod:*

> "We in our lucky mediocrity
> Have ne'er experienced, cannot calculate,
> What dangerous wishes such a height may breed
> In the heart of such a man."

To Macaulay the "moderation of virtue" ascribed to Sir William Temple seemed littleness and meanness when he compared him with many of those frail men who, aiming high, but often drawn from the right path by strong passions and strong temptations, have left to posterity a doubtful and chequered fame. Clive, for instance, who, "like most men born with strong passions and tried by strong temptations," committed great faults. Of Cowper, on the other hand, as the contrasted schoolfellow of Warren Hastings, the historian observes, that having never been compelled to make a choice between innocence and greatness, between crime and ruin, his habits were such that he was unable to conceive how from the path of right even kind and noble natures may be hurried by the rage of conflict and the lust of dominion.

That which we do being evil, writes Hooker, "is notwithstanding by so much more pardonable, by how much the exigence of so doing, or the difficulty of doing otherwise, is greater,"—unless indeed this necessity or difficulty have originally risen from ourselves. To estimate the force by which temptation is overcome, said Sir James Stephen, you must ascertain the force of the propensities to which it is addressed. Robert South describes Him who came to save the lost, as never weighing the sin without weighing also the force of the inducement—how much of it is to be attributed to choice, how much to the violence of the temptation, to the stratagem of the occasion, and the yielding frailties of weak nature. De Foe is extolled by W. C. Roscoe as a great teacher of charity to those who are apt, as we all are, to think of the criminal outcasts of society as of persons removed from the ordinary conditions of humanity, and given up to a reprobate condition totally different from our own: one day we may be surprised to find that, while right and wrong continue to differ infinitely, the various degrees of human sinfulness lie within much narrower limits than we, who measure by the external act, are at all accustomed to conceive. *Mit dem unglücklichen solte der glücklich nicht rechten*, says a German dramatist. A deed done, a word spoken, is an act over which we can sit in

judgment; but how that word came to be spoken, the temptation which led to it, the human nature which yielded—there is quite sure, as one of George Eliot's reviewers affirms, to be something in the process with which we can sympathize; enough for pity and fellow-feeling to mingle with our virtuous indignation, and divest it of some of its harshness. There is a good clergyman in one of Mr. Froude's early fictions, to whom evil, in its abstract form, was so loathsome, and in its concrete so little familiar, that if ever he was obliged to transfer the judgment he had of the general to the particular, it was transferred whole: he could make no allowance; he knew not the infinite variety of natures men receive at the hands of Providence; nor had ever studied the strange laws which govern the moulding of them into characters; nor had any idea that the same temptation acts as variously on different men, as the same temperature on metals and gases.

XXXV.

NATURE'S LAW OF LIFE OUT OF DEATH.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 36.

IN illustrating and enforcing his doctrine of the resurrection of the body, St. Paul meets one hypothetical objector with the trenchant reply, designed to be question and answer in one, —"Thou fool! that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die." *Ἄφρον, σὺ ὃ σπείρεις, οὐ ζωοποιεῖται ἐὰν μὴ ἀποθάνῃ.*

With the Apostle's application of his argument we do not here propose to deal. The illustrative text is simply quoted as a starting-point for a digression on what may be called Nature's law of life out of death—the natural matter of fact, or the matter of fact in nature, that death is made to furnish new life, supplies the materials for it, and as it were actively as well as passively makes way for it. If the indefinite term Nature, thus conventionally used, be cavilled at, the cavil seems hardly

serious enough in practical import, however seriously urged and in whatever serious tones, to require explaining, or explaining away. And if objectors of another class take exception to the Apostle's argument, and urge that it is not the seed itself that dies—that the vital power of the seed, its germinating force, must remain, if there is to be any quickening process at all—we are not careful to answer them in this matter. We are concerned only with the applicability of the text to Nature's recognized method of evolving new forms out of decayed old ones, of bringing reconstruction out of decomposition, reorganization out of dissolution, life out of death.

We might thus apply to Nature the words of Bildad the Shuhite, and say: Behold, this is the joy of her way, and out of the earth shall others grow.

> "See plastic Nature working to this end, . . .
> See dying vegetables life sustain,
> See life dissolving vegetate again:
> All forms that perish other forms supply,
> By turns we catch the vital breath, and die."

Thus in the several orders of terrestrial forms, as Shaftesbury words it, "a resignation is required," a sacrifice and mutual yielding of natures one to another: the vegetables by their death sustain the animals, and animal bodies dissolved enrich the earth, and raise again the vegetable world. "All lives, and by succession still revives. The temporary beings quit their borrowed forms, and yield their elementary substance to new-comers. . . . New forms arise: and when the old dissolve, the matter whence they were composed is not left useless, but wrought with equal management and art, even in corruption, Nature's seeming waste and vile abhorrence. The abject state appears merely as the way or passage to some better." As Friar Lawrence muses, herb-gathering:

> "The earth, that's Nature's mother, is her tomb;
> What is her burying grave, that is her womb."

Among the *Crumms Fal'n from King James's Table*, and respectfully picked up and preserved as too good to be lost, by his complaisant courtier and alleged victim, Sir Thomas Overbury,

this fragment occurs: "All corruption is nothing but dissolution, and the last dissolution of everything is into the earth, which shows that from thence we began." His Majesty reasons not like Lucifer in Byron's *Cain*, when he bids his air-borne pupil, though out of sight of earth, deem not he can escape it: he shall soon return to earth, and all its dust: "'Tis part of thy eternity, and mine . . . And mightier things have been extinct To make way for much meaner than we can surmise." Dust we are, and to dust we return. It is not wonderful, said Dr. Rowland Williams, that those who accept no clue out of the labyrinth save speculation, and who observe completeness in the round of Nature, become tempted to class man with other animals, in the vast circle of life and decay, in which all things that breathe enjoy their hour, and relapse into that field of death, from which new harvests spring. "Why should the forces which moulded us, not mould out of ou rremains fresh forms of life? Air to air, dust to dust; the grass greener with our flesh." The Lucretius of the laureate bids

> "Great Nature, take, and forcing far apart
> Those blind beginnings that have made me man,
> Dash them anew together at her will
> Through all her cycles—intó man once more,
> Or beast or bird or fish, or opulent flower."

Heraclitus, we are told, was the first to proclaim the absolute vitality of Nature, the endless change of matter, the mutability and perishability of all individual things, in contrast with the eternal Being, the supreme Harmony which rules over all. He said there was nothing but a perpetual flux of things, that the whole world of phenomena was as a flowing river, ever-changing yet apparently the same. "Another truth I now unfold," said Empedocles: "no natural birth

> "Is there of mortal things, nor death's destruction final;
> Nothing is there but a mingling, and then a separation of the mingled,
> Which are called a birth and death by ignorant mortals."

We may be reminded of Schelling's expression of the accepted idea of life, as depending on the incessant disturbance and re-establishment of an equilibrium; or again of De Blainville's

definition of it, as a continual movement of decomposition and recomposition. Two streams circulate through the universe, said Julius Hare, the stream of Life and the stream of Death: each feeds, and feeds upon, the other; for they are perpetually crossing, like the serpents round Mercury's Caduceus, wherewith *animas ille evocat Orco Pallentes, alias sub Tartara tristia mittit.* Victor Hugo presents the grim aspect of the vext question when he dilates on the fact, that all nature which is under our observation is alternately devouring and devoured: the prey prey on each other. Nor is he over-eager to accept the solution of Bonnet, whose notions may be thus summarized: Universal death necessitates universal sepulture: the devourers are the sextons of the system of nature. All created things enter into and form the elements of other. To decay is to nourish. Such is the terrible law from which not even man himself escapes. So fleeting, as Mr. Carlyle moralizes, is the habitation of man—"his very house of houses, what we call his body, were he the first of geniuses, will evaporate in the strangest manner, and vanish even whither we have said." *La fange,* writes Lamartine, *devient homme et fermente encore:*

> "Puis un souffle d'en haut se lève, et toute chose
> Change, tombe, périt, fuit, meurt, se décompose,"—

as in Emerson's preception of the generation of contraries, of death out of life, and life out of death—"that law by which in nature, decomposition is recomposition, and putrefaction and cholera are only signals of a new creation." In a later work the essayist says of Nature that she turns her capital day by day; deals never with dead, but ever with quick subjects: all things are flowing, even those that seem immovable:* the

* The labours of Rouelle, Desmarest, Dolomieu, and Montlosier, made familiar to their countrymen, as Mr. Buckle remarks, the previously strange conception, that the surface of our planet, even where it appears perfectly stable, is constantly undergoing most extensive changes; that this perpetual flux takes place not only in those parts of nature which are obviously feeble and evanescent, but also in those which seem to possess every element of strength and permanence, such as the mountains of granite which wall the globe, and are the shell and encasement in which it is held.

adamant is always passing into smoke: the plants burn, that is, exhale and decompose their own bodies into the air and earth again: the animal burns, or undergoes the like perpetual consumption: the earth burns,—the mountains burn and decompose,—more slowly, but incessantly. To apply the quaint deliverance of a picturesquely disposed philosopher, the New works itself out from under the Old; and in some instances the Old sits sedulously hatching a cockatrice that will one day devour it.

Science has shown the great circles* in which Nature works; the manner in which "marine plants balance the marine animals, as the land plants supply the oxygen which the animals consume, and the animals the carbon which the plants absorb." Nature is thus said to work on a method of all for each and each for all: the strain that is made on one point bears on every arch and foundation of the structure; there is a perfect solidarity. Shelley sings how the leprous corse touched by a spirit tender,

> "Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
> Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
> Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death . . .
> Nought we know dies."

In a different mood were written the lines of Earth's scornful song,

> "As she sung, To my bosom I fold
> All my sons when their knell is knoll'd,
> And so with living motion all are fed,
> And the quick spring like weeds out of the dead."

In *Queen Mab* he had, long before, calmly propounded what is but another reading of the argument transferred or transposed from Chaucer by Dryden, only in the elder poet's there is a Personal great First Cause:

* Lord Lytton somewhere observes how often it had seemed to him that if there be, as ancient philosophers fabled, one certain figure pervading all nature, human and universal, it is the circle. Round, in one vast monotony, one eternal gyration, roll the orbs of space; and thus moves the spirit of creative life, kindling, advancing, maturing, decaying, perishing, reviving, and rolling again, and so onward for ever through the same course.

> "He perfect, stable; but imperfect we,
> Subject to change, and different in degree;
> Plants, beasts, and man; and, as our organs are,
> We more or less of His perfection share.
> But, by a long descent, the ethereal fire
> Corrupts; and forms, the mortal part, expire.
> As He withdraws His virtue, so they pass,
> And the same matter makes another mass."

Thus do the generations of the earth, wrote Shelley, go to the grave, and issue from the womb, surviving still the imperishable change that renovates the world: "even as the leaves Which the keen frost-wind of the waning year Has scattered on the forest soil, and heaped For many seasons there, though long they choke, Loading with loathsome rottenness the land, All germs of promise.

> "Yet when the tall trees
> From which they fell, shorn of their lovely shapes,
> Lie level with the earth to moulder there,
> They fertilize the land they long deformed,
> Till from the breathing lawn a forest springs
> Of youth, integrity, and loveliness,
> Like that which gave it life, to spring and die."

So Professor Lowell makes a moral emblem of the oak that profits by the foregone lives of immemorial vegetable races that have worked-over the juices of earth and air into organic life, out of whose dissolution a soil might gather fit to maintain that nobler birth of nature. And so too Washington Irving applied the thought to the mutability of literature; urging from analogy that as we daily behold the varied and beautiful tribes of vegetable growth springing up, flourishing, adorning the fields for a short time, and then fading into dust, to make way for their successors, in like manner the works of genius and learning decline, and make way for subsequent productions, haply dependent for much organic matter upon them, as they had been on the earlier series. Generation after generation passes away, but the vital principle is transmitted to posterity, and the new find sustenance from the old, the living from the dead.

One of Arthur Hugh Clough's miscellaneous poems touches

on a subject which, however absolutely wide of the mark, in itself, is suggestively capable of present application :

> "Where processes, with pain, and fear,
> Disgust, and horror wrought, appear
> The quick mutations of a dance,
> Wherein retiring but to advance,
> Life, in brief interpause of death,
> One moment sitting taking breath,
> Forth comes again as glad as e'er,
> In some new figure full as fair,
> Where what has scarcely ceased to be,
> Instinct with newer birth we see."

A younger poet takes the more cynical side of the main question, in blurting out such stanzas as these :

> "We follow the way that nature leads,
> What's the very first thing that we learn?—To devour.
> Each life the death of some other needs
> To help it from hour to hour.
>
> From the animalcule that swallows his friends,
> Nothing loth, in the wave as it rolls,
> To man, as we see him, this law ascends." . . .

That Demades the Athenian should have condemned an "undertaker," or vendor of funereal appliances, for making a profit by the deaths (the more the merrier) of his fellow-citizens, Montaigne accounted a folly, since no profit whatever can be made but at the expense of another ; and the essayist professed to hold, with natural philosophers, that the birth, nourishment, and increase of any one thing, is the dissolution and corruption of another. *Continuo hoc mors est illius quod fuit ante.* The world subsists upon alteration, meditates Marcus Antoninus, and what it loses one way, it gets another ; "for generation and corruption are but related terms." "The destruction of one thing is the making of another ; and that which subsists at present, is as it were the seed of what is to spring from it." Pages might be filled with excerpts to the same effect from widely-sundered sections of the imperial stoic's Meditations. As where, again, he speaks of things rotting in the earth, apparently sheer refuse and rubbish, but by the economy of nature reconstituted, transfigured, renovated, reformed. Elsewhere :

"All things are in a perpetual flux, and a sort of consumption." And again: "The dissolution of forms is no loss in the mass of matter." So again: "All things change of course, and wither, and drop to pieces, that new ones may be made out of them." The destroying agencies, argued J. S. Mill, are a necessary part of the preserving agencies: the chemical compositions by which life is carried on could not take place without a parallel series of decompositions. "The great agent of decay in both organic and inorganic substances is oxidation, and it is only by oxidation that life is continued for even the length of a minute." His reviewer in the *Edinburgh* has this to remark of the great facts of mutual destruction, disease, decay, and death, which appear so revolting to the essayist on theism, that they are obviously the inseparable conditions of a state of being of brief duration, by means of which an inexhaustible *flow* of successive generations passes onwards through a limited sphere of space and time, and the world is perpetually renewed. "Life supports life but by losing it, for while vegetables draw their nutriment directly from the chemical ingredients of the soil, animals only subsist upon organic productions." * A stranger who seeks the tomb of Lord Bacon, in St. Michael's Church, near Gorhambury, may still read upon his monument the words placed there by the faithful Meautys, "Composita solvuntur." That, says the Edinburgh reviewer, is perhaps the secret of the world. For, as Tertullian has it, "Omnia pereundo servantur; omnia interitu reformantur." The Christian Father is so far at one with the most materialistic of philosophers, opening and alleging that the formation of new combinations, out of dissolving forms, is the immutable order of ever-active nature.

"On sent à ce travail qui change, brise, enfante,
Qu'un eternel levain dans l'univers fermente."

* "Water and salt are perhaps the only inorganic exceptions in the diet of man, but these alone will not support life, though they are essential to it. If the globe were inhabited by a fixed number of creatures, incapable of destruction or of increase, the whole movement of animated nature would cease: we should live in what Professor Tyndall calls the stagnation of the marsh, instead of the leap of the torrent." (Vol. cxli., p. 25.)

Affirming that the carbonic acid which passes from our lips at every breath, is a precious boon to thousands of things of which we have daily need, an accomplished lecturer on science finds a sort of hint at physical truth in the old fairy tale of the girl from whose lips, as she spoke, fell pearls and diamonds; for the carbonic acid of our breath may help hereafter to make the pure carbonate of lime of a pearl, or the still purer carbon of a diamond;—nay, it may go—in such a world of transformations do we live—to make atoms of coal strata, which shall lie buried for ages beneath deep seas, shall be upheaved in continents which are yet unborn, and there be burnt for the use of a future race of men, and resolved into their original elements. "Coal, wise men tell us, is on the whole breath and sunlight; the breath of living creatures who have lived in the vast swamps and forests of some primæval world; and the sunlight which transmuted that breath into the leaves and stems of trees, magically locked up for ages in that black stone, to become, when it is burnt at last, light and carbonic acid, as it was at first." When we walk in a sunlit garden, Mr. Charles Kingsley reminds us, every breath we breathe * is feeding the plants and flowers around;—the delicate surface of the green leaves absorbs the carbonic acid, and parts it into its elements, retaining the carbon to make woody fibre, and returning us the oxygen to mingle with the fresh air, and be inhaled by our lungs once more. Thus are we shown to feed the plants, just as the plants feed us; and the geranium standing in the sick child's window absorbs the breath which he needs not, and gives to him the breath which he needs. "It is true—too true, if you will—that all things live on each other. But is it not, therefore, equally true that all things live for each other?—that self-sacrifice, and not selfishness, is at the bottom the law of Nature, as it is the law of Grace?" Is it not true that everything has to help something else to live, whether it knows it or not?—that not

* What becomes of this breath which passes from your lips? Is it merely harmful? merely waste? God forbid! God has forbidden that anything should be merely harmful or merely waste in this so wise and well-made world," etc.—*The Two Breaths*, by Rev. C. Kingsley. (1869.)

a plant or an animal can turn again to its dust without giving food and existence to other plants, other animals? *

> "Nought lives for self. All, all from crown to base—
> The clouds, whose glory is to die in showers,
> The fleeting streams, who in their ocean graves
> Flee the decay of stagnant self-content;
> The oak, ennobled by the shipwright's axe;
> The soil, which yields its marrow to the flower;
> The flower, which feeds a thousand velvet worms
> Born only to be prey to every bird;
> All spend themselves on others."

And the poet moralizes his song by teaching that Man, whose every breath is debt on debt, must show himself the creatures' lord by free-will gift of that self-sacrifice which they, perforce, by Nature's laws endure—the law of self-sacrifice, whether unconscious or not in the animals, rising in man into consciousness just as far as he is a man.

> "Death is the one condition of our life;
> To murmur were unjust; our buried sires
> Yielded their seats to us, and we shall give
> Our elbow-room of sunshine to our sons.
> From first to last the traffic must go on;
> Still birth for death. Shall we remonstrate then?
> Millions have died that we might breathe this day:
> The first of all might murmur, but not we." †

Sic rerum summa novatur, thus Nature renews herself—this fragment from Lucian is coupled with Ovid's *Mille animas una necata dedit* (one death is made the opening to a thousand lives), by Montaigne, in an essay which deprecates an irrational dread of death, considering of how great utility it is to Nature in maintaining the succession and vicissitude of her works, and

* "Is it not true . . . that the very tiger, seemingly the most useless tyrant of all tyrants, is still of use, when, after sending out of the world suddenly, and all but painlessly, many an animal which would without him have starved in misery through a diseased old age, he himself dies, and, in dying, gives, by his own carcase, the means of life and of enjoyment to a thousandfold more living creatures than ever his paws destroyed?"—Kingsley *On Bio-Geology*.

† T. Lovell Beddoes: *The Second Brother*, Act iii., Sc. 2.

that, in this universal republic, it tends more to growth and increase, than to loss or ruin. *Omnia commutat natura, et vertere cogit.* This planet of ours is for ever, as De Quincey said, working by golden balances of change and compensation, of ruin and restoration: she recasts her glorious habitations in decomposing them; she lies down for death, which perhaps a thousand times she has suffered; she rises for a new birth, which perhaps for the thousandth time has glorified her disc. "Hers is the wedding-garment, hers is the shroud, that eternally is being woven in the loom of *palingenesis.* And God imposes upon her the awful necessity of working for ever at her own grave, yet of listening for ever to His far-off trumpet of resurrection."

The D'Holbach school, without God in the world, in similar terms aver that by this palingenesis, this regeneration, the great whole, the mighty macrocosm subsists; and they compare it to the Saturn of the ancients, perpetually occupied as it is with devouring its own children.

Spenser rhymes and reasons to the like purpose, in the second canto of his fifth book:

> "Likewise the earth is not augmented more
> By all that dying into it doe fade;
> For of the earth they formed were of yore:
> However gay their blossome or their blade
> Doe flourish now, they into dust shall vade.
> What wrong then is it if that when they die
> They turn to that whereof they first were made?"

We may take Mr. Robert Browning's word for it, that

> "Roses will bloom, nor want beholders,
> Sprung from the dust where our own flesh moulders."

Pourriture, c'est nourriture. The same elementary substances sustain in turn, or are animated by so many successive organisms, "the young Phœnix rising from the ashes of its parent." In Prior's diction,

> "Here all is changed, though all is still the same,
> Fluid the parts, yet durable the frame;
> Of those materials which have been confess'd
> The pristine springs, and parents of the rest,
> Each becomes other."

In a lighter vein and looser strain the same poet sings how "reptiles perish, plants decay; flesh is but grass, grass turns to hay, and hay to dung, and dung to clay." And yet again, in statelier rhythm, Master Matthew inveighs against the folly which, after so much teaching, still thinks it strange

> "That all the parts of this great fabric change,
> Quit their old station, and primeval frame,
> And lose their shape, their essence, and their name."

Our very mother-earth, as Mr. G. H. Lewes reminds us, is formed of the *débris* of life: plants and animals which have been, build up its solid fabric; the very quarry into which we dig, thousands of feet downwards, is mainly composed of the skeletons of microscopic animals; the Apennines and Cordilleras, the "chalk cliffs so dear to homeward-nearing eyes," are the pyramids of bygone generations of atomies. "So revolves the luminous orb of Life. Generations follow generations; and the Present becomes the matrix of the Future, as the Past was of the Present: the Life of one epoch forming the prelude to a higher Life." What is this world? asks Blair; and answers his own question:

> "What but a spacious burial-field unwall'd . . .
> The very turf on which we tread once lived;
> And we that live must lend our carcases
> To cover our own offspring; in their turns,
> They too must cover theirs."

Life has been called the heir of Death, and yet his conqueror: victim at once and victor: all things living succumb to Death's assault; Life smiles at his impotence, and makes the grave her cradle. "Life never dies," as Philip von Artevelde takes it:

> "Matter dies off it, and it lives elsewhere,
> Or elsewhere circumstanced and shaped; it goes;
> At every instant we may say 'tis gone,
> But never it hath ceased: the type is changed,
> Is ever in transition, for life's law
> To its eternal essence doth prescribe
> Eternal mutability."

Wordsworth's gray-haired Wanderer enforces one of his most impressive discourses with a reference to "Nature's pleasant

robe of green, humanity's appointed shroud"—and with the sort of collateral reflection which becomes the most reflective of poets,—glancing from the individual to the social:

"The vast frame
Of social nature changes evermore
Her organs and her members, with decay
Restless, and restless generation, powers
And functions dying and produced at need,—
And by this law the mighty whole subsists."

XXXVI.

FORCIBLE PEN AND FALTERING TONGUE.

2 CORINTHIANS x. 10.

TO take the estimate of the men of Lystra, St. Paul was a distinguished speaker. They called Barnabas, Jupiter, and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. To take the estimate of the Corinthians, the great Apostle of the Gentiles was no speaker at all, or, at best, a bad one. *They* called his speech contemptible. His bodily presence, they said, was weak; and here the men of Lystra so far agreed with them that they gave to Barnabas the implied superiority of imposing figure and mien. Altogether, the Pauline physique was very poorly thought of at Corinth. "His bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." "Rude in speech" he admits himself to be,—let the oral defect have been what it may, organic or otherwise. But, on the other hand, his letters, they were free to own, were "weighty and powerful." If he could not dazzle them by his speaking, he could "terrify them by letters." They felt his power as a penman, however much they might despise him as an orator. His epistles carried weight, if his orations did not.

Whether they depreciated or not the spoken words of him whom the world accounts a great preacher on Mars' hill, and whose rhetoric almost persuaded King Agrippa to become a

Christian, he might have cited great names in holy writ of self-asserted short-comers in the power of speech. "I am not eloquent," protested Moses, the man of God, "but slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." "Behold, I cannot speak," pleaded Jeremiah, when ordained a prophet unto the nations, "for I am a child."

There can be no doubt, observes M. Jules Simon, that the true worth of many choice spirits (*esprits d'élite*) will for ever remain undiscovered, because the faculty of free and facile expression has been denied them. "Notez," says Michelet, "qu'un effet trop fréquent des grands travaux, des grands efforts, c'est de faire perdre la parole. Qui agit ou crée, jase peu." As a rule, according to Rousseau, people who know little talk much, and they who know a good deal are comparatively slow of speech. A small stock of ideas is more easily managed, and sooner displayed, as Smollett has it, than a great quantity crowded together. His Matthew Bramble enunciates and enforces the not very novel proposition, that "a man may be very instructive upon paper, and exceedingly dull in common discourse." Many an example might be offered of some more or less eminent statesman or influential legislator, who was yet "no orator"—like the Lord Arlington of Clarendon's History, who "had not the gift of speaking," and whose "talent was in private." Biographers of the celebrated (second) Earl of Sunderland lay stress on the fact that all his success in political life was achieved without the faculty of public speaking: he scarcely ever opened his lips to express more than a simple assent or dissent either in Parliament or at the meetings of the Cabinet. "Honest Lord Althorp" he resembled not at all in point of honesty and consistency, nor perhaps in anything else except defective power of speaking; but then in Lord Althorp's case, and because of his recognized honesty, a few sentences from him are said to have been more than equivalent to eloquent orations from less consistent statesmen.* Alison

* "Lord Castlereagh was a very tiresome, involved, and obscure speaker. Lord Althorp was without any power of oratory; yet I never heard two men who had more influence in the House of Commons. Thus Lord

made much of Lord George Bentinck, as "an extraordinary example of the success of energy and perseverance in overcoming great natural disadvantages;" for his voice was shrill and feeble, and in speaking he "laboured under what was to his auditors a painful hesitation in expression." Would he ever come to an end, some were constrained to speculate, unless by breaking down all at once, and so breaking off altogether?

Many a closely printed page might be filled with examples of broken-down orators, whether in the habit or not of breaking down. We should have Robortello, the pugnacious assailant of Erasmus, Muretus, Henry Stephens, and others, who broke down in his funeral oration in honour of Charles the Fifth, not a little to the detriment of his own kudos. And Algazzali, the Light of Islam and Pillar of the Mosque, once a familiar name in Europe through the attacks of his adversary Averroes; his breaking down in a lecture he deemed a visitation of God, to rebuke his vanity; and so distressed was he as to lose appetite and almost life, till he "sought refuge in contemplation of the Deity." No such perturbation overcame the Earl of Halifax (George Montagu), when he broke down in a debate on the Trials for Treason Bill, in 1691, but had the wit, on recovering himself, to turn the misfortune into an argument for what he was urging—that prisoners should be allowed counsel. Equally happy, to say the least, was the turn Lord Finch gave to *his* collapse, when standing up for Steele, who had formerly refuted a libel on his sister. Finding himself foiled in all his efforts to make a speech, he sat down in despair, but the House cheered to the echo his exclamation as he did so, "It is strange I cannot speak for this man,

Castlereagh and Lord Althorp had qualities that govern men, such as sincerity and a conviction on the part of the hearers [can this too be called a quality?] that the Minister is a man to be trusted, which has more to do with influence over the House of Commons than the most brilliant flights of fancy and the keenest wits."—Earl Russell's *Recollections and Suggestions*, 1813—1873, p. 162.

though I could readily fight for him!" The collapse was not final with him, any more than had been that of Sir Robert Walpole when, some ten years previously, *he*, too, as Earl Stanhope words it, "was confused and embarrassed, and, according to the Parliamentary phrase, 'broke down.'" On the last day but one of the year 1796, no sooner had Pitt finished his statement of the negotiation then pending at Paris, than Erskine started to his feet, eager to assail it, but after a few sentences, he faltered, broke down, and resumed his seat in confusion. Moore tells us in his autobiography how signally Robert Emmett, upon one occasion, broke down in a debate at the Historical Society, "to the no small mortification and surprise of us who gloried in him as our leader." Moore himself at a Dublin political meeting in 1830, as we read in his Diary, "once lost the thread of what I was about to say; all seemed to have vanished from my mind. It was a most painful moment, and Sheil told me afterwards that I had turned quite pale." But the little orator managed to say *something*, he knew not what, and somehow the audience gave him credit for having assumed this temporary fit of embarrassment.* For the moment, his sensations must have been comparable to those of Peter Bell the potter:

> "He trembles—he is pale as death;
> His voice is weak with perturbation;
> He turns aside his head, he pauses;
> Poor Peter from a thousand causes
> Is crippled sore in his narration."

Did not Burke himself fairly break down in his Glasgow University address as Lord Rector, in 1783, and have to stop short in the middle of it? What, asked Francis Horner, is that mysterious gift of self-possession, which is granted to

* Several years later he seems to have had a recurrence of the disorder when speaking at a dinner at Devizes; and Lord Lansdowne at once consoled and surprised him by the assurance that he hardly ever, himself, spoke in the House without feeling the approaches of some such loss of self-possession, and found that the only way to surmount it was to talk on, at all hazards.

some men and withheld from others, according to the constitution of their nerves and blood-vessels? which deserting us, when we are placed in a new situation, palsies the faculty of memory in its recollection of what has been most recently imprinted, and suspends the course of those habits which long exercise had formed. Noteworthy is this entry from the Journals of the House of Commons in 1601: "Mr. Zachary Lock began to speak, but for very fear shook, so that he could not proceed, but stood still awhile, and at length sat down." Like Boileau's falterer,—

> "Le nouveau Ciceron, tremblant, décoloré,
> Cherche en vain son discours sur sa langue égaré:
> En vain, pour gagner temps, dans ses transes affreuses,
> Traîne d'un dernier mot les syllabes honteuses;
> Il hésite, il bégaie, et le triste orateur
> Démeure enfin muet aux yeux du spectateur;"—

spectateur, not *auditeur;* for as the orator is struck dumb, there is nothing to hear; and those who came to listen can only look, gaze, stare, make the most of their eyes, since their ears are no longer in request.

In the Life of Saint Francis of Assisi may be read how, when appointed to preach in the sacred consistory, he engraved on his memory, with the utmost diligence, a sermon he had composed with his utmost skill; and how, at the sight of that august audience, every trace of the sermon departed from his mind, leaving him in utter confusion, and, as it seemed,* in hopeless silence. Robert Hall more than once broke down ignominiously as a youthful pulpiteer—suddenly pausing, covering his face with his hands, and exclaiming, "Oh! I have lost all my ideas." So we are told of Henry Venn Elliott, at a Bible-meeting at Chepstow, that after speaking fluently for some twenty minutes, he suddenly "lost all his ideas." † Like Curran, Henry Clay broke down when he first

* The hopelessness of the silence was in seeming only: for, after a pause, and a mental prayer, and one vehement self-conflict, the preacher *so* spake that Pope and Cardinals with one consent declared the utterance to be divine.

† Upon his remark that he must have "had a face of brass to speak

attempted to address an audience—though he gained confidence as he went on, and made a good ending. M. Guizot, in his Memoirs, describes Bertin de Veaux as singularly sagacious, prompt, boldly, original and clever, who yet failed signally in his one endeavour to take a place among the orators of the Chamber of Deputies. "Before I mounted the tribune," said he, when relating the story of this final check, "I had a store of excellent things to say, and not the slightest fear of those whom I was about to address. But I no sooner found myself there, than my throat became closed up, and my sight thick. I uttered very little of what I had prepared, and returned to my seat, fully resolved never to repeat the attempt." Lord Cockburn tells us, in a rather homely phrase, how Jeffrey, at the Edinburgh dinner to John Kemble, "stuck a speech." Jeffrey was chairman, and had to make an address to the retired Roscius, before presenting him with a snuff-box. He began very promisingly, but got confused, and amazed both himself and every one else, by actually sitting down, and leaving the speech unfinished, and forgetting all about the box.

A more fluent penman than Francis Jeffrey, it were hard to name. It was a most rare exception, his failing with his tongue; but to the rule of absolute facility with his pen, no exception could ever be alleged. Nor could he be claimed to support the argument of those who insist on the incompatibility of ready social expression with real culture of mind and thought. Mr. Greville in his Diary speaks of John Stuart Mill (in 1830) as "powerful with a pen in his hand," but "in conversation he has not the art of managing his ideas, and is consequently hesitating and slow, and has the appearance of being always working in his mind propositions or a syllogism."

before Hannah More," the Saturday Reviewer of his Life was fain to observe that "a generation to whom that awful woman is only known by nursery tradition or the prints of the period will be inclined to sympathize with the unfortunate young speaker." But possibly both nursery traditions and the prints of the period do less than justice to the formidable old lady.

Swift maintained, paradoxical as it may sound, that natural elocution usually springs from a barrenness of invention, and of words; by which men who have only one stock of notions upon every subject, and one set of phrases to express them in, are emboldened to air them on all occasions, and, as he expresses it, to "swim upon the superficies;" whereas men of much learning are confounded with abundance of matter, variety of notions and words, which they cannot readily choose, but are perplexed and embarrassed by too great a choice. As Chamfort says, in one of his neatly pointed *Maximes et Pensées*, "Des qualités trop supérieures rendent souvent un homme moins propre à la société. On ne va pas au marché avec des lingots; ou y va avec de l'argent ou de la petite monnaie." But this reads like a free translation or adaptation of Goldsmith's reply to the lady who rallied him on his stint of talk in company: "Madam, I have but ninepence in ready money, but I can draw for a thousand pounds." * But, as Chamfort says in another place, "On n'est point homme d'esprit pour avoir beaucoup d'idées, comme on n'est pas un bon général pour avoir beaucoup de soldats." Shaftesbury sets it down as a most certain observation in his science, that they who are great talkers in company, men of "sprightly genius," *hommes d'esprit* of a sort, are shallow sciolists, and incapable of writing a book that shall be worth the reading. Dugald Stewart alleged that he seldom, if ever, found that a great philosopher excelled in conversation—and that as for poets, or men of genius in the realms of imagination, he had almost always been painfully impressed by their comparative inferiority when not under the inspiration of the Muse, who visited them, it would appear, only during the hours of composition: at all other times they were dullish, or idiotic, or at best commonplace. Yet were Coleridge and Wordsworth (both "great" talkers, in more than one sense), Byron and Scott, Rogers and Campbell,† his

* So again Descartes apologized for his silence in mixed company by the plea that he had received his intellectual wealth from Nature in solid bars, not in current coin.

† Campbell had the repute of being the reverse of brilliant as a talker But the late Lord Lytton, in the *Caxtoniana*, has another tale to tell.

contemporaries. "A man of genius," said Professor Wilson, "is always a man of genius, and, unless he has been too much of a recluse, pleasant and instructive in all companies worthy of him; but he rarely desires to play first fiddle,"—and indeed, as the Ettrick Shepherd insists, there should never be a first fiddle in a private concert. Another critical authority has said of another man of genius, that although not wanting either wit or polish, he tasked his powers too severely on great subjects not to be sometimes dull upon small ones; yet, when he was "either excited or at home,* he was not without—what man of genius is?—his peculiar powers of conversation." Thackeray tells us of his Warrington, fresh from and full of the glories of Nature he has been seeing while in Switzerland, that he will write ardently and frankly about that which he is shy of saying; the thoughts and experience of his travel will come

* Some natures are only "at home" tête-à-tête. Two are company, by this rule and practice; raise the figure, and you reduce the result. They can only get on with one other at a time, and that one must be a congenial spirit. It is a saying to be met with in several of Emerson's books, that where we look for the highest benefits of conversation, "the Spartan rule of one to one" is in force. It by no means follows, on his showing, that we are not fit for society, because soirées are tedious, and because the soirée finds us tedious. A backwoodsman, who had been sent to "the university," told him that when he heard the best-loved young men at the law-school talk together, he reckoned himself a boor; but whenever he caught them apart, and had one to himself alone, then they were the boors, and he the better man. "I find this law of one to one, peremptory for conversation, which is the practice and consummation of friendship." Margaret Fuller said to one of her biographers, referring to a common acquaintance,—"You fancy you know him. It is too absurd; you have never seen him. . . . You suppose him a mere man of talent. He is so with you. But the moment I was alone with him he was another creature," —as though, in fact, the animating lady's own creation. Washington Irving was complained of as mighty dull at a dinner party, but delightful "at home," or where he felt to be there. So of Etty we are told by Mr. Gilchrist that in "general society" he could never, to the last, be got to take a part: he "would often, at a dinner party, sit without saying a word." It was only with an intimate friend that Wilkie could "get on" or "come out." Sir James Stephen contrasts the reserve which hung upon Thomas Gisborne in crowded saloons, with his affluence and effluence of cordial talk with some one congenial spirit.

forth in his writings, as the learning, which he never displays in talk, enriches his style with pregnant allusion and brilliant illustration, colours his generous eloquence, and points his wit. What more essential for conversational success, Mr. Lister asks, than imagination and facility of expression? yet the poet has it not necessarily, nor the orator. "Anything, however good, that anybody may have written or spoken, is no more a security for his colloquial talents than for his personal good looks." Isaac Disraeli devotes a section of his *Curiosities of Literature* to men of genius deficient in conversation; and his examples are Corneille, Descartes, Nicole, Addison (that "silent parson in a tie-wig," as he seemed to Mandeville), Dryden (who avowed himself "slow and dull" in conversation), besides Isocrates and Virgil among the ancients, and La Fontaine among the moderns. La Bruyère described La Fontaine as coarse, heavy, and stupid in society. And Ménage described La Bruyère as *pas un grand parleur*, while D'Olivet charged him with "craignant toute sorte d'ambition, même celle de montrer de l'esprit." Montesquieu was deficient in conversation, nor was either Buffon or Rousseau eloquent or pleasing in table-talk. Hume told Boswell that the Abbé Raynal could not have written his books himself, for "he is a dull man in conversation"—which Boswell discreetly rejected as a certain rule for judging that a man cannot write well. And Hume it was of whom Walpole said, that his writings so excelled his conversation that the historian seemed to understand nothing till he had written upon it. Gray, according to Walpole, was the worst company in the world, for he never talked easily. Yet Walpole himself talked ill, remarks Mr. Forster; and so, he adds, did Gay; and so did Pope, and Swift, and Addison, besides other Queen Anne men already named.

XXXVII.

THE FALL OF EUTYCHUS.

ACTS XX. 9—12.

THE preacher who sends you to sleep may quote the precedent of St. Paul. But it does not at all follow that *he* is a great apostle. Nor is it absolutely clear that St. Paul took to himself none of the responsibility of the accident that befell the young man Eutychus in consequence of a discourse prolonged until midnight. In direct consequence: "as Paul was long preaching, he [Eutychus] sunk down with sleep." There is, at any rate, not a word of rebuke or expostulation on the Apostle's part, towards the young man that, having fallen from the third loft, was taken up dead, and whom he so gladly and gratefully restored to his friends alive, with a cordial embrace, and without so much as a parting monition, Go, and sleep no more—in sermon-time.

Eutychus may be held forth as a frightful example, by way of warning. And there is something to be said on that side of the question. But there is something to be said for Eutychus too. There are allowances to be made for him—at least Scripture appears to have made them by its very abstention from one syllable of censure. The author of the Acts of the Apostles obviously takes the accident to have been fully accounted for by the length of the preaching; and he appears to have studiously refrained from giving an ethical and improving or cautionary tone to his narrative of the incident. Or, if there be anything cautionary discoverable in it, the caution may as legitimately be addressed to those illimitable discoursers whose ignorance of when and where to stop sends people to sleep, as to the involuntary drowsy-heads who are thus overtaken with a fault, if not, like Eutychus, with a fall.

Is this designed, then, by way of justification of sleeping in sermon-time? A thousand times, no! But it *is* designed to hint that St. Paul himself might sympathize, in certain cases, rather with the droppers-off who can resist sleep no longer

under a pulpit spell so somniferous, than with the scolding preacher who resents the affront, and who descries and proclaims "a judgment" in the midnight catastrophe at Troas.

Of all misbehaviour, none is comparable to that of those who go to church to sleep, says Dean Swift, in a sermon on the fall of Eutychus. Opium, he adds, is not so stupefying to many persons as an afternoon sermon: perpetual custom has so brought it about, that the words of whatever preacher become only a sort of uniform sound at a distance, than which nothing is more effectual to lull the senses. "For that it is the very sound of the sermon which bindeth up their faculties is manifest from hence, because they all awake so very regularly as soon as it ceaseth, and with much devotion receive the blessing." In a contribution to *The Tatler* he makes an imaginary parishioner complain of a perhaps not imaginary vicar that "generally, when his curate preaches in the afternoon, he sleeps sotting in the desk on a hassock." Cowper has such a picture in *The Task*—only, in his instance, it is the curate who dozes, and the rector who drones overhead; here too the clerk* is fast:

> "Sweet sleep enjoys the curate in his desk,
> The tedious rector drawling o'er his head;
> And sweet the clerk below."

The Indian King in *The Spectator* (also by Swift), who describes his experiences in this country, records a Sunday visit to one of our churches, or "holy houses," and his inability to discover any circumstances of devotion in the behaviour of the people. "There was indeed a man in black, who was mounted above the rest, and seemed to utter something with a great deal of vehemence; but as for

* The beadle in the Scotch story is ready with a mollifying excuse. How was it, the minister demanded, that that functionary managed to keep briskly attentive whenever a stranger preached, and invariably dozed under the discourses of his own pastor? "'Deed, sir, I can soon explain that. When ye're in the poupit yoursel', I ken it's a' richt; but when a stranger preaches, I like to watch his doctrine a wee."

those underneath him, . . . a considerable number were fast asleep." So with Goldsmith's Chinese citizen of the world, in *his* notes of travel: "The priest himself [no vehemence of manner here], in a drowsy tone, read over the duties of the day. Bless my eyes, cried I, as I happened to look towards the door, what do I see? one of the worshippers fallen asleep, and actually sunk down on his cushion: is he now enjoying the benefit of a trance, or does he receive the influence of some mysterious vision? 'Alas! alas!' replied my companion, 'no such thing; he has only had the misfortune of eating too hearty a dinner, and finds it impossible to keep his eyes open.'" Addison gives a characteristic touch of nature to his Sir Roger de Coverley at church, when he describes him as landlord to the whole congregation, and as such keeping them in very good order, and suffering nobody to sleep during service besides himself; for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it he stands up and looks about him, and if he sees anybody else nodding, either wakes them himself, or sends his servant to them. There is something in the self-assertion of the waker to remind one of Squire Dale in the *Last Chronicle of Barset:* "Uncle Christopher certainly does go to sleep when Mr. Boyce preaches," Lily Dale admits; "and he hasn't studied any scientific little movements during his slumbers to make the people believe that he's all alive. I gave him a hint one day, and he got so angry with me!" Nonagenarian Dr. Barnes being rallied by a companion on his having nodded now and then in his pew, insisted that he had been awake all the time. "Well, then," said his friend, "can you tell me what the sermon was about?" "Yes, I can," he answered, "it was about half an hour too long." Lily Dale takes exception to Mr. Boyce's sermons on that ground, and pleads for her uncle, "He doesn't like to go to sleep, and he has to suffer a purgatory in keeping himself awake." The Reverend Homer Wilbur, of the Biglow Papers, is concerned at having to number among his parishioners some whose gift of somnolence rivals that of the Cretan Rip van Winkle, Epimenides,

and who nevertheless complain not so much of the substance as of the length of his (by them unheard) discourses. "Happy Saint Anthony of Padua, whose finny acolytes, however they might profit, could never murmur! *Quare fermuerunt gentes?* Who is he that can twice a week be inspired, or has eloquence (*ut ita dicam*) always on tap?" Of the Dominie of Mastland we read with what infinite labour he composed discourses and committed them to memory, and with what effort he delivered them, and all with what failure of effect. The demonstrative part sent almost every one to their sleeping corners, though the schoolmaster supplied all the ruling elders with snuff. The word "application" aroused the dozing congregation, who stood up and listened with eyes and ears then.

It is a query propounded among Pope's collection of Thoughts on Various Subjects, whether churches are not dormitories of the living as well as of the dead. Jean Paul's description of the Heimlicher von Blaise, to be seen every Sunday evening at his devotions fast asleep, includes this ironical apology, that, like all other hearers, he was accustomed to close his eyes during the scattering of the Divine seed, as people do while their heads are powdered; and that private chapels and public churches are like the heathen temples of old, in which oracular revelations were received in sleep.

Goldsmith's essay on the English clergy, and Popular Preachers, of his time, describes their pulpit discourse as generally dry, methodical, and unaffecting; delivered with the most insipid calmness: insomuch, that should the preacher lift his head over the cushion, which alone he seemed to address, he might discover his audience, instead of being awakened to remorse, actually sleeping over his orderly and laboured composition. As in Churchill's instance,

> "With sacred Dulness ever in his view,
> Sleep at his bidding crept from pew to pew."

John Galt's Mr. Pittle is one of this complexion—a man whose sermons in the warm summer afternoons, said the provost's wife, were just a perfect hushabaa, that no mortal could

hearken to without sleeping. The Ettrick Shepherd is critically observant of female physiognomy at such sleeping-times. "As for the auld wives, they lay their big-bonneted heads on their shouther, and fa' ower into a deep sleep at ance; yet you'll never hear a single ane amang them committin' a snore. . . . . But the curiousest thing to observe about the lasses, when they are gettin' drowsy during sermon, is their een. First a glazedness comes ower them, and the lids fa' down, and are lifted up at the rate o' about ten in the minute. Then the puir creatures gie their heads a shake, and, unwillin' to be overcome, try to find out the verse the minister may be quotin'; but a' in vain, for the hummin' stillness o' the kirk subdues them into sleep, and the sound o' the preacher is in their lugs like that o' a waterfall." Hogarth, in virtue of his Sleeping Congregation, in which picture a heavy parson is promoting, with all the alacrity of dulness, the slumber of his flock, has been called the most audible of painters, as Dante is the most visible of poets. The soporific drawl of the preacher, said to represent Desaguliers, and the whole gamut of snores in the congregation, rise from the print like what Hartley Coleridge calls a steam of rich distilled perfume. The Sick Man's Salve, vaunted for efficacy in Ben Jonson, was a prescription to go to church thrice a week to hear a preacher that would preach folk asleep. One would have thought the receipt a very commonplace one, within everybody's reach, and within the weekly usage of the majority of payers of church and parish rates,

> "For which they claim their Sunday's due,
> Of slumbering in an upper pew,"

as Prior has it. Jamie Fraser, the idiot of Lunan, was the reverse of idiotic in his reply to the minister's rebuke of a sleeping congregation, the example of Jamie sitting wide awake in the front gallery being thus set before them: "You see even Jamie Fraser, the idiot, does not fall asleep, as so many of you are doing." To be thus designated was so little to Jamie's mind that he at once gave a bit of it to the preacher: "An'

I hadna been an idiot, I wad ha' been sleeping too." Mr. Fitchett, in George Eliot's *Scenes of Clerical Life*, is noted for his irrepressible tendency to drowsiness under spiritual instruction, and in the recurrent regularity with which he dozed off until he nodded and awaked himself, he is said to have looked not unlike a piece of mechanism, ingeniously contrived for measuring the length of Amos Barton's discourse.

Mr. Thackeray's readers will hardly have forgotten his description of Mr. Trotter the curate, and his sermon before Castle company at the little village church in the park: how anxiously the preacher looks at the Great Pew,—faltering as he gives out the text, and thinking, "Ah, perhaps his lordship will give me a living!" How anxious Mrs. Trotter and the girls look at the Great Pew too, and watch the effect of papa's discourse—the well-known favourite discourse—upon the bigwigs assembled. "Papa's first nervousness is over; his noble voice clears, warms to his sermon: he kindles: he takes his pocket-handkerchief out: he is coming to that exquisite passage which has made them all cry at the parsonage: he has begun it! Ah! What is that humming noise, which fills the edifice, and causes hob-nailed Melibœus to grin at smock-frocked Tityrus? It is the Right Honourable Lord Naseby, snoring in the pew by the fire! And poor Trotter's visionary mitre disappears with the music." Melibœus and Tityrus on the broad grin remind us that Peter Plymley compliments his reverend brother Abraham, who lives in the country, on having a church than which no other can produce cleaner faces and smockfrocks, or eyes more uniformly directed to the preacher. Better still: "the eyes so directed towards you are wide open." But what follows is an unkind cut: "For the rustic has, in general, good principles, though he cannot control his animal habits; and however loud may be his snore, his face is perpetually turned towards the fountain of orthodoxy." As little could Sydney Smith control his dear love of a fling at them of his cloth. One of his very earliest contributions to the *Edinburgh Review* pictures himself in a state of coma from which he was restored with difficulty, by

observing the rules of the Royal Humane Society, and all owing to a sermon preached for that good cause.

Sir Walter Scott puts it on record in his Diary, as an elderly man, that "one person talking for a long time," whether in the pulpit or elsewhere, set him to sleep,—unless, indeed, the interest was very great, and the eloquence of the highest character. As a boy, we are told of him by Mr. Mitchell, that "Master Walter had more of a soporific tendency than the rest of my young charge," (it was somebody or something else that was soporific; but let that pass,) and that he needed some one to rouse him, although he excited admiration by being able to report more of the sermon than the others could; which the narrator accounts for by supposing that, having heard the text and divisions of the subject, Walter's own good sense, memory, and genius supplied the thoughts which would occur to the preacher. Charlotte Brontë describes the weary Sunday evenings at Lowood, when a long sermon would be read with irrepressible yawns, and a frequent interlude would be "the enactment of the part of Eutychus by some half-dozen little girls, who, overpowered with sleep, would fall down, if not out of the third loft, yet off the fourth form, and be taken up half dead." Nurse Wilson, in one of Mr. Charles Reade's books, has this to say to her young mistress on the Troas mishap: "Why, Miss, we do read of Eutychus, how he snoozed off setting under Paul himself—up in the windy—and down a-tumbled. But parson says it wasn't that he didn't love religion, or why should Paul make it his business to bring him to life again, 'stead of letting 'un lie for a warning to the sleepy-headed ones? ''Twas a wearied body, not a heart cold to God,' says our parson."—But after all, there is one point in the context not to be overlooked by apologists for Eutychus,—that St. Paul did not apparently regard the young man's fall as a warning against long discourse; for after the resuscitation he talked again a long while, even till break of day.

XXXVIII.

THE ANGER THAT STOPS SHORT OF SIN.

EPHESIANS iv. 26.

NOT to be angry for any cause, would imply the being something less, or at any rate something else, than man. St. Paul's words, "Be ye angry," unless wrested into some non-natural sense, offer a direct sanction for at least a certain kind of anger, and in a certain degree. Taken in connection with the context, their meaning is obvious: So be angry as to "sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Let not anger carry you away. Be master of it, in mastering yourself. And give it a limited time; let it, at farthest, die out with the dying day. The voice of the Preacher saith, "Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry; for anger resteth in the bosom of fools." And whoso is angry in haste and without due cause, and suffers his anger to rest in his bosom, to abide there, and rankle, and fester,—to him it is sin.

Analyses of the emotions tell us how necessary is anger in the constitution of man; it being the passion by which one creature that would offer violence to another is deterred from the execution, while he observes how the attempt affects his fellow, and knows by the signs which accompany this rising motion, that if the injury be carried farther, it will not pass easily with impunity. But there is hardly any need, observes Shaftesbury, to explain "how mischievous anger is if it be such a passion as is rash, and violent in the instant of provocation; or such as imprints itself deeply, and causes a settled revenge, and an eager vindictive pursuit." Thomson describes these phases of it:

> "Senseless and deformed,
> Convulsive anger storms at large; or, pale
> And silent, settles into fell revenge."

We are, as moral philosophy assures us, made capable of a malevolence that may be said to be virtuous when it operates; for the moral affections which lead to the infliction of evil, are

occasionally as necessary as the benevolent affections: if vice exist, it must be loathed by us, or we may learn to imitate it. But, that even this "virtuous malevolence" may not outlast the necessity for it, it is made painful for us to be malevolent even in this best sense. *Furor brevis ira est;* and there is not in nature, says John Webster,

> "A thing that makes man so deformed, so beastly,
> As doth intemperate anger."

Horace traces the origin of anger to Promethus' having placed in our breast the "insane" rage of the lion. That anger is a short madness is a saying for which the ancients are applauded by Mr. Charles Reade, who observes, in reference to it, that when we reflect in cold blood on the things we said in hot—how impossible they seem! how out of character with our real selves! And this is one of the recognized symptoms of mania.

Anger is certainly a kind of baseness, according to Lord Bacon, "as it appears well in the weakness of those subjects in whom it reigns, children, women, old folks, sick folks." But there are two sides to every question; and Fuller was, as usual with him, wise as well as witty, when he spoke of anger as one of the sinews of the soul: he that wants it hath a maimed mind.

It has been said of Joseph de Maistre, that his anger—and he felt he did well to be angry—"ressemblait tout à fait à celle de l'écriture: *Mettez-vous en colère et ne péchez pas.* C'était un tonnerre en vue du soleil de verité et dans des sphères sereines, la colère de l'intelligence pure." Metaphysicians point out how the rudest passions of our nature become, in the progressive development of man, refined, and perhaps what seemed base in itself becomes an essential element of a noble sentiment. Thus, anger, which leads, in the first instance, to wild injustice, gives to the advanced mind that moral indignation without which there could be no strength of character. "I love not one that will never be angry," said our King James the First, "for as one who is with [? without] sorrow is without gladness, so he that

is without anger is without love." Dante describes approvingly one whose

> "visage took the stamp
> Of that right zeal, which with due temperature
> Glows in the bosom ;"

even as Massinger's virgin-martyr protests there are things she cannot bear "without a virtuous and religious anger;" or again as Wordsworth impersonates a spirit of righteous indignation :

> "Pale was her hue ; yet mortal cheek
> Ne'er kindled with a livelier streak
> When aught had suffered wrong,—
> When aught that breathes had felt a wound;
> Such look the Oppressor might confound,
> However proud and strong."

Defending himself from the charge of being actuated by passion, in his proceedings against Warren Hastings, Burke owned to feeling anger, but surely not a blamable anger; for who, he asked, ever heard of an inquiring anger, a digesting anger, a collating anger, an examining anger, or a selecting anger? The anger he had felt was, he affirmed, a uniform, steady, public principle, without any intermixture of private animosity; and for five years it had continued unimpaired, neither greater nor less. He would not have accepted as applicable to him the poet's self-impeachment, *Væ! meum Fervens difficili bile tumet jecur:* he would admit of no biliary derangement in his case. Not one of the least likeable points about the late Mr. Robertson, of Brighton, has been said to be his earnest and genuine confession of wrathfulness and hatred, where he thought them due. "He prided himself on this heroic, Achillean capacity for a divine anger." His biographer says that the indignation with which he heard of a base act was so intense that it rendered him sleepless. "His wrath was terrible, and it did not evaporate in words. It was Christlike indignation." Falsehood, hypocrisy, the sin of the strong against the weak, "stirred him to the very depths of his being." "My blood," he writes himself, after a conversation on the wrongs of women, "was running liquid fire." Of Frederick Perthes we read that

he was not easily, and never long, irritated by the opposition of others, provided he thought it sincere; but against insolence, falsehood, indifference, and baseness, he blazed up instantly and violently, even in cases where he was under no obligation to speak. A leading English review speaks of the anger, even, of Robert Burns as profitable for an example—there being nothing sullen or lurid or spiteful about it, nothing either of prudish, mawkish smouldering: with him anger was "what it should be in a big man—sheer lightning, swift, decisive, and straight-hitting." In the case of offences which must be corrected, and yet cannot well be corrected in cold blood, a hot and hasty humour is held to be an actual advantage. Most of us, indeed, as a discourser on the control of temper alleges, can remember several times in our lives when we exhibited an amount of wrath quite disproportionate to the cause of offence, and have had just and prolonged reason to regret it; but to some few among us there comes a distinct and more bitter sense of suffering from the consciousness that there have been moments when, if we felt, we at any rate did not show, the anger which we ought to have shown; and about this there is something humiliating and shameful, inasmuch as it implies a clear remissness, or even "a deficiency of courage, which is, of all imputations, the hardest to bear." If it be true that no much severer fate can overtake a man, among the smaller tribulations of the world, than to have thrust upon him the reputation of being what is called a philosopher, so is it that one of the hardest of these penalties is the presuming him or requiring him to be incapable of anger. The late Dr. James Hamilton, in a memorial sketch of his mother, records her being sometimes provoked at herself because she could not be angry. The philosopher who, as such, is refused the right ever to be angry, may well be angered by the refusal. Any exhibition of the ordinary feelings of a human being is held to be so far a lapse from his high estate. "Hot wrath against slovenliness or indolence or incapacity or injustice is an emotion altogether unworthy of so exalted a creature." In spite of the apostolic injunction to be angry, as well as of the undoubted practice of

the holiest persons both before and after apostolic times, anger is constantly treated, one of our best essay-writers complains, not as a righteous faculty which the just man ought on fit occasion to use, but more frequently as a sin and a stumbling-block, or at best as a weakness to be conquered and driven out from a virtuous character. One of Mr. Reade's favourite heroines is described as a little choleric, and indeed downright prone to that more generous indignation which fires at the wrongs of others. One of Mr. Wilkie Collins's is thus praised in passing by the observant solicitor who has to put up with her hot words: "I liked to feel her hearty indignation flash out on me in that way. We see so much malice and so little indignation in my profession." Ribira, in Jephson's tragedy of *Braganza*, is conciliated by the "noble stamp" of fury in certain excited spirits, whose

> "honest rage glow'd on their kindling cheeks,
> Broke through the cold restraints of coward caution,
> And swell'd ev'n to an eloquence of anger."

One of Mrs. Brunton's autobiographic damsels is asked by her conscience, "Dost thou well to be angry?" and she answers, as every angry woman will answer, "Yes, I do well to be angry. Vile were the spirit that would not stir against such inhuman baseness." This was well spoken, the didactic demoiselle proceeds to remark, as perhaps it was well felt: "Yet I would advise all lofty spirits to be abstemious in their use of noble indignation. It borders too nearly on their prevailing sin." Let there be an attempt on the part of the mind, says Dr. Chalmers in one of his Moral Philosophy lectures, to study the phenomena of anger, and its attention is thereby transferred from the cause of the affection to the affection itself; and so soon as its thoughts are withdrawn from the cause, the affection, as if deprived of its needful aliment, dies away from the field of observation. Professor Ferrier, on the other hand, in his *Introduction to the Philosophy of Consciousness*, contends that the dying away of anger in such a case is in consequence of the antagonist act of consciousness which comes against it, displacing and sacrificing it. The two philosophers agree, however,

in the main point, namely, as to the fact that anger does vanish away in the presence of consciousness; on which account this act acquires (whatever theory may be held respecting it) a moral character and significance, and the exercise of it becomes an imperative duty; for, as the subtler metaphysician of the two demands, what passion presides over a wider field of human evil, and of human wickedness, than the passion of human wrath? and therefore what act can be of greater importance than the act which overthrows, and puts an end to its domineering tyranny?

Taking men as they are, that man is perhaps to be envied who can honestly describe himself, in Shakspeare's words, by Brutus uttered, as one

> "That carries anger as the flint bears fire;
> Who, much enforced, shows a hasty spark,
> And straight is cold again."

Jean Paul's Leibgeber utters a hearty "God be praised!" when, as Night overtakes him, the fires of anger suddenly burn down, and in a tone lower by two octaves he welcomes a sense of returning peace and reconciliation. According to Plutarch, it was a custom of the Pythagoreans, for those who had been engaged in a quarrel, to kiss and make friends (*τὰς δεξιὰς ἐμβάλλοντες ἀλλήλοις, καὶ ἀσπασάμενοι*) before the sun went down (*πρὶν ἢ τὸν ἥλιον δῦναι*). When Archdeacon Grantley enjoins his wife to write a message of bitterness to their offending son, she undertakes to send it, "but not to-day." "Why not to-day?" "Because the sun shall go down upon your wrath before I become its messenger. If I am to write to him on your behalf, I will take my instructions from you to-morrow morning. When to-morrow morning comes, you will not be angry with me because of the delay." We are told he knew she was right; but his anger at the present moment was hot—so hot that he wished to wreak it: he knew that it would cool before the morrow, and no doubt knew also, theoretically, that it would be most fitting that it should cool: but not the less was it a matter of regret to him that so much good hot anger should be

wasted. Then he is described as going out, about his parish, intending to continue to think of his son's offence, so that he might keep his anger hot,—red-hot; remembering however that the evening would come, and that he would say his prayers; and shaking his head in regret,—in a regret of which he was only half-conscious, though it was very keen, and which he did not attempt to analyse,—as he reflected that his rage would hardly be able to survive that ordeal.

Fuller paraphrases the Pauline text as though the sinking sun might carry news to the antipodes in another world of man's revengeful nature; yet would he take the Apostle's meaning rather than his words, with all possible speed to depose our passion; not understanding the text so literally as that we may take leave to be angry till sunset; for then, says Fuller, in the very manner of Sir Thomas Browne, might our wrath lengthen with the days; and men in Greenland, where the day lasts above a quarter of a year, have plentiful scope for revenge.

XXXIX.

SWIFT TO HEAR, SLOW TO SPEAK.

St. James i. 19.

IN exhorting every man to be "swift to hear, slow to speak," St. James has by some been imagined to allude to the silence which Pythagoras imposed upon his disciples. The "allusion" is probably imaginary, and no more. But commentators agree that the words ταχὺς ἐις τὸ ἀκοῦσαί, κ.τ.λ., are directed against the intemperate zeal and angry violence of the Jews in maintaining their opinions, to which Horace refers in *Sat.* I. 4. 412, *Ac veluti te Judæi cogemus in hanc concedere turbam.* It is, however, with the larger, indeed universal, application of the precept that these pages are concerned; applying them, in the terse form of a saw, to all and sundry whom they may be said to counsel or characterize. We may

in this sense find a parallel in the Book of Proverbs, where it is written that "a fool uttereth all his mind, but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards." The fool is slow to hear, swift to speak. The wise man is swift to hear, slow to speak. The slowness of the one is the swiftness of the other; and the wisdom of the one is the foolishness of the other.

Seest thou a man that is hasty in words? there is more hope of a fool than of him. Happy is the middle term between such haste and the extremity of one that is dumb, who doth not open his mouth; especially if, as in the Psalmist's case, he becomes even as a man that heareth not, as well. It was because the deaf and dumb artist, Benjamin Ferrers, was pure of life, in part perhaps from his infirmities—in so far at least as the Power that made the Tongue, restrained his lips from lies and guile, and He that made the Hearing, rescued him from siren's song and the like temptations—that Vincent Bourne, in Latin verse which Charles Lamb has Englished, was fain to form and utter the else paradoxical wish,

> "Might I but be
> As speechless, deaf, and good as he!"

Very like Shakspeare's Gloster is the aside-spoken line, "I hear, yet say not much, but think the more." Very like his Jaques is that cynical forester's reference to the more sociable duke, "I think of as many matters as he; but I give heaven thanks, and make no boast of them." And very like his Polonius is the counsel that old state craftsman bestows upon his son:

> "Give thy thoughts no tongue . . . . .
> Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice:
> Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment."

To be a good listener, is, as some (consciously or unconsciously) take it, to be the best of all good company. The wonder we often express, says Dean Swift, at our neighbours keeping dull company, would lessen if we reflected that most people seek companions less to be talked to than to talk.

When Jean-Pierre Camus, Bishop of Belley,—the ecclesiastic Boswell of St. Francis of Sales—expressed his wonder to his

patron-saint, if so (in life) the Bishop of Geneva may be called, at women of the great world gathering about him, "for it seems to me you never have much to say to them,"—"Do you call it nothing," was the reply, "to let them talk as much as they will to me? Most assuredly they care more for ears to listen than words to reply. They talk enough for both sides, and probably they come to me because I am such a good listener;* nothing is so delightful to great talkers as a patient hearer." A shrewd observer says that the most brilliant *salons* have always been created by dexterous listeners: a pleasant house is not a house where one is especially talked to, but where one discovers that one talks more easily than elsewhere. No flattery, it is rightly said, is so delicate as that which consists in a lively perception of the force of every remark you make; nor again is anything more humiliating than the blank indifference which some persons oppose to your most brilliant flashes of genius. Francis Jeffrey, homesick in England, solaced himself with the assurance that nowhere is a good listener more popular than in London. In the same letter we find him regretting the loss of Sir Walter; and *he* was not only the best of good listeners, but made a point of introducing those good people into more than a few of his fictions. Story-telling Claud Halero fastens with instinct on Mordaunt "as in a favourable state to play the part of listener," and, with the unfailing dexterity peculiar to prosers, contrives to dribble out his tale to double its usual length, by exercising the privilege of unlimited digressions,—so receptive an ear once secured. Alan Fairford, pleading from his first brief, is happy enough to see the presiding judge, Lord Bladderskate, relax the scorn of his features into an expression of profound attention,—"the highest compliment, and the greatest encouragement, which a judge can render to the counsel addressing him." † Touch-

* A GOOD LISTENER is the subject of a previous chapter of instances, from the same pen as the present, to be found in *Cues from all Quarters*, pp. 236—251.

† A clerical fellow-countryman of Sir Walter's remembers feeling awe-stricken by the intense attention with which "a very great Judge" was

wood's tattle, though Jekyl pays not the slightest attention to it, is continued as cheerily as if he had been addressing the most attentive listener in Scotland, whether the favourite nephew of a cross, rich old bachelor, or the aide-de-camp of some old rusty firelock of a general, who tells stories of his last campaign; but Touchwood ironically compliments the *insouciant* captain on his well-sustained silence, and declares himself happy in having fallen in with a gentleman who hears him so well: "That grave, steady attention of yours reminds me of Elfi Bey—you might talk to him in English, or anything he understood least of—you might have read Aristotle to Elfi, and not a muscle would he stir—give him his pipe, and he would sit on his cushion with a listening air as if he took in every word of what you said." At this, Captain Jekyl throws away the remnant of a cigar, with a little movement of pettishness, and begins to whistle an opera air. "There again, now!" exclaims the exasperating and insuppressible but imperturbable nabob,—"that is just like the Marquis of Roccombole, another dear friend of mine, that whistles all the time you talk to him," —and whose apology was that he learned it in the Reign of Terror, when a man was glad to whistle to show his throat was whole. What makes the Laird of Ellangowan, when estranged from general society, increasingly partial to that of Dominie Sampson, is, that although conversation is out of the question, "the Dominie was a good listener," and succeeded with some tact in uttering certain indistinct murmurs of acquiescence at the conclusion of Mr. Bertram's long and winding stories. All that Professor M'Cloud, in a later fiction, wants, is a good listening post,—so a rival alleges; but that rival is anon found

wont, in ordinary conversation, to listen to all that was said to him. "It was the habit of the judgment-seat, acquired through many years of listening, with every faculty awake, to the arguments addressed to him." But when, records this reverend reminiscent, you began to make some statement to him, it was positively alarming to see him look you full in the face, and listen with inconceivable fixedness of attention to all you said. "You could not help feeling that really the small remark you had to make was not worth that great mind's grasping it so intently, as he might have grasped an argument by Follett," or some other bar-leader of the day.

paying his tribute to a new acquaintance: "We had a long and interesting chat on the continuity-of-species question: I found him really very intelligent—a very good conversationist indeed;" the truth of the matter being that the speaker had prosed upon his favourite subject for an hour to his patient victim, who had not comprehended a single word of the whole harangue, but had kept saying, at judicious intervals, "Ah, indeed," "Very curious,"—and by this simple means had acquired a high character with the other as a conversationist. "Yes, really a very good talker indeed; pursues his subject; does not shatter the conversation in the kind of way that so many men do." An essayist on social subjects thinks himself not mistaken in saying that all great talkers are impatient of other talkers, and resent the tax on their attention as a grievance and severe infliction. The impatience of such a temperament is recognized by signs only too unmistakable, where it is held in the vice of necessity; by sighs, jerks, fidgets, groans, biting of nails, drummings, tappings, yawnings, in various stages of development, as the natural tendency is partially restrained by good manners or allowed full play; by interruptions and exclamations—"Yes, yes!" "Well!" "And so," "And then," "And did he?" and all the interjectional goads to greater dispatch, as a discourser on impatience happily terms them. On the other hand, to quote from an essay on Attention, "there are eyes that invite confidence—'bland,' serene, clear-shining, outlooking eyes, at once patient and intelligent. This is the eye of the good listener. He keeps your pace; he goes with the fluctuations of fact or feeling or argument without effort. You may know you are not wearying him." The essayist's drift is, that men constantly think they like and prize people for their talking, when it is in fact for their listening; and his conclusion is, that every kindly intelligent man who possesses this accomplishment is certain to win to himself a great social reputation.

It is not, as a literary divine observes, the dull of hearing whom it is the hardest to get to hear; but rather the man who is roaring out himself, and so cannot attend to anything else; and this is a mortifying indication of the little importance that

is attached to what you are saying, while there is something provoking even in the outward signs that the mind of the (by courtesy) listener is in a non-receptive state—the eye looking beyond you, the grin that is not the effect of any smartness on your part, and the occasional inarticulate sounds put in at the close of your sentence, as if to delude you with a show of attention. "The non-receptive mind is occasionally found in clever men; but the men who exhibit it are invariably conceited. They can think of nothing but themselves." Alexander von Humboldt has been charged with putting down all talk but his own; but those who knew him better declared this to be the natural mistake of the empty-minded, who were not qualified either to listen or talk in his presence—there being, on good authority, no better listener than Humboldt in the presence of one who had anything worth hearing to say on any subject whatever. The traditional picture of Chateaubriand in Mdme. de Récamier's *salon* is quite different: when he deigned to talk, everybody was bound to listen; and nobody was allowed to talk a moment longer than seemed agreeable to the idol, who had "well-understood ways of intimating his weariness or impatience," such as stroking an ugly cat placed purposely on a chair by his side, or playing with a bell-rope conveniently hung within reach,—which last was the signal for Madame to rush to the rescue, "coûte que coûte." His deafness too, as Mr. Hayward says, was observed to come and go upon occasions.

Judge Haliburton being assured by his Yankee hero, "I like your conversation," as a motive plea for improving his acquaintance, goes on to reflect, "How singular this is! To the native reserve of my country I add an uncommon taciturnity; but this peculiar adaptation to listening has everywhere established for me that rare, but most desirable reputation, of being a good companion." It is therefore evident to him, that listeners are everywhere more scarce than talkers, and are valued accordingly. Indeed, without them, what would become of the talkers? he pertinently asks. When Falstaff is accused by the Chief Justice of being deaf, he answers, "Rather, an't please

you, it is the disease of not listening, the malady of not marking, that I am troubled with." And the same disease or malady continues to the present day, as "Original" Walker complains, to be very troublesome; and those who are afflicted with it may, on his showing, be instantly known by the interrogative "umph?" with which they notice whatever is said to them. The habit he takes to arise not from any defect in the faculties, but from carelessness in the use of them; and it is as great an impediment to conversation as deafness, and without its excuse. "Pride cannot condescend to listen, except to its superiors; conceit does not think it worth while, and selfishness is too much taken up with its own concerns." Attention to whatever is said is confessedly sometimes the consequence of obsequiousness, or of a fawning disposition; but that is a species easily distinguishable from the unaffected attention which is the result of composure and kindness. "Attention to what is said to us, or in our presence, is not only a very agreeable quality, but it is indicative of a well-regulated mind, of a mind at ease, above the cares and vanities of the world, free from pride, conceit, and selfishness, and without fear or [? self-] reproach"—of which last two hindrances, fear is destructive of presence of mind, and self-reproach turns inward with fatal frequency. Chesterfield reckons it a great advantage for any man to be able to talk or to hear, neither ignorantly nor absurdly, upon any subjects; "for I have known people who have not said one word, hear ignorantly and absurdly: it has appeared in their inattentive and unmeaning faces." He assures his son, when pressing upon him the importance of not only real but seeming attention, that "there is nothing so brutally shocking, nor so little forgiven, as a seeming inattention to the person who is speaking to you; and I have known many a man knocked down for (in my opinion) a much slighter provocation than that shocking inattention which I mean." Lord Shaftesbury, in his celebrated critique on the Judgment of Hercules, as a work of art, insists upon the absolute necessity of silence being distinctly characterized in him, while Virtue is pleading; for the effect would be utterly lost if, in the instant

that she employed the greatest force of action, she should appear to be interrupted by the ill-timed speech, reply, or utterance of her listener. "Such a design or representation as this, would prove contrary to order, contrary to history, and to the decorum or decency of manners." And he takes note, in passing, of the general absurdity committed by many of the "esteemed great masters in painting," who, in one and the same company, jointly engaged in one simple or common action, represent to us not only two or three, but several, and sometimes all, speaking at once: which must naturally have the same effect on the eye, as such a confused colloquy would have upon the ear, were we in reality to hear it.

Salathiel found, even in the sandy ways of Palestine, that to be a judicious listener is one of the first talents for popularity, all over the world. There can be no doubt that real attention, as a social essayist affirms, is a great talent and a great power: indeed, an extreme impatience of attention incapacitates a man for a place in the world. And he exposes that morbid, demoralized state of mind in which men cannot listen—cannot follow another man's train of thought, for they cannot give their minds into another man's custody even for a moment—the very thought of it is an irritation and a bondage. "No man can be really influential who cannot listen as well as talk; and no one can know anything of the mind of others without attending in the simple patient attitude of attention." There is subtle significance in the saw ascribed to the Stoic philosopher, Zenodotus: Ἄκουε τοῦ τέσσαρα ὦτα ἔχοντος—listen to him who has four ears ("Had I three ears, I'd hear thee," exclaims eager Macbeth): listen to one who shows himself ready to learn from others. Sir Jasper, in the story, is described as having your true talker's instinctive faculty of discovering a good listener: he finds one accordingly in George Pauncefort; not your stupid listener, who gazes at you with the fixed stare of rapt admiration, and flounders dismally in the endeavour to reply to you, thereby too clearly revealing that he has not understood a word you have been saying; nor yet your self-absorbed listener, who abandons

himself to his own reflections while you talk to him, and strikes in with a vacant grin and a "Really!" whenever you come to a full-stop. "Mr. Pauncefort was of the sterling metal—the thoughtful listener who weighs every word you say to him," and proves it by differing where need be, and by tokens of intelligent discrimination to form a sort of running commentary throughout. Ellesmere protests that whenever a talk is good, he is the last man in the world to interrupt it: he only interrupts folly, irrelevancy, inaccuracy, and incomplete logic. "I am the best listener in the United Kingdom when there is anything worth listening to." It soon came to be admitted by all who knew Phineas Finn that he had a peculiar power of making himself agreeable which no one knew how to analyse or define. "I think it is because he listens so well," said one man. "He has studied when to listen and when to talk," said another. *Place aux dames.* The Lady Muriel of one popular story is admired as the possessor of powers of conversation quite out of the common way—but it never, says the author, occurred to her admirers to calculate how much of her talking she did by means of intelligent acquiescent little looks, graceful little bows, sprightly exclamations, a judicious expression of intense interest in the subject under discussion when it chanced to be personal to the other party in the discourse, and sundry other skilful and effective feminine devices. The Eleanor Vane of another wins the heart of old De Crespigny by her manifestly real interest in his reminiscent talk: he was accustomed to the polite attention of his nieces, whose suppressed yawns sometimes broke in unpleasantly at the very climax of a story, and whose wooden-faced stolidity had at best something unpleasantly suggestive of being listened to and stared at by two Dutch clocks; but he was *not* accustomed to see "a beautiful and earnest face turned towards him as he spoke, a pair of bright gray eyes lighting up with new radiance at every crisis in the narrative, and lovely lips half parted through intensity of interest." The garrulous senior in this case was not quite of the class Mrs. Gaskell somewhere describes as being not at all particular as

regards receptive intelligence, and who, so that they may themselves talk on undisturbedly, are not so unreasonable as to expect attention to what they say. Her Cynthia, in a later (indeed her latest) work, excels in putting on a look of intense interest in what any one is saying to her, let the subject be what it may, as if it were the thing she cared most about in the whole world. The old squire, despite his distrust of her, can scarcely find it in his heart to be hard on "a lass who was so civil to me, and had such a pretty way with her of hanging on every word that fell from my lips." Towards the end of the tale Cynthia evinces her good taste as well as tact in listening with the semblance of unwearied interest to Molly Gibson's distressful experiences at Hamley Hall,—knowing instinctively that the repetition of all those painful recollections would ease the oppressed memory: "so she never interrupted Molly, as Mrs. Gibson had so frequently done, with—'You told me all that before, my dear,'" etc. The Miss Desmond of yet another fiction that made its mark is characterized as always wise enough to remember that the larger art of talking well comprehends the smaller art of listening gracefully; she being emphatically *not* one of "those obnoxious people" who talk for the sake of talking, and who, after rattling on without a full-stop for half an hour at a stretch, will stare vacantly at you while you recite to them some noteworthy adventure, evidently thinking of what they mean to say next, and waiting for the chance of cutting in. Miss Tox in *Dombey and Son*, "from a long habit of listening admiringly to everything that was said in her presence, and looking at the speakers as if she were mentally engaged in taking off impressions of their images upon her soul, never to part with the same but with life," had got her head settled quite on one side; while her hands had contracted a spasmodic habit of raising themselves of their own accord as in involuntary admiration, and her eyes too had become liable to a similar affection. Jane Eyre is often elected the involuntary confidant of her acquaintances' secrets, because people (Mr. Rochester included) instinctively discover that it is not her forte to talk of herself, but to listen while

others talk of themselves; they feel too that she listens with a kind of innate sympathy, not the less soothing and winsome because it is very unobtrusive in its manifestations. Mary Scudder, again, is described as one of the most seductive little confidants in the world; so pure from all "selfism," so heartily and innocently interested in what another was telling her, that people in talking with her found the subject constantly increasing in interest; although if they had been actually called upon afterwards to state the exact portion in words which she added to the conversation, they would have been surprised to find it so small.

It is one of the distinctive traits in the *Caractère* of Madame de Longueville that she "écoutoit beaucoup, n'interrompoit jamais,* et ne témoignoit point d'empressement de parler." So it is Sainte-Beuve's estimate of Madame de Rémusat, that she "savait écouter, savait comprendre et suivre"—being indeed particularly sensible of the value of this kind of intelligence, and rightly accounting it an excellent thing in woman. Benjamin Constant was agreeably surprised to find what a good listener Madame de Staël was, with all her affluence of talk: *elle sait parfaitement écouter*, he wrote to Madame de Charrière in 1794; "elle sent l'esprit des autres avec autant de plaisir que le sien." It was told to the disadvantage of Joseph de Maistre, on the other hand, that when engaged in conversation he had almost no ear for the respondent, *il n'entendait guère les réponses;* that he was, by turns, and very abruptly too, either

* Swift accords high praise to Stella (Mrs. Johnson) for the fact that "she never interrupted any person who spoke." "She listened to all that was said, and had never the least absence or distraction of thought."—*On the Death of Mrs. Johnson.*

One of the Dean's most appreciative correspondents, Lady Betty Brownlowe, begging leave to be present at his proposed meeting at Cashel with the Archbishop, expresses her certainty "that you would allow me to be a good listener," "for I assure you I have too great a desire to be informed and improved to occasion any interruption in your conversation, except when I find you purposely let yourself down to such capacities as mine, with an intention, as I suppose, to give us the pleasure of babbling."—*Letters*, May 19, 1735.

extremely animated or excessively torpid; all animation while speaking, all drowsiness when he was being replied to; and then, the moment the reply was ended, his eyes would open in wide-awake vivacity, and animation was again the order of the day. M. de Tocqueville is signalized among more recent noteworthies as a capital listener. So, in his way, was Mr. Crabb Robinson. He gives ingenuous proof of it in his Diary when in Germany, in 1804, where he says of Knebel, at Jena, that the attachment to him of the latter, "a wonder to me," arose from his loving the society of those who would hear what he had to say, "and my *betters* here are not of that description—real scholars have not time, and have too much pretension. I am a man of leisure." The amiable diarist is declared by his biographer to have had few rivals in the art of conversation—that is, of power of conversation without art; if any one chose to be a listener only, "H. C. R. was his man: he had always enough for two, and a bit over." And he appreciated a listener, Dr. Sadler adds, and considered the faculty as positive, not negative, virtue. "I consider ——," he said, "as one of the most sensible young men I ever knew."—"Why! he hardly says anything."—"Ah, but I do not judge him by what he says, but by *how* he listens." How H. C. R. listened was perhaps best shown by the tact with which he followed his partner's lead.

Caustic, cynical Chamfort was one day asked by Queen Marie-Antoinette how it came about that he had managed to please every one at Versailles, she would not say because of his wit, but in spite of it. The reason was very simple, he replied, in his free way; "at Versailles I resign myself to learn a number of things that I know, from people who are ignorant of them." Hence he got on so well there. Elsewhere, if the company pleased him not, he was at small pains to conceal his intolerance. But, perhaps, rather than take the trouble to assert his superiority, he would adopt the course of hearing all and saying nothing—and that, done with method and of malice aforethought, is bad listening with a vengeance.

Mr. Hunsden taxes the Professor, in Currer Bell's autobiographical fiction, with his cherished habit of sitting in a room full of company, bent on hearing, not on speaking; on observing, not on entertaining; looking frigidly shy at the commencement of a party, confusingly vigilant about the middle, and insultingly weary towards the end. "Is that the way, do you think, ever to communicate pleasure or excite interest?"

As Viceroy in India, Lord Elgin made a point of having two or three people to dine with him every day on which he had not a great dinner—by which means, said he, "I get acquainted with individuals, and if my bees have any honey in them I extract it at the moment of the day when it is most gushing." It was sometimes complained that on these occasions he was so little communicative, drawing out the opinions of others without expressing his own. But, submits the editor of his correspondence, Mr. Theodore Walrond, it requires very little reflection to see that this complaint is really a commendation.—Captain Marryat was once invited at Brussels to meet a company of literary "wits," and everybody talked and laughed away, the Captain alone excepted, who swallowed his dinner gravely and almost in silence, much to the disappointment of the host, who, meeting him next morning, expressed himself as "afraid" his guest did not "enjoy himself" last night. The guest protested he never enjoyed himself better. "Then why didn't you talk?" his friend remonstrated. "You didn't make a single joke the whole evening." "Oh!" replied Captain Marryat, with a prolonged utterance of the exclamatory syllable,—"if that's what you wanted, you should have asked me when you were alone. Why, did you imagine I was going to let out any of my jokes for those fellows to put in their next books? No; that is not *my* plan. When I find myself in such company as *that*, I open my ears and hold my tongue, glean all I can, and give them nothing in return." M. Necker used to be censured for *son silence habituel* in literary circles: "son esprit fin, ironique, dédaigneux, plein de nuances, se plasait à observer un monde dont il jouissait et dont il allait se servir sans jamais s'y mêler entièrement." An earlier his-

torical banker, Jacques Cœur, took for one of his devices, "*Bouche close. Neutre. Entendre dire. Faire. Taire,*"—a wise and discreet maxim, which should be followed without speaking of it, says Michelet, who takes it to show "the petty wisdom of the trader of the middle age." The waiting-maid's song in *Inkle and Yarico* begins,

> "This maxim let every one hear,
> Proclaimed from the north to the south:
> Whatever comes in at your ear
> Should never run out at your mouth.
> We servants, like servants of state,
> Should listen to all, and be dumb;
> Let others harangue and debate,
> We look wise—shake our heads—and are mum."

Schiller's master of the cellar in *The Piccolomini* rebukes the incipient tattle of the servants with the admonitory saw, A good servant hears, and hears not; he should be nothing but eyes and feet, except when called to.

It is an alleged characteristic of the worldly-wise man that he commits himself to no adventurously expressed opinions, but simply accustoms himself to hold his tongue: his spirit may burn within him, but he keeps silence; and at the end of a long life he is able to feel that he has never lost a chance of good fortune by saying the wrong thing. But the reticent have been called so many forms of living death; for the faculty of speech seems to have been given them in vain. "Any one not a born fool can resolve to keep silence on certain points; but it takes a master-mind to be able to talk and yet not tell." There is recognized art, consummate art, in appearing absolutely frank, yet never telling anything which it is not wished should be known. Caught by the easy manner of such an "artist," by his genial talk and ready sympathy, one may be insensibly led to confide to him all of one's own and of other people's; and it is "only long after, when you reflect quietly, that you come to the knowledge of how reticent he has been in the midst of this seeming frankness, and how little reciprocity there has been in your confidences together." As with Rousseau and

Coindet—*c'était un singulier corps ce Coindet*, who heard all from Jean-Jacques, and would tell him nothing: "Au lieu de me dire ce qu'il avait appris, ou dit, ou vu, qui m'intéressait, il m'écoutait, m'interrogeait même." It is full of character what M. Fromentin tells us of villagers in the Sahara, that they ask questions, but all curiosity about themselves they consider impertinent, and improper, importunate. With people who, *par finesse*, says La Bruyère, hear all, and say very little, you will do well to say still less; or if you talk freely, let your talk be of trifles.

> "Conceal yoursel' as weel's ye can
> Frae critical dissection;
> But keek thro' every other man,
> Wi' sharpen'd, sly inspection."

Pope is on his guard against "all sly slow things, with circumspective eyes: men in their loose unguarded hours they take, not that themselves are wise, but others weak." Chesterfield recommends a seeming ignorance, in order to become wise, in the worldly-wisdom of "thorough and extensive private information;" and his recommendation of it is, because it "will make you pass for incurious, and consequently undesigning." *Hunc caveto.* And beware of accomplished practitioners of the Leonine line of the middle ages, *Audi, vide, tace, si vis vivere in pace;* for such keen-eared, sharp-eyed taciturnity means mischief, or at best bodes no good. Crabbe's borough-bailiff counselling his son John, is so far a counterpart of Shakspeare's Polonius counselling his son Laertes:

> "Observe the prudent: they in silence sit . . .
> They hazard nothing, nothing they assume,
> But know the useful art of acting dumb.
> Yet to their eyes each varying look appears,
> And every word finds entrance at their ears."

But this is how Cowper, with the generous warmth of a Christian gentleman, deals with such practical philosophers:

> "Some act upon the prudent plan,
> 'Say little, and hear all you can.'
> Safe policy, but hateful—

So barren sands imbibe the shower,
But render neither fruit nor flower,
    Unpleasant and ungrateful.

The man I trust, if shy to me,
Shall find me as reserved as he,
    No subterfuge or pleading
Shall win my confidence again;
I will by no means entertain
    A spy on my proceeding."

XL.

NO MORE SEA.

REVELATION xxi. 1.

WHEN the first heaven and the first earth were passed away from the vision of the seer of Patmos, and a new heaven and a new earth filled his gaze, "there was no more sea." Like so many other passages in his book of revelation, this one is of disputed meaning. We islanders are apt to grudge the literal acceptation of the words, and to fancy that a cosmos without a sea would almost be chaos come again. Expositors incline to the belief that what is implied is the removal of a barrier to free intercourse, and that the sea as such a barrier, *oceanus dissociabilis*,* can well be spared from the new creation. But why should the waters of the great deep be dried off on that account alone? Water seems to remain as a means of separation within the New Jerusalem itself,—since we read of the tree of life "on either side of the river," that pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, pro-

* A scholarly critic protests against what he calls the "miserable fallacy of Horace about the *oceanus dissociabilis*," and contends that so far from an island-life implying the being cut off from the rest of the world, throughout the history of Europe the sea has been the great connecter of nations. Till railways were invented, he argues, water carriage was much the easiest way of travelling for all purposes; and so far from being cut off from other nations by our insular position, we islanders had probably more intercourse with foreigners than had any other nation in Europe.

ceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Seas may be bridged as well as rivers; it is a question of degree—practically speaking, as well as conjecturally, or speculatively. At any rate one is loth to accept an interpretation which would involve the extinction of an object so instinct with associations of grandeur, sublimity, and elevating awe, as the mighty ocean.

Be it fully conceded, nevertheless, that whole kindreds, peoples, and tongues, especially in the East, have held the sea in pronounced and persistent aversion,—hating it as intensely as they feared it, and so hating because they so feared it. Adam Smith opens a pregnant paragraph of his *Wealth of Nations* with the remark, "The ancient Egyptians had a superstitious aversion to the sea." To the Persians it is as repellant as to the Arabs it is attractive. To the Romans, says Gibbon, in his first chapter, the ocean remained an object of terror rather than of curiosity; they "tried to disguise, by the pretence of religious awe, their ignorance and terror."* Graphically Mr. Lothrop Motley describes the dismay of the Spaniards before Leyden, in 1574, when the great dyke was pierced: brave as they were on land, the Spaniards "were not sailors," and it was natural that they should be amazed and confounded at what they saw. "Nothing is more appalling to the imagination than the rising ocean tide, when man feels himself within its power; and here were the waters, hourly deepening and closing round them, devouring the earth beneath their feet,"—not to speak of the flotilla that rode on those waves, bent equally on their destruction. Two at least of France's foremost prose poets—for so we may designate both Michelet and Victor Hugo (not however forgetting the right of the latter to be accounted one of her foremost poets absolute and unconditioned)—have given forcible expression to the sense of shuddering awe which the expanse of ocean engenders in some imaginative minds. Victor Hugo dilates upon the "mystery of the dread, laborious ocean," upon the vacillation of the waves, the perseverance of the foam, the

* See Tacitus, *Germania*, c. 34.

wearing-down of rocks. Of these latter he is eloquent upon the kind called, in the old sea-dialect, *Isolés:* rocks in mid-ocean, where the sea is alone, and works her own will, undisturbed by token of terrestrial life. "Man is a terror to the sea; she is shy of his approach, and hides from him her deeds. But she is bolder among the lone sea rocks. The everlasting soliloquy of the waves is not troubled there." She has her splendid and monstrous vegetation, composed of floating plants which bite, and of monsters which take root; and she hides away all this magnificence in the twilight of her deeps. It is here she developes at liberty her mysterious side, inaccessible to man; here keeps all strange secretions of life, and here assembles her unknown wonders. "Moi aussi," writes Michelet, in presence of a storm, "je regardais insatiablement cette mer, je la regardais avec haine. N'étant pas en danger réel, je n'en avais que davantage l'ennui et la désolation. Elle était laide; d'affreuse mine. Rien ne rappelait les vains tableaux des poëtes. Seulement, par un contraste étrange, moins je me sentais bien vivant, plus, elle, elle avait l'air de vivre. Toutes ces vagues électrisées par un si furieux mouvement avaient pris une animation, et comme une âme fantastique, dans la fureur générale chacune avait sa fureur. . . Elles me faisaient l'effet d'un épouvantable *mob*, d'une horrible populace, non d'hommes, mais de chiens aboyants, un million, un milliard de dogues acharnés, ou plutôt fous. Que dis-je? des chiens, des dogues? ce n'était pas cela encore, c'étaient des apparitions exécrables et innommées, des bêtes sans yeux ni oreilles, n'ayant que des gueules écumantes. Monstres, que voulez-vous donc! n'êtes-vous pas soûls des naufrages que j'apprends de tous côtés? Que demandez-vous? 'Ta mort et la mort universelle, la suppression de la terre et le retour au chaos.'" If this be indeed the demand of the sea,—if the voice of the waves is instant for the suppression of dry land and for a return to chaos,—light is indeed thrown, be it lurid or otherwise, on the saving import of that saving clause in the Apocalypse, that there shall, in the new dispensation, be no more sea.

That line of Mr. Matthew Arnold's, "The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea," has been pronounced by a discerning and practised critic, inexhaustible in beauty and force,—shadowing out, as it does, without any false emphasis or prolix dwelling on the matter, the plunging deep-sea lead and the eerie cry of "no soundings,"—and recalling that saltness of the sea which takes from water every refreshing association, every quality that helps to slake thirst or supply sap,—and then concentrating all these dividing attributes, which strike a sort of lonely terror into the soul, into the one word "estranging."

Mrs. Browning calls the sea

> "that blue end of the world,
> That fair scroll-finis of a wicked book."

To those who have been familiar with it all their lives, it might almost seem, Archdeacon Hare said, as though their minds would be "poor shrunken things," without its air to brace and expand them;"* if for instance they had never seen the ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα of the waves, nor knew how changeful the sea is, and yet how constant and changeless amid all the changes of the seasons, nor how powerful she is, whom Winter with all his chains can no more bind than Xerxes could, how powerful to destroy in her fury, how powerful to bless in her calmness,—nor had ever learnt the lesson of obedience and of order from her, the lesson of ceaseless activity, and of deep unfathomable rest; if they had no sublunary teacher but the mute, motionless earth, and had been deprived of an ever-faithful mirror of heaven. Julius Hare, too, equally with Mr. Freeman, rejects the Horatian epithet *dissociabilis*, and maintains that however much the Sea may appear to be the great separater of nations, the impassable barrier to all intercourse,

* Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes tells us of Myrtle and her long voyage as a child, that, in the course of it, the strange mystery of the ocean was wrought into her consciousness so deeply, that it seemed to belong to her being: the waves rocked her, as if the sea had been her mother; and, looking over the vessel's side from the arms that held her with tender care, she used to watch the play of the waters, until the rhythm of their movement became a part of her, almost as much as her own pulse and breath.

yet in fact it is the grand medium of communication, the chief uniter of mankind, the only means by which the opposite ends of the earth can hold converse as though they were neighbours. "Thus in divers ways the πόντος ἀτρύγετος has become even more productive than if fields of corn were waving all over it." That it has been an essential condition in the civilizing of nations, all history shows. Perhaps the Germans in our days are the first people who have reached any high degree of culture,—who have become eminent in poetry and in thought, —without its immediate aid. Yet Germany has been called "she of the Danube and the Northern Sea;" and might still more justly be called "she of the Rhine."*

With the benison, "God be with thee, gladsome Ocean," Coleridge opens the first stanza of one of his lyrics. With Wordsworth we watch "the gentleness of heaven brood o'er the Sea;

> "Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
> And doth with his eternal motion make
> A sound like thunder—everlastingly."

It is in the sonnet next succeeding this one, that the fine line occurs which tells of the poet having "Of the old Sea some reverential fear." And in a like spirit he speaks, in the *Prelude*, of "the grandeur which invests The mariner, who sails the roaring sea Through storm and darkness." An American writer calls the sound of the soft, eternal pulsations of the distant sea, the "mournfullest, most mysterious, of all the harpings of Nature,"—and goes on to speak with a kind of shuddering awe of the "treacherous, soft, dreadful, inexplicable sea." Dr. Howard Russell, if we may take Dr. Brady for his spokesman, refers to an early voyage from which were derived impressions of the force of the sea, of its cruelty, its

* The Greek was not shut in by his mountains. "The sea enlarged the range and scope of his thoughts, which the mountains might have hemmed in." To him, as to us English, it was an inexhaustible mine of intellectual riches. "Nor is it without a prophetic symbolicalness that the sea fills so important a part in both the Homeric poems."—*Guesses at Truth*, 3rd edit., p. 93; cf. pp. 102 sq.

irresponsible power, its sullen anger and destroying rage,—combining to excite in him a sense of antipathy to it, as to a thing which had done him irreparable wrong. Another expert traveller and voluminous author says emphatically of the sea, "I hate it. I have a dread for it, as Mrs. Hemans had." He avows that to him it is simply a Monster, cruel, capricious, remorseless, rapacious, insatiable, deceitful; sullenly unwilling to disgorge its treasures; mockingly refusing to give up its dead,—though "it must, and shall, some day, the sea." Rousseau, who, as Mr. John Morley observes, always loved nature best in her moods of quiescence and serenity, and in proportion as she lent herself to such moods in men, and who therefore "liked rivulets better than rivers,"—could not bear the sight of the sea, whose infertile bosom and blind restless tumblings filled him with melancholy.* Lord Cockburn tells us of his friend Jeffrey, that, of all strong-minded men, there never was one who from what he deemed a just estimate of its dangers, but in truth from mere nervous horror, recoiled from it with such sincerity of aversion. Jeffrey's diary of his voyage to America (in 1813) abounds in disrespectful terms touching the amazing narrowness and paltriness of the "boundless" ocean. "There is nothing so ugly or mean as the sea in roughish weather: the circuit very narrow, the elevations paltry, and all the forms ungraceful and ignoble." A real gale of wind comes, and he professes to have felt no alarm, but "never saw an uglier scene; and, what is worse, ugly, without being sublime or terrible." He owns to feeling "a spite at the sea, for I cannot bring myself to think or speak of it without a certain contempt, as well as dislike." He would probably have adopted *ex animo*, or *con amore*, the opinion of that later voyager across the same waters, Mr. Mark Tapley, who par-

* Vivid as are the pictures, in his *Confessions*, of the Venetian episode of his chequered life, he makes no mention in them of his first sight of the sea—nor, adds his English biographer, "does the sight or thought of the sea appear to have left the least mark in any line of his writings. He always disliked it, and thought of it with melancholy."—Morley's *Rousseau*, i., 101.

ticularly pronounced the sea "as nonsensical a thing as anything going. It never knows what to do with itself. It hasn't got no employment for its mind, and is always in a state of vacancy. Like them Polar bears in the wild-beast shows as is constantly a nodding their heads from side to side, it never *can* be quiet. Which is entirely owing to its uncommon stupidity." One of the ablest of recent dissertators on the subject avows himself prompt to agree with the philosopher who wished that he could have been consulted at the creation of the universe—for then we might probably have had a world without an ocean. He holds it to be demonstratable that no object in nature is on the whole less beautiful than the sea—that it is monotonous and singularly commonplace, excepting always the cases in which it serves as an admirable background to fine coast scenery. "But why there should be so much sea out of sight of land is a problem which to our present understandings must be abandoned as inscrutable." So again an anonymous discourser upon long voyages takes it to be undeniable that the sea loses nine-tenths of its poetry and impressiveness while you are living on it: you think of the noble things that poets have written about it, of its gigantic irrepressible impulses, its tidal forces, its vast unchangeableness; that time writes no wrinkle on its azure brow, is an exquisitely graceful reflection as one sits on a grassy beach on a day in spring, but its significance and solace fade away into the most dismal distance in a gale of wind. Victor Hugo is said to be the only great poet who has thoroughly understood the "vile, insensate, and absolutely brutal ferocity" of the sea; a monster so thoroughly irrational, so incurably deaf and blind, so unconditionally without purpose or aim. "The sensations of most men in their first rough blow are probably those of pure fear. But by the second and third blow fear retreats an inch or two to make way for a fragment of contempt. One begins to think a little meanly of the ocean, which, in spite of all its fury and its hundreds of miles of tumbling waters, and with the winds for its auxiliaries, still is thoroughly mastered by a clever toy of wood and iron. You

feel that your raging foe has a good deal of the mere bully in him, after all." On the other hand, it has been well said that the child's first consciousness of the greatness and mystery of the world around him is embodied in the sea—so charming and yet so terrible, the most playful of playfellows, the most awful of possible destroyers. By it the child is first and most abidingly impressed with the sense of a mysterious life, the sense of a mysterious danger, and, above all, the sense of a mysterious power. Lamartine says that if prayer was not born with man himself, it must have been on the sea that it was invented, by men left alone with their thoughts and their feebleness; in presence of that abyss of the firmament, where their view is lost in confusion, and of that abyss of the sea, from which only a frail plank divides them; in hearing the roar of the ocean, when it growls, hisses, howls, and bellows, like the voices of a thousand wild beasts. De Quincey speaks of the sea as often peopled, amidst its ravings, with what seem innumerable *human* voices—such voices, or as ominous, as what were heard by Kubla Khan, "ancestral voices prophesying war;" and he refers to the shapes of fear, or shapes of beauty not less awful, that doubtless are seen at times upon the waves by the diseased eye of the sailor, in other cases besides the somewhat rare one of calenture. For "all sailors, it is notorious, are superstitious,"—partly, it is inferred, from looking out so much upon the wilderness of waters, empty of all human life,—and mighty solitudes are generally fear-haunted and fear-peopled. In his treatise on Modern Superstition the same writer adverts to Wordsworth's notice of that ancient awe for the sea and its tremendous secrets, which, he predicts, will never become obsolete: no excess of nautical skill will ever perfectly disenchant the great abyss from its terrors. In this world, to his thinking, there are two mighty forms of perfect solitude—the ocean and the desert: the wilderness of the barren sands, and the wilderness of the barren waters. "Both are the parents of inevitable superstitions—of terrors solemn, ineradicable, eternal."

Of all the objects he had ever seen, there was none, said

Addison, which affected his imagination so much as did the sea. He could not gaze on the heavings of that prodigious bulk of waters, even in a calm, without what he calls "a very pleasing astonishment;" but when it was worked up in a tempest, so that the horizon on every side was nothing but foaming billows and floating mountains, he found it impossible to describe the "agreeable horror" that rises from such a prospect. A troubled ocean, he adds, to a man who sails upon it, is "the biggest object that he can see in motion," and consequently gives his imagination one of the highest kinds of pleasure that can arise from a sense of the vast.

Mr. Black's winsome Princess of Thule tells the fair-haired stranger from the South, when he rails against "that perpetual and melancholy sea" amid which her lot is cast,—"Ah, but you must not talk badly of the sea. It is our very good friend. It gives us [Borva islanders] food, and keeps many people alive. It carries the lads away to other places, and brings them back with money in their pockets,"—and sometimes, interposes the objecting Southron, it smashes a few of them on the rocks, or swallows up a dozen families, and the next morning it is as smooth and fair as if nothing had happened. "But that is not the sea at all," said Sheila; "that is the storms that will wreck the boats, and how can the sea help that? When the sea is let alone, the sea is very good to us." And so animated and prettily accentuated was Sheila's defence of her favourite, that the Southron confessed himself beaten, and vowed that never again would he, in Miss Mackenzie's presence, say anything against the sea.

In one of the least known of his miscellaneous poems, Walter Savage Landor speaks reverently, lovingly, tenderly even, of

> "that unpausing sea
> Which heaves with God's own image, ever pure,
> And ministers in mightiness to Earth
> Plenty and health and beauty and delight;
> Of all created things beneath the skies
> The only one that mortal may not mar."

No one who could write this, no one who can go along with the

writer of it, feel as he felt, and think as he thought, can accept as probable or plausible, without something of a revolting intellect and an aching heart, a literal, or literally commonplace, interpretation of the text which announces, for the better life and the new creation, NO MORE SEA.

XLI.

NO MORE PAIN.

REVELATION xxi. 4.

A NEW heaven and a new earth, the seer of Patmos beheld in his apocalyptic visions; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. But other negative characteristics there were, also, in the new creation, due to Him who made all things new. Conspicuous by its absence, in this cosmic regeneration, was a mystery deeper than the sea,—the mystery of pain. In this new world, in the holy city, new Jerusalem, God should be very present with His people, and should wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there should be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither should there be any more pain.

St. Paul had declared the whole creation, or every creature, to be groaning and travailing in pain together until now. But the Patmos vision was of a new creation, where there should be no room for the cry, "Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable?"—no cause for the lament, "Much pain is in all loins, and the faces of them all gather blackness." The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death; and the charter of the holy city, New Jerusalem, gives formal assurance to its denizens, the citizens of no mean city, that there shall be no more death. For the former things are passed away; and with death are passed away the concomitants and foreshadowers of death: neither sorrow nor crying is to be heard in that better land, neither shall there be any more pain.

Is all this but a wistful yearning? a sublime dream? a

pathetic aspiration? Is the wish the father of the thought, and hope the fabricator of but a baseless vision? Even were it so, the yearning is so natural, the aspiration is so tenderly human and humane, the dream is so soothing as well as sublime in its scope, that even the most negatively disposed of Positivists might bear with a suffering believer's entreaty to be spared his hope, and even the most astringent of Agnostics comply with the appeal to let him dream his dream.

The New Testament makes no pretension, as Colani observes, to suppress or ignore the existence and the power of pain. Too well acquainted is it with human nature to adopt and repeat *ce mot insensé* of an arrogant philosophy, Pain, thou art nothing but a name. The New Testament regards pain as something much more than a mere name, or a simply nominal evil,—pain is there accounted "la plus réelle des réalités," and is treated "au sérieux." Grant, with Dr. Hugh Macmillan, the beneficent purpose it answers in the economy of man, and that, but for its warnings, these fearfully and wonderfully constructed bodies of ours would often be seriously injured, without our knowledge, unless indeed our attention were kept in a constant state of distressing watchfulness, worse almost than any pain; still, to no martyr to physical suffering will any such explanation be satisfactory; he will only ask why, if the purpose of pain is a purely benevolent one, should it be so excessive? why should it rend and rack the frame with agony? why should it last so long? why should our sensibility be more developed for pain than for pleasure, and a slight pain destroy much happiness? "Why should some begin to suffer tortures as soon as they begin to live; and be destined in their mother's womb to lives of lingering disease? Why, as in the case of burning, should it exhaust the system, and thus produce the fatal result it was intended to prevent?" Not altogether bad, not in every sense bad, is the authority to which Milton assigns the dictum,

> "But pain is perfect misery, the worst
> Of evils, and, excessive, overturns
> All patience."

No animal, as Hartley Coleridge has remarked, seems capable

of sufferings so exquisite as man, to say nothing of the aggravation each moment's pain receives from the prospect of a painful succession. And pains of all sort are intolerable, when they make us conscious of weakness. "To be weak is miserable." Arthur Hallam called pain the deepest thing we have in our nature, and to him union through pain seemed always more real and holy than any other. But even such apologists for pain as Hinton admit that no adequate explanation is to be found of it in the beneficial effects which it produces in respect to our physical existence: serving those uses, it yet exists independently of them; its source lies deeper, and its ends are larger.

> "There is purpose in pain,
> Otherwise it were devilish. I trust in my soul
> That the great master-hand which sweeps over the whole
> Of this deep harp of life, if at moments it stretch
> To shrill tension some one wailing nerve, means to fetch
> Its response the truest, . . .
> Its pathos the purest, from out the wrung heart,
> Whose faculties, flaccid it may be, if less
> Sharply strung, sharply smitten, had fail'd to express
> Just the one note the great final harmony needs.
> And what best proves there's life in a heart?—that it bleeds!"

The philosophic author of *Gravenhurst*—a book of thoughts on good and evil—is keen to note how pain and suffering prompt man's energies. The energy of fortitude he would not forfeit for an immunity from pain. He shows how pain that acts as a stimulant to action, blends with or is lost in the sense of effort, or the vigorous muscular exertion it calls forth; very acute pain paralyses or subdues, but the prick and the sting that stimulate to energetic movement are forgotten in the energy they produce. Of pain as the great conservator of life, in giving note of danger, he says, "We should die very rapidly if it were not for the pain of disease." Harriet Martineau, in more than one of her life in a sick-room essays, expatiates on the relief afforded by visitations of severe pain, in rallying the vital forces, and vivifying and cheering "on the whole." But also she describes with force, as we have seen in a previous

section (p. 60), the sinking of our spirits, fathoms deep, when extreme pain seizes on us, and the self-put sickening question, "How *shall* I bear this for five minutes? What *will* become of me?"—no word but "despair" expressing the feeling if the imagination stretches on to an hour, or hours. She claims accordingly a quite unbounded degree of admiration for those who die, with any composure, of sheer pain—of the most torturing diseases,—retaining their spiritual dignities to the end. In a later chapter this expert in physical endurance explicitly avowed her conviction, that there is no more possibility of becoming inured to acute agony of body than to paroxysms of remorse—the severest of moral pains: a familiar pain, frequently recurring, becomes, in point of fact, more and more dreaded, instead of becoming lightly esteemed in proportion to its familiarity. The pain itself becomes more odious, more oppressive, more intolerable, in proportion to the accumulation of experience of weary hours, and to the aggregate of painful associations which every visitation revives. "When it is, moreover, considered that the suffering part of the body is, if not recovering, growing continually more diseased and susceptible of pain, it will appear how little truth there is in the supposition of tortured persons becoming inured to torture." Experiences differ, equally with organizations; and we find Dr. Channing convincing himself that by analysing a pain he could discover an element of pleasure in it—and that by looking the pain "fully in the face and comprehending it," he diminished its intensity. Distinct perception, he argued, instead of aggravating, decreases evil. Seeing that pain and death are everywhere, that all animated nature suffers and dies, that life begins and ends in pain, he saw too that "pain has a great work to do," and its universality reconciled him to it: he would not ask to be exempted from the common lot.

There are uncommon degrees, however, of the common lot; and it is a commonplace in medical science that the degrees of pain are not to be estimated by any obvious similarity of lesion, or exciting cause; and that, as Sir Henry Holland words it, the "sentient state of the individual" is also concerned,—varying

in different persons, and at different times in the same person. It is not to be doubted, says Dr. South, but a dull fellow can endure the paroxysms of a fever, or the torments of the gout or stone, much better than a man of sensitive temperament; in the one case pain beats upon a rock or an anvil, in the other it prints itself upon wax. Medical authority has rebuked before now the shallow heedlessness which flippantly derides the groaners who cry out at a touch of pain: pain to some natures is all but absolutely unbearable—in them the nervous organization is so exquisitely delicate (though of course there are mere pretenders as well, and plenty of them), that even "a touch of pain," which most people would scarcely feel, is to them the acutest agony. There are people, it has been said, who suffer as much in having a tooth filed, as others in losing a limb. We find the late Dr. George Wilson writing to Sir J. Y. Simpson a description of what he suffered under an operation before the days of anæsthetics, which account he begins by owning himself deficient in physical courage,—meaning by physical courage that consciousness of a power to endure bodily agony which accompanies a certain temperament—the possessors of which courage know from the first instinctively, and by-and-by learn from experience, that a blow, a cut, a burn, an attack of toothache, or the like infliction of injury, or onset of pain, can be endured by them, though unwelcome, up to a degree of considerable severity, without excessively incommoding them or exhausting their patience. "I belong, on the other hand, to that large class, including most women, to whom cutting, bruising, burning, or any similar physical injury, even to a small extent, is a source of suffering never willingly endured, and always anticipated with more or less of apprehension. Pain in itself has nothing tonic or bracing in its effects upon such. In its relation to the body, it is a sheer and unmitigated evil." Lord Lytton made his Herculean Jasper long to swell his groan into a roar, when the gnaw of the monster anguish fastened on the nerves like a wolf's tooth; and it is suggested that the old fable of Hercules in the poisoned tunic was surely invented by some skilled physiologist to denote the truth that only in the strongest frames can pain be pushed into

its extremest torture. The finest constitutions may enable the sufferer to bear pain which would soon wear away the delicate; but they are also those which, when once seriously impaired, occasion the direst pain. In a later work the same author maintains, in opposition to the popular belief, that pain is most acutely felt by those in whom the animal organization being perfect, and the sense of vitality exquisitely keen, every injury or lesion finds the whole system rise, as it were, to repel the mischief and communicate the consciousness of it to all those nerves which are the sentinels to the garrison of life. "Pain, pain! Has life any ill but pain?" is the querulous query of Margrave in *A Strange Story*, whose exquisite susceptibility to it is made compatible with perfect health, and with that intense vitality which connotes blissful consciousness of life.

It is well for us, Goethe somewhere remarks, that man can only endure a certain degree of misery; what is beyond that, either annihilates him, or passes by him, and leaves him apathetic. Isaac Barrow approves the common solace of grief, *Si gravis, brevis est; si longus, levis;* if it be very grievous and acute, it cannot continue long without intermission or respite; if it abide long, it is insupportable: "intolerable pain is like lightning, it destroys us, or is itself instantly destroyed." As Carlyle puts it, the maddest boil, unless it kill you with its torments, does at length burst, and become an abscess. A popular essayist argues that the artificial infliction of excessive pain is impossible—that Nature herself imposes the maximum—that after the first sharp, cutting pang, all tends to faintness; and that in the most lingering operations acute pain ceases much sooner than is commonly supposed. The Samson Agonistes of Milton might give a text for such a treatise:

> "Much more affliction than already felt
> They cannot well impose, nor I sustain."

To apply the phrase of a later poet, "Pain o'erreaches itself, so is baulked." *Omnis dolor*, writes Cicero, *aut est vehemens aut levis; si levis, facile fertur, si vehemens, certè brevis futurus est.*

So that either *levis* or *brevis* it must be, on his showing—either trifling in degree, or else brief in duration. "Rien n'est longtemps extrême," the author of *Le Méchant* sings or says. So William Cullen Bryant in his sonnet on mutation:

> "They talk of short-lived pleasure—be it so—
> Pain dies as quickly: stern, hard-featured pain
> Expires, and lets her weary prisoner go.
> The fiercest agonies have shortest reign."

So Byron, in *The Two Foscari*, speaks of the wretch who happily escapes to death "By the compassionate trance, poor nature's last Resource against the tyranny of pain." Or the trance *may* be a life-giving sleep—a sleep and a forgetting; not the sleep of death, and the forgetfulness of the grave, but the sleep whose waking is to new life* this side the grave, and

* If room be found in these footnotes for a passing reference to the pleasures of convalescence, it may perhaps be justified as foreshadowing the better time coming when there shall be no more sickness, no more pain. Jean Paul Richter regards the first day of convalescence of what he calls the "over-wintered body" as the season of bloom of a beautiful soul, which steps, as if transfigured, out of the cold rind of earth into a warm Eden. "The whole heart is a moist, warm, gushing spring, full of buds, beneath a young sun." Whose conscience ever slept during the progress of a protracted convalescence? asks a discourser on that "sweet and solemn time." A little while ago we had drifted so far away from love, sunshine, work, and play, that it seemed as if the doors of the world were almost closed upon us for ever; but now they open again gradually and graciously, and we catch from afar sounds and glimpses of the life and light we love so well. "The coldest heart must acknowledge the goodness of God with a thrill then. The most indifferent must lift up his eyes reverently towards the common light of day, and whisper a thanksgiving." So again the author of *Cometh up as a Flower* dilates on the sweet sleeps that come to the young when their sickness is on the wane—the desire for food that ensues—the pleasure they find in the dusty sunbeam streaming through the window, in the mote playing up and down on ceiling and wall. There is even a daring expression of wonder whether the bliss of spirits at the Resurrection dawn, feeling the clothing of pure new bodies, will surpass the delight that attends the renewal of the old body at the uprising from a great sickness. To Esther Craven, fully dressed for the first time since her long illness, and removed into an adjoining dressing-room, there is "intense delight" in even that small change of scene—delight even in the changed pattern on the walls, in the different shape

the oblivion a blessed immunity from the sense and from the recollection of bygone pangs—the pangs of what Coleridge, with such depth of meaning, calls *agony that cannot be remembered.*

Refine as we will, optimize as we may, still is, and ever will be, bewildering, to mortal insight, the mystery of pain. Pain is not entirely synonymous with Evil, Mr. Carlyle once wrote, but bodily pain seems less redeemed by good than almost any other kind of it: from the loss of fortune, of fame, or even of friends, philosophy pretends to draw a certain compensating benefit; but in general the permanent loss of health will bid defiance to her alchemy. He regards it as a universal diminution—the diminution equally of our resources and of our capacity to guide them; a penalty unmitigated, save by love of friends, which then first becomes truly dear and precious to us; or by comforts brought from beyond this earthly sphere, from that serene Fountain of peace and hope, to which our weak philosophy cannot raise her wing. For all men, in itself, disease, he goes on to say, is misery, but chiefly for men of finer feelings and endowments, to whom, in return for such superiorities, it seems to be sent most frequently and in its most distressing forms. "It is a cruel fate for the poet

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of the chairs—even in the brass handles of the old oak chest of drawers. "Every power seems new and fresh—every sensation exquisitely keen; in every exercise of sight and sound and touch there is conscious joy." Gray's lines, so often quoted, and not long since by Mr. Gladstone with an emphasis of admiration for Gray, must here be quoted once again, if only for the justification the last of them suggests for appending such a footnote to such a topic:

> "See the wretch, that long has toss'd
> On the thorny bed of pain,
> At length repair his vigour lost,
> And breathe and walk again!
> The meanest flow'ret of the vale,
> The simplest note that swells the gale,
> The common sun, the air, the skies,
> To him are opening Paradise."

And what else deems mortal man of Paradise but of that promised land where there shall be no more pain?

to have the sunny land of his imagination, often the sole territory he is lord of, disfigured and darkened by the shades of pain." His clay dwelling is changed into a gloomy prison; every nerve is become an avenue of disgust or anguish; and the soul sits within, in her melancholy loneliness, a prey to the spectres of despair, or stupefied with excess of suffering, doomed as it were to a "life in death." Dr. Newman as explicitly affirms bodily pain to be the most mysterious of all. Sorrow, anxiety, and disappointment he sees to be more or less connected with sin and sinners; but bodily pain is involuntary for the most part, stretching over the world by some external irresistible law, reaching to children who have never actually sinned, and to the brute animals, who are strangers to Adam's nature; while in its manifestations it is far more piteous and distressing than any other suffering. He insists, too, as regards the effect of pain upon the mind, that it has no sanctifying influence in itself; that bad men are made worse by it; and that even the most religious among us may be misled to think it makes them better than it really does; for the effect of it at length, on any but very proud or ungovernable tempers, is to cause a languor and composure of mind which looks like resignation, while it necessarily throws our reason upon the especial thought of God, our only stay in such times of trial.—As to the brute animals, indeed, the mystery is deeper and deeper still.

"Pain in man
Bears the high mission of the flail and fan;
In brutes 'tis truly piteous."

These sheep, what have they done? If the wish could as easily assure the event as it fathers the thought, there should be assured to all these dumb sufferers a better land of green pastures and still waters, no longer embittered with liability to suffering, but sweetened with the perennial promise of no more pain.

No more Sea. The thought is depressing to many, if taken in anything like a literal sense. How much to miss, to regret, to lament, in a new world without the old, old sea!

No more Night. That, again, may to many be a thought the reverse of soothing, so endeared to their associations of memory and of hope is the varied but ever solemn, and sometimes so sweetly solemn, aspect of Night.

No more sorrow, or crying. Even this, too, some may count not absolutely and unconditionally a blessedness supreme, while they bethink them of the sanctuary of sorrow, the sweet uses of adversity, and the blessed relief of tears.

But, no more Pain? Few indeed, and above or below the level of our common humanity, must they be to whom this prospect is not a promise to be caught at literally, and cherished instinctively. They who cannot but sigh at the conjecture, as matter of fact, of no more Sea; and who would fain put a liberal private interpretation on the meaning of no more Night; and who could resign themselves almost complacently to the explaining away a positive sense as regards no more sorrow or crying, will pray God the words be strictly construed which promise that there shall be NO MORE PAIN.

THE END.

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