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SIR WALTER RALEIGH

AND HIS TIME,

WITH OTHER PAPERS.

BY CHARLES KINGSLEY.

AUTHOR OF "HYPATIA," "TWO YEARS AGO," ETC.

BOSTON:  
TICKNOR AND FIELDS.

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## KINGSLEY'S MISCELLANIES.

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### SIR WALTER RALEIGH AND HIS TIME.

[*North British Review.*]

“TRUTH is stranger than fiction.” A trite remark. We all say it, again and again: but how few of us believe it! How few of us, when we read the history of heroic times and heroic men, take the story simply as it stands. On the contrary, we try to explain it away; to prove it all not to have been so very wonderful; to impute accident, circumstance, mean and commonplace motives; to lower every story down to the level of our own littleness, or what we (unjustly to ourselves, and to the God who is near us all) choose to consider our level; to rationalize away all the wonders, till we make them at last impossible, and give up caring to believe them; and prove to our own melancholy satisfaction that Alexander conquered the world with a pin, in his sleep, by accident.

And yet in this mood, as in most, there is a sort of left-handed truth involved. These heroes are not so far removed from us, after all. They were men of like passions with ourselves, with the same flesh about them, the same spirit within them, the same world outside, the same devil beneath, the same God above. They and their deeds were not so very wonderful. Every child who is born into the world is just as wonderful; and, for aught we know, might, *mutatis mutandis*, do just as wonderful deeds. If accident and circumstance helped them, the same may help

1. *Life of Sir Walter Raleigh.* By PATRICK FRASER TYTLER, Esq. F.R.S., F.S.A. 2. *Raleigh's Discovery of Guiana.* Edited by Sir ROBERT SCHOMBURGK. 3. *Lord Bacon and Sir Walter Raleigh.* By MACVEY NAPIER, Esq. 4. *Raleigh's Works, with Lives* by OLDYS and BIRCH. 5. *Bishop Goodman's History of his own Times.*

us : have helped us, if we will look back down our years, far more than we have made use of.

They were men, certainly, very much of our own level : but may we not put that level somewhat too low ? They were certainly not what we are ; for if they had been, they would have done no more than we : but is not a man's real level not what he is, but what he can be, and therefore ought to be ? No doubt they were compact of good and evil, just as we : but so was David, no man more ; though a more heroical personage (save One) appears not in all human records ; but may not the secret of their success have been, that, on the whole, (though they found it a sore battle,) they refused the evil and chose the good ? It is true, again, that their great deeds may be more or less explained, attributed to laws, rationalized : but is explaining always explaining away ? Is it to degrade a thing to attribute it to a law ? And do you do anything more by "rationalizing" men's deeds than prove that they were rational men ; men who saw certain fixed laws, and obeyed them, and succeeded thereby, according to the Baconian apophthegm, that nature is conquered by obeying her ?

But what laws ?

To that question, perhaps, the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews will give the best answer, where it says, that by faith were done all the truly great deeds, and by faith lived all the truly great men, who have ever appeared on earth.

There are, of course, higher and lower degrees of this faith ; its object is one more or less worthy : but it is in all cases the belief in certain unseen eternal facts, by keeping true to which a man must in the long run succeed. Must ; because he is more or less in harmony with heaven, and earth, and the Maker thereof, and has therefore fighting on his side a great portion of the universe ; perhaps the whole ; for as he who breaks one commandment of the law is guilty of the whole, because he denies the fount of all law, so he who with his whole soul keeps one commandment of it is likely to be, in harmony with the whole, because he testifies of the fount of all law.

We will devote a few pages to the story of an old hero, of a man of like passions with ourselves ; of one who had the most intense and awful sense of the unseen laws, and succeeded mightily thereby ; of one who had hard struggles with a flesh and blood which made him at times forget those laws, and failed mightily thereby : of one whom God so loved that He caused each slightest sin, as with David, to bring its own punishment with it, that while the flesh was delivered over to Satan, the man himself might be saved in the Day of the Lord ; of one,

finally, of whom nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of a thousand may say, "I have done worse deeds than he: but I have never done as good ones."

In a poor farm-house among the pleasant valleys of South Devon, among the white apple-orchards and the rich water-meadows, and the red fallows and red kine, in the year of grace 1552, a boy was born, as beautiful as day, and christened Walter Raleigh. His father was a gentleman of ancient blood: none older in the land: but, impoverished, he had settled down upon the wreck of his estate, in that poor farm-house. No record of him now remains; but he must have been a man worth knowing and worth loving, or he would not have won the wife he did. She was a Champernoun, proudest of Norman squires, and could probably boast of having in her veins the blood of Courtneys, Emperors of Byzant. She had been the wife of the famous knight Sir Otho Gilbert, and lady of Compton Castle, and had borne him three brave sons, John, Humphrey, and Adrian; all three destined to win knighthood also in due time, and the two latter already giving promises, which they well fulfilled, of becoming most remarkable men of their time. And yet the fair Champernoun, at her husband's death, had chosen to wed Mr. Raleigh, and share life with him in the little farm-house at Hayes. She must have been a grand woman, if the law holds true that great men always have great mothers; an especially grand woman, indeed; for few can boast of having borne to two different husbands such sons as she bore. No record, as far as we know, remains of her; nor of her boy's early years. One can imagine them, nevertheless.

Just as he awakes to consciousness, the Smithfield fires are extinguished. He can recollect, perhaps, hearing of the burning of the Exeter martyrs; and he does not forget it; no one forgot or dared forget it in those days. He is brought up in the simple and manly, yet high-bred ways of English gentlemen in the times of "an old courtier of the Queen's." His two elder half-brothers also, living some thirty miles away, in the quaint and gloomy towers of Compton Castle, amid the apple-orchards of Torbay, are men as noble as ever formed a young lad's taste. Humphrey and Adrian Gilbert, who afterwards, both of them, rise to knighthood, are—what are they not? soldiers, scholars, Christians, discoverers, and "planters" of foreign lands, geographers, alchemists, miners, Platonical philosophers; many-sided, high-minded men, not without fantastic enthusiasm; living heroic lives, and destined, one of them, to die a heroic death. From them Raleigh's fancy has been fired, and his appetite for learning quickened, while he is yet a daring

boy, fishing in the gray trout-brooks, or going up with his father to the Dartmoor hills, to hunt the deer with hound and horn, amid the wooded gorges of Holne, or over the dreary downs of Hartland Warren, and the cloud-capt thickets of Cator's Beam, and looking down from thence upon the far blue southern sea, wondering when he shall sail thereon, to fight the Spaniard, and discover, like Columbus, some fairy-land of gold and gems.

For before this boy's mind, as before all intense English minds of that day, rise, from the first, three fixed ideas, which yet are but one—the Pope, the Spaniard, and America.

The first two are the sworn and internecine enemies (whether they pretend a formal peace or not) of Law and Freedom, Bible and Queen, and all that makes an Englishman's life dear to him. Are they not the incarnations of Antichrist? Their Moloch sacrifices flame through all lands. The earth groans because of them, and refuses to cover the blood of her slain. And America is the new world of boundless wonder and beauty, wealth and fertility, to which these two evil powers arrogate an exclusive and divine right; and God has delivered it into their hands; and they have done evil therein with all their might, till the story of their greed and cruelty rings through all earth and heaven. Is this the will of God? Will he not avenge for these things, as surely as he is the Lord who executeth justice and judgment in the earth?

These are the young boy's thoughts. These were his thoughts for sixty-six eventful years. In whatsoever else he wavered, he never wavered in that creed. He learnt it in his boyhood, while he read Fox's Martyrs beside his mother's knee. He learnt it as a lad, when he saw Hawkins and Drake changed by Spanish tyranny and treachery from peaceful merchantmen into fierce scourges of God. He learnt it scholastically, from fathers and divines, as an Oxford scholar, in days when Oxford was a Protestant indeed, in whom there was no guile. He learnt it when he went over, at seventeen years old, with his gallant kinsman Henry Champernoun, and his band of one hundred gentlemen volunteers, to flesh his maiden sword in behalf of the persecuted French Protestants. He learnt it as he listened to the shrieks of the San Bartholomew; he learnt it as he watched the dragonnades, the tortures, the massacres of the Netherlands, and fought manfully under Norris in behalf of those victims of "the Pope and Spain." He preached it in far stronger and wiser words than we can express it for him, in that noble tract of 1591, on Sir Richard Grenville's death at the Azores—a Tyrtæan trumpet-blast such as has seldom rung in human ears; he discussed it like a cool statesman in his pam-

phlet of 1596, on *A War with Spain*. He sacrificed for it the last hopes of his old age, the wreck of his fortunes, his just recovered liberty; and he died with the old God's battle-cry upon his lips, when it awoke no response from the hearts of a coward, profligate, and unbelieving generation. This is the background, the key-note of the man's whole life, of which, if we lose the recollection, and content ourselves by slurring it over in the last pages of his biography with some half-sneer about his putting, like the rest of Elizabeth's old admirals, "the Spaniard, the Pope, and the Devil" in the same category, we shall understand very little about Raleigh; though, of course, we shall save ourselves the trouble of pronouncing as to whether the Spaniard and the Pope were really in the same category as the devil; or, indeed, which might be equally puzzling to a good many historians of the last century and a half, whether there be any devil at all.

The books which we have chosen to head this review, are all of them more or less good, with one exception, and that is Bishop Goodman's *Memoirs*, on which much stress has been lately laid, as throwing light on various passages of Raleigh, Essex, Cecil, and James's lives. Having read it carefully, we must say plainly, that we think the book an altogether foolish, pedantic, and untrustworthy book, without any power of insight or gleam of reason, without even the care to be self-consistent; having but one object, the whitewashing James, and every noble lord whom the bishop has ever known; but in whitewashing each, the poor old flunkey so bespatters all the rest of his pets, that when the work is done, the whole party look, if possible, rather dirtier than before. And so we leave Bishop Goodman.

Mr. Fraser Tytler's book is well known; and it is on the whole a good one; because he really loves and admires the man of whom he writes: but he is wonderfully careless as to authorities, and too often makes the wish father to the thought—indeed to the fact. Moreover, he has all the usual sentimental cant about Mary Queen of Scots, and all the usual petty and prurient scandal about Elizabeth, which is to us anathema, which prevents his really seeing the time in which Raleigh lived, and the element in which he moved. This sort of talk is happily dying out just now; but no one can approach the history of the Elizabethan age (perhaps of any age) without finding that truth is all but buried under mountains of dirt and chaff—an Augean stable which, perhaps, will never be swept clean. Yet we have seen, with great delight, several attempts toward removal of the said superstratum of dirt and chaff from the Elizabethan histories, in several articles, all evidently from the same pen, (and that one,

more perfectly master of English prose to our mind than any man living,) in the *Westminster Review* and *Fraser's Magazine*.\*

Sir Robert Schomburgk's edition of the Guiana Voyage contains an excellent Life of Raleigh, perhaps the best yet written; of which we only complain, when it gives in to the stock-charges against Raleigh, as it were at second hand, and just because they are stock-charges, and because, too, the illustrious editor (unable to conceal his admiration of a discoverer in many points so like himself) takes all through an apologetic tone of "Please don't laugh at me. I daresay it is very foolish; but I can't help loving the man."

Mr. Napier's little book is a reprint of two *Edinburgh Review* articles on Bacon and Raleigh. The first, a learned statement of facts in answer to some unwisdom of a Quarterly reviewer, (as we suspect an Oxford Aristotelian; for "we think we do know that sweet Roman hand.") It is clear, accurate, convincing, complete. There is no more to be said about the matter, save that facts are stubborn things, and

"Victrix causa diis placuit, sed victa Suello!"

The article on Raleigh is very valuable; first, because Mr. Napier has had access to many documents unknown to former biographers; and next, because he clears Raleigh completely from the old imputation of deceit about the Guiana mine, as well as of other minor charges. With his general opinion of Raleigh's last and fatal Guiana voyage, we have the misfortune to differ from him *toto caelo*, on the strength of the very documents which he quotes. But Mr. Napier is always careful, always temperate, and always just, except where he, as we think, does not enter into the feelings of the man whom he is analyzing. Let readers buy the book (it will tell them a hundred things they do not know) and be judge between Mr. Napier and us.

In the meanwhile, one cannot help watching with a smile how good old Time's scrubbing brush, which clears away paint and whitewash from church pillars, does the same by such characters as Raleigh's. After each fresh examination, some fresh count in the hundred-headed indictment breaks down. The truth is, that as people begin to believe more in nobleness, and to gird up their loins to the doing of noble deeds, they discover more nobleness in others. Raleigh's character was in its lowest Nadir in

\* We especially entreat readers' attention to two articles in vindication of the morals of Queen Elizabeth, in *Fraser's Magazine* of 1854; to one in the *Westminster* of 1854, on Mary Stuart; and one in the same of 1852, on England's Forgotten Worthies.

the days of Voltaire and Hume. What shame to him? For so were more sacred characters than his. Shall the disciple be above his master? Especially when that disciple was but too inconsistent, and gave occasion to the uncircumcised to blaspheme? But Cayley, after a few years, refutes triumphantly Hume's silly slanders. He is a stupid writer: but he has sense enough, being patient, honest, and loving, to do that.

Mr. Fraser Tytler shovels away a little more of the dirt-heap; Mr. Napier clears him, (for which we owe him many thanks,) by simple statement of facts, from the charge of having deserted and neglected his Virginia colonists; Humboldt and Schomburgk from the charge of having lied about Guiana; and so on; each successive writer giving in generally on merest hearsay to the general complaint against him, either from fear of running counter to big names, or from mere laziness, and yet absolving him from that particular charge of which their own knowledge enables them to judge. In the trust that we may be able to clear him from a few more charges, we write these pages, premising that we do not profess to have access to any new and recondite documents. We merely take the broad facts of the story from documents open to all, and comment on them as we should wish our own life to be commented on.

But we do so on a method which we cannot give up; and that is the Bible method. We say boldly, that historians have hitherto failed in understanding not only Raleigh, Elizabeth, but nine tenths of the persons and facts in his day, because they will not judge them by the canons which the Bible lays down—(by which we mean not only the New Testament, but the Old, which, as English Churchmen say, and Scotch Presbyterians have ere now testified with sacred blood, is “not contrary to the New.”)

Mr. Napier has a passage about Raleigh for which we are sorry, coming as it does from a countryman of John Knox. “Society, it would seem, was yet in a state in which such a man could seriously plead, that the madness he feigned was justified” (his last word is unfair, for Raleigh only hopes that it is no sin) “by the example of David, King of Israel!” What a shocking state of society when men actually believed their Bibles, not too little, but too much! For our parts, we think that if poor dear Raleigh had considered the example of David a little more closely, he need never have feigned madness at all; and that his error lay quite in an opposite direction from looking on the Bible heroes, David especially, as too sure models. At all events, we are willing to try Raleigh by the very scriptural standard which he himself lays down, not merely in this case unwisely, but in his *History of the World* more wisely than any historian

whom we have ever read; and to say, "Judged as the Bible taught our Puritan forefathers to judge every man, the character is intelligible enough; tragic, but noble and triumphant: judged as men have been judged in history for the last hundred years, by hardly any canon save those of the private judgment, which philosophic cant, maudlin sentimentality, or fear of public opinion, may happen to have begotten, the man is a phenomenon, only less confused, abnormal, suspicious than his biographers' notions about him." Again we say, we have not solved the problem; but it will be enough if we make some think it both soluble, and worth solving.

Let us look round, then, and see into what sort of a country, into what sort of a world, the young adventurer is going forth, at seventeen years of age, to seek his fortune.

Born in 1552, his young life has sprung up and grown with the young life of England. The earliest fact, perhaps, which he can recollect, is the flash of joy on every face which proclaims that Mary Tudor is dead, and Elizabeth reigns at last. As he grows, the young man sees all the hope and adoration of the English people centre in that wondrous maid, and his own centre in her likewise. He had been base had he been otherwise. She comes to the throne with such a prestige as never sovereign came, since the days when Isaiah sang his pæan over young Hezekiah's accession. Young, learned, witty, beautiful, (as with such a father and mother she could not help being,) with an expression of countenance remarkable (we speak of those early days) rather for its tenderness and intellectual depth than its strength, she comes forward as the Champion of the Reformed Faith, the interpretest of the will and conscience of the people of England—herself persecuted all but to the death, and purified by affliction, like gold tried in the fire. She gathers round her, one by one, young men of promise, and trains them herself to their work. And they fulfil it, and serve her, and grow gray-headed in her service, working as faithfully, as righteously, as patriotically, as men ever worked on earth. They are her "favourites;" because they are men who deserve favour; men who count not their own lives dear to themselves for the sake of the queen and of that commonweal which their hearts and reasons tell them is one with her. They are still men, though; and some of them have their grudgings and envyings against each other: she keeps the balance even between them as skilfully, gently, justly, as woman ever did, or mortal man either. Some have their conceited hopes of marrying her, becoming her masters. She rebukes and pardons. "Out of the dust I took you, sir! go and do your duty, humbly and rationally, henceforth, or



into the dust I trample you again !” And they reconsider themselves, and obey. But many, or most of them, are new men, country gentlemen, and younger sons. She will follow her father’s plan, of keeping down the overgrown feudal princes, who, though brought low by the wars of the Roses, are still strong enough to throw every thing into confusion by resisting at once Crown and Commons. Proud nobles reply by rebellion, come down southwards with ignorant Popish henchmen at their backs ; will restore Popery, marry the Queen of Scots, make the middle class and the majority submit to the feudal lords and the minority. The Alruna-maiden, with her “aristocracy of genius,” is too strong for them ; the people’s heart is with her, and not with dukes. Each mine only blows up its diggers, and there are many dry eyes at their ruin. Her people ask her to marry. She answers gently, proudly, eloquently : “She is married—the people of England is her husband. She has vowed it.” And well she keeps her vow. And yet there is a tone of sadness in that great speech. Her woman’s heart yearns after love, after children ; after a strong bosom on which to repose that weary head. But she knows that it must not be. She has her reward. “Whosoever gives up husband or child for my sake and the gospel’s, shall receive them back a hundredfold in this present life,” as Elizabeth does. Her reward is an adoration from high and low, which is to us now inexplicable, impossible, overstrained, which was not so then. For the whole nation is in a mood of exaltation ; England is fairyland ; the times are the last days—strange, terrible, and glorious.

At home are Jesuits plotting ; dark, crooked-pathed, going up and down in all manner of disguises, doing the devil’s work if men ever did it ; trying to sow discord between man and man, class and class ; putting out books full of filthy calumnies, declaring the queen illegitimate, excommunicate, a usurper. English law null, and all state appointments void, by virtue of a certain “bull,” and calling on the subjects to rebellion and assassination, even on the bed-chamber women to do to her “as Judith did to Holofernes.” She answers by calm contempt. Now and then Burleigh and Walsingham catch some of the rogues, and they meet their deserts ; but she for the most part lets them have their way. God is on her side, and she will not fear what man can do to her.

Abroad, the sky is dark and wild, and yet full of fantastic splendour. Spain stands strong and awful, a rising world—tyranny, with its dark-souled Cortezes and Pizarros, Alvas, Don Johns, and Parmas, men whose path is like the lava stream, who go forth slaying and to slay, in the name of their gods, like

those old Assyrian conquerors on the walls of Nineveh, with tutelary genii flying above their heads, mingled with the eagles who trail the entrails of the slain. By conquest, intermarriage, or intrigue, she has made all the southern nations her vassals or her tools; close to our own shores, the Netherlands are struggling vainly for their liberties; abroad, the Western Islands, and the whole trade of Africa and India, will in a few years be hers. And already the Pope, whose "most Catholic" and faithful servant she is, has repaid her services in the cause of darkness by the gift of the whole new world—a gift which she has claimed by cruelties and massacres unexampled since the days of Timour and Zinghis Khan. There she spreads and spreads, as Drake found her picture in the Government House at St. Domingo, the horse leaping through the globe, and underneath, "Non sufficit orbis." Who shall withstand her, armed as she is with the three-edged sword of Antichrist—superstition, strength, and gold?

English merchantmen, longing for some share in the riches of the New World, go out to trade in Guinea, in the Azores, in New Spain; and are answered by shot and steel. "Both policy and religion," as Fray Simon says, fifty years afterwards, "forbid Christians to trade with heretics!" "Lutheran devils, and enemies of God," are the answer they get in words; in deeds, whenever they have a superior force they may be allowed to land, and to water their ships, even to trade, under exorbitant restrictions; but generally this is merely a trap for them. Forces are hurried up; and the English are attacked treacherously, in spite of solemn compacts; for "No faith need be kept with heretics." And wo to them if any be taken prisoners, even wrecked. The galleys, and the rack, and the stake, are their certain doom; for the Inquisition claims the bodies and souls of heretics all over the world, and thinks it sin to lose its own. A few years of such wrong raise questions in the sturdy English heart. What right have these Spaniards to the New World? The Pope's gift? Why, he gave it by the same authority by which he claims the whole world. The formula used when an Indian village is sacked is, that God gave the whole world to St. Peter, and that he has given it to his successors, and they the Indies to the King of Spain. To acknowledge that lie would be to acknowledge the very power by which the Pope claims a right to depose Queen Elizabeth, and give her dominions to whomsoever he will. A *fico* for Bulls!

By possession, then? That may hold for Mexico, Peru, New Grenada, Paraguay, which have been colonized; though they were gained by means which make every one concerned in con-

quering them worthy of the gallows ; and the right is only that of the thief to the purse whose owner he has murdered. But as for the rest—Why the Spaniard has not colonized, even explored, one twentieth of the New World, not even one fourth of the coast. Is the existence of a few petty factories, often hundreds of miles apart, at a few river mouths, to give them a claim to the whole intermediate coast, much less to the vast unknown tracts inside ? We will try that. If they appeal to the sword, so be it. The men are treacherous robbers ; we will indemnify ourselves for our losses, and God defend the right.

So argued the English ; and so sprung up that strange war of reprisals, in which, for eighteen years, it was held that there was no peace between England and Spain beyond the line, *i. e.* beyond the parallel of longitude where the Pope's gift of the western world was said to begin ; and, as the quarrel thickened and neared, extended to the Azores, Canaries, and coasts of Africa, where English and Spaniards flew at each other as soon as seen, mutually and by common consent, as natural enemies, each invoking God in the battle with Antichrist.

Into such a world as this goes forth young Raleigh, his heart full of chivalrous worship for England's tutelary genius, his brain aflame with the true miracles of the new-found Hesperides, full of vague hopes, vast imaginations, and consciousness of enormous power. And yet he is no wayward dreamer, unfit for this workday world. With a vein of song "most lofty, insolent, and passionate," indeed unable to see aught without a poetic glow over the whole, he is eminently practical, contented to begin at the beginning, that he may end at the end ; one who could work terribly, "who always laboured at the matter in hand as if he were born only for that." Accordingly, he sets to work faithfully and stoutly, to learn his trade of soldiering ; and learns it in silence and obscurity. He shares (it seems) in the retreat at Moncontour, and is by at the death of Condé, and toils on for five years, marching and skirmishing, smoking the enemy out of mountain-caves in Languedoc, and all the wild work of war. During the San Bartholomew massacre we hear nothing of him ; perhaps he took refuge with Sidney and others in Walsingham's house. No records of these years remain, save a few scattered reminiscences in his works, which mark the shrewd, observant eye of the future statesman.

When he returned we know not. We trace him, in 1576, by some verses prefixed to Gascoigne's satire, *The Steele Glass*, solid, stately, epigrammatic, by Walter Rawely of the Middle Temple. The style is his ; spelling of names matters nought in days in which a man would spell his own name three different

ways in one document. Gascoigne, like Raleigh, knew Lord Grey of Wilton, and most men about town, too, and had been a soldier abroad, like Raleigh, probably with him. It seems to have been the fashion for young idlers to lodge among the Templars; indeed, toward the end of the century, they had to be cleared out, as crowding the wigs and gowns too much, and perhaps proving noisy neighbours, as Raleigh may have done. To this period may be referred, probably, his justice done on Mr. Charles Chester, (Ben Jonson's *Carlo Buffone*,) "a perpetual talker, and made a noise like a drum in a room; so one time, at a tavern, Raleigh beats him and seals up his mouth, his upper and nether beard, with hard wax." For there is a great laugh in Raleigh's heart, a genial contempt of asses; and one that will make him enemies hereafter; perhaps shorten his days.

One hears of him next, (but only by report,) in the Netherlands, under Norris, where the nucleus of the English army (especially of its musquetry) was training. For Don John of Austria intends not only to crush the liberties and creed of the Flemings, but afterwards to marry the Queen of Scots, and conquer England; and Elizabeth, unwillingly and slowly, for she cannot stomach rebels, has sent men and money to The States, to stop Don John in time; which the valiant English and Scotch do on Lammas-day 1578, and that in a fashion till then unseen in war. For coming up late and panting, and "being more sensible of a little heat of the sun, than of any cold fear of death," they throw off their armour and clothes, and, in their shirts, (not over-clean, one fears,) give Don John's rashness such a rebuff, that two months more see that wild meteor, with lost hopes and tarnished fame, die down and vanish below the stormy horizon. In these days, probably, it is that he knew Colonel Bingham, a soldier of fortune, of a "fancy high and wild, too desultory and over-voluble," who had, among his hundred-and-one schemes, one for the plantation of America; as poor Sir Thomas Stukely (whom Raleigh must have known well,) uncle of the traitor Lewis, had for the peopling of Florida.

Raleigh returns: Ten years has he been learning his soldier's trade in silence. He will take a lesson in seamanship next. The Court may come in time; for, by now, the poor squire's younger son must have discovered—perhaps even too fully—that he is not as other men are; that he can speak, and watch, and dare, and endure, as none around him can do. However, here are "good adventures toward," as the Morte d'Arthur would say; and he will off with his half-brother Humphrey Gilbert, to carry out his patent for planting Meta Incognita,—“The Unknown Goal,” as Queen Elizabeth has named it,—which will

Since Raleigh's studies here's  
 equal knowledge may be allowed  
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prove to be too truly and fatally unknown. In a latitude south of England, and with an Italian summer, who can guess that the winter will out-freeze Russia itself? The merchant-seaman, like the statesman, had yet many a thing to learn. Instead of smiling at our forefathers' ignorance, let us honour the men who bought knowledge for us their children at the price of lives nobler than our own.

So Raleigh goes on his voyage with Humphrey Gilbert, to carry out the patent for discovering and planting in "Meta Incognita;" but the voyage prospers not. A "smart brush with the Spaniards" sends them home again, with the loss of Morgan, their best captain, and "a tall ship," and Meta Incognita is forgotten for a while: but not the Spaniards. Who are these who forbid all English, by virtue of the Pope's bull, to cross the Atlantic? That must be settled hereafter; and Raleigh, ever busy, is off to Ireland, to command a company in that "common-weal, or rather common-woe," as he calls it in a letter to Leicester. Two years and more pass here; and all the records of him which remain are of a man, valiant, daring, and yet prudent beyond his fellows. He hates his work; and is not on too good terms with stern and sour, but brave and faithful Lord Grey: but Lord Grey is Leicester's friend, and Raleigh works patiently under him, like a sensible man, because he is Leicester's friend. Some modern gentleman of note (we forget who, and do not care to recollect) says, that Raleigh's "prudence never bore any proportion to his genius." The next biographer we open accuses him of being too calculating, cunning, time-serving; and so forth. Perhaps both are true. The man's was a character very likely to fall alternately into either sin,—doubtless, did so a hundred times. Perhaps both are false. The man's character was, on occasion, certain to rise above both faults. We have evidence that he did so his whole life long.

He is bored with Ireland at last: nothing goes right there, (when has it?) nothing is to be done there. That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered. He comes to London, and to Court. But how? By spreading his cloak over a muddy place for Queen Elizabeth to step on? It is a pretty story; very likely to be a true one: but biographers have slurred a few facts in their hurry to carry out their theory of "favourites," and to prove that Elizabeth took up Raleigh on the same grounds that the silliest boarding-school miss might have done. Not that we deny the cloak story, if true, to be a very pretty story; perhaps it justifies, taken alone, Elizabeth's fondness for him. There may have been self-interest in it; we are bound, as "men of the world,"

to impute the dirtiest motive that we can find : but how many self-interested men do we know, who would have had quickness and daring to do such a thing ? Men who are thinking about themselves are not generally either so quick-witted, or so inclined to throw away a good cloak, when by much scraping and saving they have got one. We never met a cunning, selfish, ambitious man who would have done such a thing. The reader may : but even if he has, we must ask him, for Queen Elizabeth's sake, to consider that this young Quixote is the close relation of two of the finest public men then living, Champernoun and Carew. That he is a friend of Sidney ; a pet of Leicester ; that he has left behind him at Oxford, and brought with him from Ireland, the reputation of being a *rara avis*, a new star in the firmament ; that he has been a soldier in her Majesty's service (and in one in which she has a peculiar private interest) for twelve years ; that he has held her commission as one of the triumvirate for governing Munster, and been the commander of the garrison at Cork ; and that it is possible that she may have heard something of him before he threw his cloak under her feet, especially as there has been some controversy (which we have in vain tried to fathom) between him and Lord Grey about that terrible Smerwick slaughter ; of the result of which we know little, but that Raleigh, being called in question about it in London, made such good play with his tongue, that his reputation as an orator and a man of talent was fixed once and for ever.

Within the twelve months he is sent on some secret diplomatic mission about the Anjou marriage ; he is in fact now installed in his place as "a favourite." And why not ? If a man is found to be wise and witty, ready and useful, able to do whatsoever he is put to, why is a sovereign, who has eyes to see the man's worth, and courage to use it, to be accused of I know not what, because the said man happens to be good-looking ? Of all generations, this, one would think, ought to be the last to cry out against "favouritism" in government : but we will draw no odious comparisons, because readers can draw them but too easily for themselves.

Now comes the turning-point of Raleigh's life. What does he intend to be ? Soldier, statesman, scholar, or sea-adventurer ? He takes the most natural, yet not the wisest course. He will try and be all four at once. He has intellect for it ; by worldly wisdom he may have money for it also. Even now he has contrived (no one can tell whence) to build a good bark of two hundred tons, and send her out with Humphrey Gilbert on his second and fatal voyage. Luckily for Raleigh she deserts and comes home, while not yet out of the Channel, or she had surely

gone the way of the rest of Gilbert's squadron. Raleigh, of course, loses money by the failure, as well as the hopes which he had grounded on his brother's Transatlantic viceroyalty. And a bitter pang it must have been to him, to find himself bereft of that pure and heroic counsellor, just at his entering into life. But with the same elasticity which sent him to the grave, he is busy within six months in a fresh expedition. If *Meta Incognita* be not worth planting, there must be, so Raleigh thinks, a vast extent of coast between it and Florida, which is more genial in climate, perhaps more rich in produce; and he sends Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlow to look for the same, and not in vain.

On these Virginian discoveries we shall say but little. Those who wish to enjoy them should read them in all their naïve freshness in the originals; they will subscribe to S. T. Coleridge's dictum, that no one now-a-days can write travels as well as the old worthies could, who figure in Hakluyt and Purchas.

But we return to the question, What does this man intend to be? A discoverer and colonist; a vindicator of some part at least of America from Spanish claims? We fear not altogether, else he would have gone himself to Virginia, at least the second voyage, instead of sending others. But here, it seems to us, is the fatal, and yet pardonable mistake, which haunts the man throughout. He tries to be too many men at once. Fatal: because, though he leaves his trace on more things than (perhaps) did ever one man before or since, he, strictly speaking, conquers nothing, brings nothing to a consummation. Virginia, Guiana, the *History of the World*, his own career as a statesman—as king, (for he might have been king had he chosen,) all are left unfinished. And yet most pardonable; for if a man feels that he can do many different things, how hard to teach himself that he must not do them all! How hard to say to himself, "I must cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye." I must be less than myself, in order really to be any thing. I must concentrate my powers on one subject, and that perhaps by no means the most seemingly noble or useful, still less the most pleasant, and forego so many branches of activity in which I might be so distinguished, so useful." This is a hard lesson. Raleigh took just sixty-six years learning it, and had to carry the result of his experience to the other side of the dark river, for there was no time left to use it on this side. Some readers may have learnt the lesson already. If so, happy and blessed are they. But let them not, therefore, exalt themselves above Walter Raleigh; for that lesson is (of course) soonest learnt by the man who can excel in few things, later by him who can

excel in many, and latest of all by him who, like Raleigh, can excel in all.

Space prevents us from going into details about the earlier court-days of Raleigh. He rises rapidly, as we have seen. He has an estate given him in Ireland, near his friend Spenser, where he tries to do well and wisely, colonizing, tilling, and planting it; but, like his Virginia expeditions, principally at second hand. For he has swallowed (there is no denying it) the painted bait. He will discover, he will colonize, he will do all manner of beautiful things, at second hand: but he himself will be a courtier. It is very tempting. Who would not, at the age of thirty, have wished to have been one of that chosen band of geniuses and heroes whom Elizabeth had gathered round her? Who would not, at the age of thirty, have given his pound of flesh to be captain of her guard, and to go with her whithersoever she went? It is not merely the intense gratification to carnal vanity (which, if any man denies or scoffs at, we always mark him down as especially guilty) which is to be considered; but the real, actual honour, in the mind of one who looked on Elizabeth as the most precious and glorious being which the earth had seen for centuries. To be appreciated by her; to be loved by her; to serve her; to guard her; what could man desire more on earth?

Beside, he becomes a member of Parliament now, and Lord Warden of the Stannaries; business which of course keeps him in England: business which he performs (as he does all things) wisely and well. Such a generation as this ought really to respect Raleigh a little more, if it be only for his excellence in their own especial sphere—that of business. Raleigh is a thorough man of business. He can “toil terribly,” and what is more, toil to the purpose. In all the everyday affairs of life, he remains without a blot; a diligent, methodical, prudent man, who, though he plays for great stakes, ventures and loses his whole fortune again and again, yet never seems to omit the “doing the duty which lies nearest him;” never gets into mean money scrapes; never neglects tenants or duty; never gives way for one instant to “the eccentricities of genius.”

If he had done so, be sure that we should have heard of it. For no man can become what he has become without making many an enemy; and he has his enemies already. On which statement naturally occurs the question—why? An important question too; because several of his later biographers seem to have running in their minds some such train of thought as this—Raleigh must have been a bad fellow, or he would not have had so many enemies; and because he was a bad fellow, there is an



*à priori* reason that charges against him are true. Whether this be arguing in a circle or not, it is worth searching out the beginning of this enmity, and the reputed causes of it. In after years it will be, because he is "damnable proud;" because he hated Essex, and so forth: of which in their places. But what is the earliest count against him? Naunton (who hated Raleigh, and was moreover a rogue and a bad fellow) has no reason to give, but that the queen took him for a kind of oracle, which much nettled them all; yea, those he relied on began to take this his sudden favour for an alarm; to be sensible of their own supplantation, and to project his; which shortly made him to sing, "Fortune my foe."

Now, be this true or not, and we do not put much faith in it, it gives no reason for the early dislike of Raleigh, save the somewhat unsatisfactory one which Cain would have given for his dislike of Abel. Moreover, Mr. Tytler gives a letter of Essex's, written as thoroughly in the Cain spirit as any we ever read, and we wonder that after, as he says, first giving that letter to the world, he could have found courage to repeat the old sentimentalism about the "noble and unfortunate" Earl. His hatred of Raleigh (which, as we shall see hereafter, Raleigh not only bears patiently, but requites with good deeds as long as he can) springs, by his own confession, simply from envy and disappointed vanity. The spoilt boy insults Queen Elizabeth about her liking for the "knave Raleigh." She, "taking hold of one word disdain," tells Essex that "there was no such cause why I should thus disdain him." On which, says Essex, "as near as I could I did describe unto her what he had been, and what he was; and then I did let her see, whether I had come to disdain his competition of love, or whether I could have comfort to give myself over to the service of a mistress that was in awe of such a man. I spake for grief and choler as much against him as I could: and I think he standing at the door might very well hear the worst that I spoke of him. In the end, I saw she was resolved to defend him, and to cross me." Whereon follows a "scene," the naughty boy raging and stamping, till he insults the Queen, and calls Raleigh "a wretch;" whereon poor Elizabeth, who loved the coxcomb for his father's sake, "turned her away to my Lady Warwick," and Essex goes grumbling forth.

On which letter, written before a single charge has been brought, (as far as yet known, against Raleigh,) Mr. Tytler can only observe, that it "throws much light on the jealousy" between Raleigh and Essex, "and establishes the fact, that Elizabeth delighted to see them competing for her love."

This latter sentence is one of those (too common) which rouse our indignation. We have quoted only the passage which Mr. Tytler puts in italics, as proving his case; but let any reader examine that letter word by word, from end to end, and say whether even Essex, in the midst of his passion, selfishness, and hatred, lets one word drop which hints at Elizabeth "*delighting*" in seeing the competition, any more than one which brings a tangible charge against Raleigh. It is as gratuitous and wanton a piece of evil-speaking as we ever read in any book; yet, we are ashamed to say, it is but an average specimen of the fairness with which any fact is treated now-a-days, which relates to the greatest sovereign whom England ever saw, the "Good Queen Bess," of whom Cromwell the regicide never spoke without the deepest respect and admiration.

Raleigh's next few years are brilliant and busy ones; and gladly, did space permit us, would we give details of those brilliant adventures which make this part of his life that of a true knight-errant. But they are mere episodes in the history, and we must pass them quickly by, only saying that they corroborate in all things our original notion of the man—just, humane, wise, greatly daring and enduring greatly; and filled with the one fixed idea, which has grown with his growth, and strengthened with his strength, the destruction of the Spanish power, and colonization of America by English. His brother Humphrey makes a second attempt to colonize Newfoundland, and perishes as heroically as he had lived. Raleigh, undaunted by his own loss in the adventure and his brother's failure, sends out a fleet of his own to discover to the southward, and finds Virginia. We might spend pages on this beautiful episode on the simple descriptions of the fair new land which the sea-kings bring home; on the profound (for those times at least) knowledge which prompted Raleigh to make the attempt in that particular direction, which had as yet escaped the notice of the Spaniards; on the quiet patience with which, undaunted by the ill-success of the first colonists, he sends out fleet after fleet, to keep the hold which he had once gained, till, unable any longer to support the huge expense, he makes over his patent for discovery to a company of merchants, who fare for many years as ill as Raleigh himself did: but one thing we have a right to say, that to this one man, under the providence of Almighty God, do the whole United States of America owe their existence. The work was double. The colony, however small, had to be kept in possession at all hazards; and he did it. But that was not enough. Spain must be prevented from extending her operations northward from Florida; she must be crippled along the whole east coast of

America. And Raleigh did that too. We find him for years to come a part-adventurer in almost every attack on the Spaniards; we find him preaching war against them on these very grounds, and setting others to preach it also. Good old Hariot (Raleigh's mathematical tutor, whom he sent to Virginia) re-echoes his pupil's trumpet-blast. Hooker, in his epistle dedicatory of his *Irish History*, strikes the same note, and a right noble one it is. "These Spaniards are trying to build up a world-tyranny by rapine and cruelty. You, sir, call on us to deliver the earth from them, by doing justly and loving mercy; and we will obey you!" is the answer which Raleigh receives (as far as we can find) from every nobler-natured Englishman.

It was an immense conception: a glorious one: it stood out so clear: there was no mistake about its being the absolutely right, wise, patriotic thing: and so feasible, too, if Raleigh could but find "six cents hommes qui savaient mourir." But that was just what he could not find. He could draw round him, and did, by the spiritual magnetism of his genius, many a noble soul: but he could not organize them, as he seems to have tried to do, into a coherent body. The English spirit of independent action, never stronger than in that age, and most wisely encouraged (for other reasons) by good Queen Bess, was too strong for him. His pupils will "fight on their own hook" like so many Yankee rangers; quarrel with each other; grumble at him. For the truth is, he demands of them too high a standard of thought and purpose. He is often a whole heaven above them in the hugeness of his imagination, the nobleness of his motive; and Don Quixote can often find no better squire than Sancho Panza. Even glorious Sir Richard Grenvil makes a mess of it; burns an Indian village because they steal a silver cup; throws back the colonization of Virginia ten years with his over-strict notions of discipline and retributive justice; and Raleigh requites him for his offence by embalming him, his valour and his death, not in immortal verse but in immortal prose. The *True Relation of the Fight at the Azores*, gives the key-note of Raleigh's heart. If readers will not take that as the text on which his whole life is a commentary, they may know a great deal about him, but him they will never know.

The game becomes fiercer and fiercer. Blow and counter-blow between the Spanish king (for the whole West-Indian commerce was a government job) and the merchant-nobles of England. At last, the Great Armada comes, and the Great Armada goes again. *Venit, vidit, fugit*, as the medals said of it. And to Walter Raleigh's counsel, by the testimony of all contemporaries, the mighty victory is to be principally attributed.

Where all men did heroically, it were invidious to bestow on him alone a crown, *ob patriam servatam*. But henceforth, Elizabeth knows well that she has not been mistaken in her choice; and Raleigh is better loved than ever, heaped with fresh wealth and honours. And who deserves them better?

The immense value of his services in the defence of England excuses him, in our eyes, from the complaint which one has been often inclined to bring against him,—why, instead of sending others westward ho, did he not go himself? Surely he could have reconciled the jarring instruments with which he was working. He could have organized such a body of men as perhaps never went out before or since on the same errand. He could have done all that Cortez did, and more; and done it more justly and mercifully.

True. And here seems (as far as little folk dare judge great folk) to have been his mistake. He is too wide for real success. He has too many plans; he is fond of too many pursuits. The man who succeeds is generally the narrow man; the man of one idea, who works at nothing but that; sees every thing only through the light of that; sacrifices every thing to that; the fanatic, in short. By fanatics, whether military, commercial, or religious, and not by "liberal-minded men" at all, has the world's work been done in all ages. Amid the modern cants, one of the most mistaken is the cant about the "mission of genius," the "mission of the poet." Poets, we hear in some quarters, are the anointed kings of mankind,—at least, so the little poets sing, each to his little fiddle. There is no greater mistake. It is the practical, prosaical fanatic who does the work; and the poet, if he tries to do it, is certain to put down his spade every five minutes, to look at the prospect, and pick flowers, and moralize on dead asses, till he ends a "*Néron malgré lui-même*," fiddling melodiously while Rome is burning. And perhaps this is the secret of Raleigh's failure. He is a fanatic no doubt, a true knight-errant: but he is too much of a poet withal. The sense of beauty intrals him at every step. Gloriana's fairy court, with its chivalries and its euphuisms, its masques and its tourneys, and he the most charming personage in it, are too charming for him—as they would have been for us, reader; and he cannot give them up, and go about the one work. He justifies his double-mindedness to himself, no doubt, as he does to the world, by working wisely, indefatigably, bravely; but still he has put his trust in princes, and in the children of men. His sin, as far as we can see, is not against man, but against God: one which we do not now-a-days call a sin, but a weakness. Be it so. God punished him for it, swiftly and sharply;

which we hold to be a sure sign that God also forgave him for it.

So he stays at home, spends, sooner or later, £40,000 on Virginia, writes charming court-poetry with Oxford, Buckhurst, and Paget, brings over Spenser from Ireland, and introduces Colin Clout to Gloriana, who loves—as who would not have loved?—that most beautiful of faces and of souls; helps poor puritan Udall out of his scrape as far as he can; begs for Captain Spring, begs for many more, whose names are only known by being connected with some good deed of his. “When, Sir Walter,” asks Queen Bess, “will you cease to be a beggar?” “When your Majesty ceases to be a benefactor.” Perhaps it is in these days that he sets up his “office of address,”—some sort of agency for discovering and relieving the wants of worthy men. So all seems to go well. If he has lost in Virginia, he has gained by Spanish prizes; his wine-patent is bringing him in a large revenue, and the heavens smile on him. “Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art poor and miserable and blind and naked.” Thou shalt learn it, then, and pay dearly for thy lesson.

For, in the meanwhile, Raleigh falls into a very great sin, for which, as usual with his elect, God inflicts swift and instant punishment; on which, as usual, biographers talk much unwisdom. He seduces Miss Throgmorton, one of the maids of honour. Elizabeth is very wroth; and had she not good reason to be wroth? Is it either fair or reasonable to talk of her “demanding a monopoly of love,” and “being incensed at the temerity of her favourite, in presuming to fall in love and marry without her consent?” Away with such prurient cant. The plain facts are: that a man nearly forty years old abuses his wonderful gifts of body and mind, to ruin a girl nearly twenty years younger than himself. What wonder if a virtuous woman (and Queen Elizabeth was virtuous) thought it a base deed, and punished it accordingly? There is no more to be discovered in the matter, save by the vulturine nose, which smells a carrion in every rose-bud. Raleigh has a great attempt on the Plate-fleets in hand; he hurries off, from Chatham, and writes to young Cecil, on the 10th of March, “I mean not to come away, as some say I will, for fear of a marriage, and I know not what. . . . For I protest before God, there is none on the face of the earth that I would be fastened unto.”

This famous passage is one of those over which the virtuosity of modern times, rejoicing in evil, has hung so fondly, as giving melancholy proof of the “duplicity of Raleigh’s character;” as if a man who once in his life had told an untruth was proved by

that fact to be a rogue from birth to death: while others have kindly given him the benefit of a doubt whether the letter were not written after a private marriage, and therefore Raleigh, being "joined unto" some one already, had a right to say, that he did not wish to be joined to any one. But we do not concur in this doubt. Four months after, Sir Edward Stafford writes to Anthony Bacon, "If you have any thing to do with Sir W. R., or any love to make to Mistress Throgmorton, at the Tower to-morrow you may speak with them." This implies that no marriage had yet taken place. And surely, if there had been a private marriage, two people who were about to be sent to the Tower for their folly would have made the marriage public at once, as the only possible self-justification. But it is a pity, in our opinion, that biographers, before pronouncing upon that supposed lie of Raleigh's, had taken the trouble to find out what the words mean. In their virtuous haste to prove him a liar, they have overlooked the fact that the words, as they stand, are unintelligible, and the argument self-contradictory. He wants to prove, we suppose, that he does not go to sea for fear of being forced to marry Miss Throgmorton. It is, at least, an unexpected method of so doing in a shrewd man like Raleigh, to say that he wishes to marry no one at all. "Don't think that I run away for fear of a marriage, for I do not wish to marry any one on the face of the earth," is a speech which may prove Raleigh to have been a goose, but we must understand it before we can say that it proves him a rogue. If we had received such a letter from a friend, we should have said at once, "Why the man, in his hurry and confusion, has omitted *the* word; he must have meant to write, not 'There is none on the face of the earth that I would be fastened to,' but 'There is none on the face of the earth that I would *rather* be fastened to,' " which would at once make sense, and suit fact. For Raleigh not only married Miss Throgmorton forthwith, but made her the best of husbands. Our conjectural emendation may go for what it is worth; but that the passage, as it stands in Murdin's State Papers (the MSS. we have not seen) is either misquoted, or miswritten by Raleigh himself, we cannot doubt. He was not one to think nonsense, even if he scribbled it.

The Spanish raid turns out well. Raleigh overlooks Elizabeth's letters of recall till he finds out that the king of Spain has stopped the Plate-fleet for fear of his coming, and then returns, sending on Sir John Burrough to the Azores, where he takes The Great Carack, the largest prize (1600 tons) which had ever been brought into England. We would that space allowed of a sketch of that gallant fight as it stands in the pages of Hakluyt. Suffice it that it raised Raleigh once more to wealth,

though not to favour. Shortly after he returns from the sea, he finds himself, where he deserves to be, in the Tower, where he does more than one thing which brought him no credit. How far we are justified in calling his quarrel with Sir George Carew, his keeper, for not letting him "disguise himself, and get into a pair of oars to ease his mind but with a sight of the queen, or his heart would break," hypocrisy, is a very different matter. Honest Arthur Gorges, (a staunch friend of Raleigh's,) tells the story laughingly and lovingly, as if he thought Raleigh sincere, but somewhat mad; and yet honest Gorges has a good right to say a bitter thing; for after having been "ready to break with laughing at seeing them two brawl and scramble like madmen, and Sir George's new periwig torn off his crown," he sees "the iron walking" and daggers out, and, playing the part of him who taketh a dog by the ears, "purchased such a rap on the knuckles, that I wished both their pates broken, and so with much ado they staid their brawl to see my bloody fingers," and then set to work to abuse the hapless peacemaker. After which things Raleigh writes a letter to Cecil, which is still more offensive in the eyes of virtuous biographers,—how "his heart was never broken till this day, when he hears the queen goes so far off, whom he followed with love and desire on so many journeys, and am now left behind in a dark prison all alone." . . . "I that was wont to behold her riding like Alexander, hunting like Diana, walking like Venus, the gentle wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks," and so forth, in a style in which the vulturine nose must needs scent carrion, just *because* the roses are more fragrant than the vulturine taste should be in a world where all ought to be either vultures, or carrion for their dinners. As for his despair, had he not good reason to be in despair? By his own sin, he has hurled himself down the hill which he has so painfully climbed. He is in the Tower—surely no pleasant or hopeful place for any man. Elizabeth is exceeding wroth with him; and what is worse, he deserves what he has got. His whole fortune is ventured in an expedition over which he has no control, which has been unsuccessful in its first object, and may be altogether unsuccessful in that which it has undertaken as a *pis-aller*, and so leave him penniless. There want not, too, those who will trample on the fallen. The deputy has been cruelly distraining on his Irish tenants for a "supposed debt of his to the Queen of £400 for rent," which was indeed but fifty merks, and which was paid, and has carried off 500 milch kine from the poor settlers whom he has planted there, and forcibly thrust him out of possession of a castle.

Moreover, the whole Irish estates are likely to come to ruin,

for nothing prevails but rascality among the English soldiers, impotence among the governors, and rebellion among the natives. Three thousand Burkes are up in arms; his "prophecy of this rebellion" ten days ago was laughed at, and now has come true; and altogether, Walter Raleigh and all belonging to him is in as evil case as was ever man on earth. No wonder, poor fellow, if he behowls himself lustily, and not always wisely, to Cecil, and every one else who will listen to him.

As for his fine speeches about Elizabeth, why forget the standing-point from which such speeches were made? Over and above his present ruin, it was, (and ought to have been,) an utterly horrible and unbearable thing to Raleigh, or any man, to have fallen into disgrace with Elizabeth by his own fault. He feels (and perhaps rightly) that he is as it were excommunicate from England, and the mission and the glory of England. Instead of being as he was till now, one of a body of brave men working together in one great common cause, he has cut himself off from the congregation by his own selfish lust, and there he is left alone with his shame and his selfishness. We must try to realize to ourselves the way in which such men as Raleigh looked not only at Elizabeth, but at all the world. There was, in plain palpable fact, something about her, her history, her policy, the times, the glorious part which England, and she as the incarnation of the then English spirit, was playing upon earth, which raised imaginative and heroic souls into a permanent exaltation—a "fairy-land," as they called it themselves, which seems to us fantastic, and would be fantastic in us, because we are not at their work, or in their days. There can be no doubt that a number of as noble men as ever stood together on the earth, did worship this woman, fight for her, toil for her, risk all for her, with a pure chivalrous affection which to us furnished one of the beautiful pages in all the book of history. Blots there must needs have been, and inconsistencies, selfishnesses, follies; for they too were men of like passions with ourselves; but let us look at the fair vision as a whole, and thank God that such a thing has for once existed even imperfectly on this sinful earth, instead of playing the part of Ham, and falling under his curse; the penalty of slavishness, cowardice, loss of noble daring, which surely falls on any generation which is "banausos," to use Aristotle's word—which rejoices in its forefathers' shame, and, unable to believe in the nobleness of others, is unable to become noble itself.

As for the "Alexander and Diana" affectations, they were the language of the time; and certainly this generation has no reason to find fault with them, or with a good deal more of the



“affectations” and “flattery” of Elizabethan times, while it listens complacently night after night to “honourable members” complimenting not Queen Elizabeth, but Sir Jabesh Windbag, Fiddle, Faddle, Red-tape, and party, with protestations of deepest respect and fullest confidence in the very speeches in which they bring accusations of every offence, short of high-treason—to be understood, of course, in a “parliamentary sense,” as Mr. Pickwick’s were in a “Pickwickian” one. If a generation of Knoxes and Mortons, Burleighs and Raleighs, shall ever arise again, one wonders by what name they will call the parliamentary morality, and parliamentary courtesy of a generation which has meted out such measure to their antitypes’ failings?

“But Queen Elizabeth was an old woman then.” We thank the objector even for that “then;” for it is much now-a-days to find any one who believes that Queen Elizabeth was ever young, or who does not talk of her as if she was born about seventy years of age, covered with rouge and wrinkles. We will undertake to say, that as to the beauty of this woman there is a greater mass of testimony, and from the very best judges too, than there is of the beauty of any personage in history; and yet it has become the fashion now to deny even that. The plain facts seem, that she was very graceful, active, accomplished in all outward matters, of a perfect figure, and of that style of intellectual beauty, depending on expression, which attracted (and we trust always will attract) Britons, far more than that merely sensuous loveliness in which no doubt Mary Stuart far surpassed her. And there seems little doubt, that like many Englishwomen, she retained her beauty to a very late period in life, not to mention that she was, in 1592, just at that age of rejuvenescence which makes many a woman more lovely at sixty than she has been since she was thirty-five. (No doubt, too, she used every artificial means to preserve her famous complexion; and quite right she was. This beauty of hers had been a talent (as all beauty is) committed to her by God; it had been an important element in her great success; men had accepted it as what beauty of form and expression generally is, an outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace; and while the inward was unchanged, what wonder if she tried to preserve the outward? If she was the same, why should she not try to look the same? And what blame to those who worshipped her, if, knowing that she was the same, they too should fancy that she looked the same—the Elizabeth of their youth, and talk as if the fair flesh, as well as the fair spirit, was immortal?) Does not every loving husband do so, when he forgets the gray hair and the sunken cheek, and all the wastes of time, and sees the partner of many joys and

sorrows not as she has become, but as she was, ay, and is to him, and will be to him, he trusts, through all eternity? There is no feeling in these Elizabethan worshippers which we have not seen, potential and crude, again and again in the best and noblest of young men whom we have met, till it was crushed in them by the luxury of effeminacy and unbelief in chivalry, which is the sure accompaniment of a long peace; which war may burn up with beneficent fire; which, to judge by the unexpected heroisms and chivalries of the last six months, it is burning up already.

But we must hasten on now; for Raleigh is out of prison in September, and by the next spring in parliament, speaking wisely and well, especially on his fixed idea, war with Spain, which he is rewarded for forthwith in Father Passon's *Andreae Philopatris Responsio*, by a charge of founding a school of Atheism for the corruption of young gentlemen; a charge which Lord Chief-Justice Popham, Protestant as he is, will find it useful one day to recollect.

Elizabeth, however, now that he has married the fair Throgmorton, and does wisely in other matters, restores him to favour. If he has sinned, he has suffered: but he is as useful as ever, now that his senses have returned to him, and he is making good speeches in parliament, instead of bad ones to weak maidens; and we find him once more in favour, and possessor of Sherborne Manor, where he builds and beautifies, with "groves and gardens of much variety and great delight." And God, too, seems to have forgiven him; perhaps has forgiven; for there the fair Throgmorton brings him a noble boy. *Ut sis vitalis metuo, puer!*"

Raleigh will quote David's example one day, not wisely or well. Does David's example ever cross him now, and these sad words,—“The Lord hath put away thy sin, . . . nevertheless the child that is born unto thee shall die?”

Let that be as it may, all is sunshine once more. Sherborne Manor, a rich share in the great carack, a beautiful wife, a child; what more does this man want to make him happy? Why should he not settle down upon his lees, like ninety-nine out of the hundred, or at least try a peaceful and easy path toward more “praise and pudding?” The world answers, or his biographers answer for him, that he needs to reinstate himself in his mistress's affection; which is true or not, according as we take it. If they mean thereby, as most seem to mean, that it was a mere selfish and ambitious scheme by which to wriggle into court favour once more—why, let them mean it: we shall only observe, that the method which Raleigh took was a rather more

dangerous and self-sacrificing one than courtiers are wont to take. But if it be meant that Walter Raleigh spoke somewhat thus with himself,—“I have done a base and dirty deed, and have been punished for it. I have hurt the good name of a sweet woman who loves me, and whom I find to be a treasure; and God, instead of punishing me by taking her from me, has rendered me good for evil by giving her to me. I have justly offended a mistress whom I worship, and who, after having shown her just indignation, has returned me evil for good by giving me these fair lands of Sherborne, and only forbid me her presence till the scandal has passed away. She sees, and rewards my good in spite of my evil; and I, too, know that I am better than I have seemed; that I am fit for nobler deeds than seducing maids of honour. How can I prove that? How can I redeem my lost name for patriotism and public daring? How can I win glory for my wife, seek that men shall forget her past shame in the thought, ‘She is Walter Raleigh’s wife?’ How can I show my mistress that I loved her all along, that I acknowledge her bounty, her mingled justice and mercy? How can I render to God for all the benefits which He has done unto me? How can I do a deed the like of which was never done in England?”

If all this had passed through Walter Raleigh’s mind, what could we say of it, but that it was the natural and rational feeling of an honourable and right-hearted man, burning to rise to the level which he knew ought to be his, because he knew that he had fallen below it? And what right better way of testifying these feelings than to do what, as we shall see, Raleigh did? What right have we to impute to him lower motives than these, while we confess that these righteous and noble motives would have been natural and rational;—indeed, just what we flatter ourselves that we should have felt in his place? Of course, in his grand scheme, the thought came in, “And I shall win to myself honour, and glory, and wealth,”—of course. And pray, sir, does it not come in in your grand schemes; and yours; and yours? If you made a fortune to-morrow by some wisely and benevolently managed factory, would you forbid all speech of the said wisdom and benevolence, because you had intended that wisdom and benevolence should pay you a good percentage? Are Price’s Patent Candle Company the less honourable and worthy men, because their righteousness has proved to be a good investment? Away with cant, and let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone.

So Raleigh hits upon a noble project; a desperate one, true: but he will do it or die. He will leave pleasant Sherborne, and

the bosom of the beautiful bride, and the first-born son ; and all which to most makes life worth having, and which Raleigh enjoys more intensely (for he is a poet, and a man of strong nervous passions withal) than most men. But,—

“ I could not love thee, dear, so much,  
Loved I not honour more.”

And he will go forth to endure heat, hunger, fever, danger of death in battle, danger of the Inquisition, rack and stake, in search of El Dorado. What so strange in that? We have known half-a-dozen men who, in his case, and conscious of his powers, would have done the same from the same noble motive.

He begins prudently ; and sends a Devonshire man, Captain Whiddon, (probably one of the Whiddons of beautiful Chagford,) to spy out the Orinoco. He finds that the Spaniards are there already ; that Berreo, who has attempted El Dorado from the westward, starting from New Granada and going down the rivers, is trying to settle on the Orinoco mouth ; that he is hanging the poor natives, encouraging the Caribs to hunt them and sell them for slaves, imprisoning the Caciques to extort their gold, torturing, ravishing, kidnapping, and conducting himself as was usual among Spaniards of those days.

Raleigh's spirit is stirred within him. If “ Uncle Tom's Cabin ” excites our just wrath, how must the history of such things have excited Raleigh's, as he remembered that these Spaniards are as yet triumphant in iniquity, and as he remembered, too, that these same men are the sworn foes of England, her liberty, her Bible, and her queen? What a deed, to be beforehand with them for once! To dispossess them of one corner of that western world, where they have left no trace but blood and flame! He will go himself ; he will find El Dorado and its golden Emperor ; and, instead of conquering, plundering, and murdering him, as Cortez did Montezuma, and Pizarro Atakualpa, he will show him English strength, espouse his quarrel against the Spaniards ; make him glad to become Queen Elizabeth's vassal tributary, leave him perhaps a body guard of English veterans, perhaps colonize his country, and so at once avenge and protect the oppressed Indians, and fill the Queen's treasury with the riches of a land equal, if not superior, to Peru and Mexico.

Such is his dream ; vague, perhaps : but far less vague than those with which Cortez and Pizarro started, and succeeded. After a careful survey of the whole matter, we give it as our deliberate opinion, that Raleigh was more reasonable in his attempt, and had more fair evidence of its feasibility, than either

Cortez or Pizarro had for theirs. It is a bold assertion. If any reader doubts its truth, he cannot do better than to read the whole of the documents connected with the two successful, and the one unsuccessful, attempts at finding a golden kingdom. Let them read first Prescott's *Conquests at Mexico and Peru*, and then Schomburgk's edition of Raleigh's *Guiana*. They will at least confess, when they have finished, that truth is stranger than fiction.

Of Raleigh's credulity in believing in El Dorado, much has been said. We are sorry to find even so wise a man as Sir Richard Schomburgk, after bearing good testimony to Raleigh's wonderful accuracy about all matters which he had an opportunity of observing, using this term of credulity. We will do battle on that point even with Sir Richard, and ask by what right the word is used? First, Raleigh says nothing about El Dorado, (as every one is forced to confess,) but what Spaniard on Spaniard had been saying for fifty years. So the blame of credulity ought to rest with the Spaniards, from Philip von Hutten, Orellana, and George of Spires, upward to Berreo. But it rests really with no one. For nothing, if we will examine the documents, is told of the riches of El Dorado which had not been found to be true, and seen by the eyes of men still living, in Peru and Mexico. Not one tenth of America had been explored, and already two El Dorados had been found and conquered. What more rational than to suppose that there was a third, a fourth, a fifth, in the remaining eight tenths? The reports of El Dorado among the savages were just of the same kind as those by which Cortez and Pizarro hunted out Mexico and Peru, saving that they were far more widely spread, and confirmed by a succession of adventurers. We entreat readers to examine this matter, in Raleigh, Schomburgk, Humboldt, and Condamine, and judge for themselves. As for Hume's accusations, one passes them by as equally silly and shameless, only saying for the benefit of readers, that they have been refuted completely, by every one who has written since Hume's days: and to those who are induced to laugh at Raleigh for believing in Amazons, and "men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders," we can only answer thus.

About the Amazons, Raleigh told what he was told; what the Spaniards who went before him, and Condamine who came after him, were told; Humboldt thinks the story possibly founded on fact; and we are ready to say, that after reviewing all that has been said thereon, it does seem to us the simplest solution of the matter just to believe it true; to believe that there was, about his time, or a little before, somewhere about the upper Orinoco,

a warlike community of women, (Humboldt shows how likely such would be to spring up, where women flee from their male tyrants into the forests.) As for the fable which connected them with the lake Manoa, and the city of El Dorado, we can only answer, "If not true there and then, it is true elsewhere now;" for the Amazonian guards of the King of Dahomey at this moment, as all know, surpass in strangeness and in ferocity all that has been reported of the Orinocan viragos, and thus prove once more, that truth is stranger than fiction.

Beside; and here we stand stubborn, regardless of gibes and sneers: it is not yet proven that there was not in the sixteenth century, some rich and civilized kingdom like Peru or Mexico, in the interior of South America. Sir Richard Schomburgk has disproved the existence of Lake Parima: but it will take a long time, and more explorers than one, to prove that there are no ruins of ancient cities, such as Stephens stumbled on in Yucatan, still buried in the depths of the forests. Fifty years of ruin would suffice to wrap them in a leafy veil which would hide them from every one who did not literally run against them. Tribes would die out, or change place, (as the Atures, and many other great nations have done in those parts,) and every traditional record of them perish gradually, (for it is only gradually and lately that it has perished;) while if it be asked, What has become of the people themselves? the answer is, that when any race (like most of the American races in the sixteenth century) is in a dying state, it hardly needs war to thin it down, and reduce the remnant to savagery. Greater nations than El Dorado was even supposed to be, have vanished ere now, and left not a trace behind; and so may they. But enough of this. We leave the quarrel to that honest and patient warder of tourneys, Old Time, who will surely do right at last, and go on to the dog-headed worthies without necks, and long hair hanging down behind, who, as a cacique told Raleigh, that "they had of late years slain many hundreds of his father's people," and in whom even Humboldt was not always allowed (he says) to disbelieve, (so much for Hume's scoff at Raleigh as a liar,) one old cacique boasting to him that he had seen them with his own eyes. Humboldt's explanation is, that the Caribs, being the cleverest and strongest Indians, are also the most imaginative, and therefore, being fallen children of Adam, the greatest liars, and that they invented both El Dorado and the dog-heads out of pure wickedness. Be it so. But all lies crystallize round some nucleus of truth; and it really seems to us nothing very wonderful, if the story should be on the whole true, and that these worthies were in the habit of dressing themselves up, like foolish savages as they were, in the skins of the

Aguara dog, with what not of stuffing, and tails, and so forth, in order to astonish the weak minds of the Caribs, just as the Red Indians dress up in their feasts as bears, wolves, and deer, with fox tails, false bustles of bison skin, and so forth. There are plenty of traces of such foolish attempts at playing "bogy" in the history of savages even of our own Teutonic forefathers; and this we suspect to be the simple explanation of the whole mare's nest. As for Raleigh being a fool for believing it; the reasons he gives for believing it are very rational; the reasons Hume gives for calling him a fool rest merely on the story's being strange; on which grounds one might disbelieve most matters in heaven and earth, from one's own existence to what one sees in every drop of water under the microscope, yea, to the growth of every seed. The only sound proof that dog-headed men are impossible, is to be found in comparative anatomy, a science of which Hume knew no more than Raleigh, and which for one marvel it has destroyed, has revealed a hundred. We do not doubt, that if Raleigh had seen and described a kangaroo, especially its all but miraculous process of gestation, Hume would have called that a lie also: but we will waste no more time in proving that no man is so credulous as the unbeliever—the man who has such mighty and world-embracing faith in himself, that he makes his own little brain the measure of the universe. Let the dead bury their dead.

He sails for Guiana. The details of his voyage should be read at length. Everywhere they show the eye of a poet as well as of a man of science. He sees enough to excite his hopes more wildly than ever; he goes hundreds of miles up the Orinoco in an open boat, suffering every misery: but keeping up the hearts of his men, who cry out, "Let us go on, we care not how far." He makes friendship with the caciques, and enters into alliance with them on behalf of Queen Elizabeth against the Spaniards. Unable to pass the falls of the Caroli, and the rainy season drawing on, he returns, beloved and honoured by all the Indians, boasting that, during the whole time he was there, no woman was the worse for any man of his crew. Altogether, we know few episodes of history, so noble, righteous, and merciful, as this Guiana voyage. But he has not forgotten the Spaniards. At Trinidad he attacks and destroys (at the entreaty of the oppressed Indians) the new town of San José, takes Berreo prisoner, and delivers from captivity five caciques, whom Berreo kept bound in one chain, "basting their bodies with burning bacon," (an old trick of the Conquistadores,) to make them discover their gold. He tells them that he was "the servant of a queen who was the greatest cacique of the north,

and a virgin; who had more caciqui under her than there were trees on that island; that she was an enemy of the Castellani (Spaniards) in behalf of their tyranny and oppression, and that she delivered all such nations about her as were by them oppressed, and having freed all the coast of the northern world from their servitude, had sent me to free them also, and withal to defend the country of Guiana from their invasion and conquest." After which perfectly true and rational speech, he subjoins, (as we think equally honestly and rationally,) "I showed them her Majesty's picture, which they so admired and honoured, as it had been easy to have brought them idolators thereof."

This is one of the stock-charges against Raleigh, at which all biographers (except quiet, sensible Oldys, who, dull as he is, is far more fair and rational than most of his successors) break into virtuous shrieks of "flattery," "meanness," "adulation," "courtiership," and so forth. Mr. Napier must say a witty thing for once, and is of opinion that the Indians would have admired far more the picture of a "red monkey." Sir Richard Schomburgk (unfortunately for the red monkey theory,) though he quite agrees that Raleigh's flattery was very shocking, says, that from what he knows (and no man knows more) of Indian taste, they would have far preferred to the portrait which Raleigh showed them (not Mr. Napier's red monkey, but) such a picture as that at Hampton Court, in which Elizabeth is represented in a fantastic dress. Raleigh, it seems, must be made out a rogue at all risks, though by the most opposite charges. Mr. Napier is answered, however, by Sir Richard, and Sir Richard is answered, we think, by the plain fact, that, *of course*, Raleigh's portrait was exactly such a one as Sir Richard says they would have admired: a picture probably in a tawdry frame, representing Queen Bess, just as queens were always painted then, bedizened with "browches, pearls, and owches," satin and ruff, and probably with crown on head and sceptre in hand, made up as likely as not expressly for the purpose for which it was used. In the name of all simplicity and honesty, we ask, why is Raleigh to be accused of saying that the Indians admired Queen Elizabeth's *beauty*, when he never even hints at it? And why do all commentators deliberately forget the preceding paragraph, Raleigh's proclamation to the Indians, and the circumstances under which it was spoken? The Indians are being murdered, ravished, sold for slaves, basted with burning fat, and grand white men come like avenging angels, and in one day sweep their tyrants out of the land, restore them to liberty and life, and say to them, "A great Queen far across the seas has sent us to do this. Thousands of miles away she has heard of your misery, and taken pity on you; and if



you will be faithful to her she will love you, and deal justly with you, and protect you against these Spaniards who are devouring you as they have devoured all the Indians round you, and for a token of it—a sign that we tell you truth, and that there really is such a great Queen, who is the Indian's friend—here is the picture of her.” What wonder if the poor idolatrous creatures had fallen down and worshipped the picture (just as millions do that of the Virgin Mary, without a thousandth part as sound and practical reason) as that of a divine, all-knowing, all-merciful deliverer? As for its being the picture of a beautiful woman or not, they would never think of that. The fair complexion and golden hair would be a sign to them that she belonged to the mighty white people, even if there were no bedizenment of jewels and crowns over and above; and that would be enough for them. When will biographers learn to do common justice to their fellow-men, by exerting now and then some small amount of dramatic imagination, just sufficient to put themselves for a moment in the place of those to whom they write?

So ends his voyage: in which, he says, “from myself I have deserved no thanks, for I am returned a beggar and withered. But I might have bettered my poor estate if I had not only respected her Majesty's future honour and riches. It became not the former fortune in which I once lived to go journeys of pillage,” (pillage;) “and it had sorted ill with the offices of honour which, by her Majesty's grace, I hold this day in England, to run from cape to cape, and place to place, for the pillage of ordinary prizes.”

So speaks one whom it has been the fashion to consider as little better than a pirate, and that, too, in days when the noblest blood in England thought no shame (as indeed it was no shame) to enrich themselves with Spanish gold. But so it is throughout this man's life. If there be a nobler word than usual to be spoken, or a more wise word either, if there be a more chivalrous deed to be done, or a more prudent deed either, that word and that deed are pretty sure to be Walter Raleigh's.

But the blatant beast has been busy at home; and in spite of Chapman's heroical verses, he meets with little but cold looks. Never mind. If the world will not help to do the deed, he will do it by himself; and no time must be lost, for the Spaniards on their part will lose none. So, after six months, the faithful Key-mis sails again, again helped by the Lord High Admiral and Sir Robert Cecil. It is a hard race for one private man against the whole power and wealth of Spain; and the Spaniard has been beforehand with them, and reoccupied the country. They have fortified themselves at the mouth of the Caroli, so it is impossible

to get to the gold mines ; they are enslaving the wretched Indians, carrying off their women, intending to transplant some tribes, and to expel others, and arming cannibal tribes against the inhabitants. All is misery and rapine ; the scattered remnant comes asking piteously, why Raleigh does not come over to deliver them ? Have the Spaniards slain him, too ? Keymis comforts them as he best can ; hears of more gold mines, and gets back safe, a little to his own astonishment, for eight-and-twenty ships of war have been sent to Trinidad, to guard the entrance to El Dorado, not surely, as Keymis well says, "to keep us only from tobacco." A colony of five hundred persons is expected from Spain. The Spaniard is well aware of the richness of the prize, says Keymis, who all through shows himself a worthy pupil of his master. A careful, observant man he seems to have been, trained by that great example to overlook no fact, even the smallest. He brings home lists of rivers, towns, caciques, poison-herbs, words, what not ; he has fresh news of gold, spleen-stones, kidney-stones, and some fresh specimens : but be that as it may, he, "without going as far as his eyes can warrant, can promise Brazil-wood, honey, cotton, balsamum, and drugs, to defray charges." He would fain copy Raleigh's style, too, and, "whence his lamp had oil, borrow light also," "seasoning his unsavoury speech" with some of the "leaven of Raleigh's discourse." Which, indeed, he does even to little pedantries and attempts at classicality, and after professing that "himself and the remnant of his few years, he hath bequeathed wholly to Raleana, and his thoughts live only in that action," he rises into something like grandeur when he begins to speak of that ever-fertile subject, the Spanish cruelties to the Indians : "Doth not the cry of the poor succourless ascend unto the heavens ? Hath God forgotten to be gracious to the work of his own hands ? Or shall not his judgments in a day of visitation by the ministry of his chosen servant come upon these bloodthirsty butchers, like rain into a fleece of wool ?" Poor Keymis ! To us he is by no means the least beautiful figure in this romance ; a faithful, diligent, loving man, unable, as the event proved, to do great deeds by himself, but inspired with a great idea by contact with a mightier spirit, to whom he clings through evil report and poverty and prison and the scaffold, careless of self to the last, and ends tragically, "faithful unto death" in the most awful sense.

But here remark two things : first, that Cecil believes in Raleigh's Guiana scheme ; next, that the occupation of Orinoco by the Spaniards, which Raleigh is accused of having concealed from James in 1617, has been, ever since 1595, matter of the most public notoriety.

Raleigh has not been idle in the meanwhile. It has been found necessary after all to take the counsel which he gave in vain in 1588, to burn the Spanish fleet in harbour; and the heroes are gone down to Cadiz fight, and in one day of thunder-storm the Sevastopol of Spain. Here, as usual, we find Raleigh, though in an inferior command, leading the whole by virtue of superior wisdom. When the good Lord Admiral will needs be cautious, and land the soldiers first, it is Raleigh who persuades him to force his way into the harbour, to the joy of all captains. When hot-head Essex, casting his hat into the sea for joy, shouts *Intra-mos*, and will in at once, Raleigh's time for caution comes, and he persuades them to wait till the next morning, and arrange the order of attack. That, too, Raleigh has to do, and moreover to lead it; and lead it he does. Under the forts are seventeen galleys; the channel is "scoured" with cannon: but on holds Raleigh's Warspite, far ahead of the rest, through the thickest of the fire, answering forts and galleys "with a blow of the trumpet to each piece, disdaining to shoot at those esteemed dreadful monsters." For there is a nobler enemy ahead. Right in front lie the galleons; and among them the Philip and the Andrew, two who boarded the Revenge. This day there shall be a reckoning for the blood of his old friend; he is "resolved to be revenged for the Revenge, Sir Richard Grenville's fatal ship, or second her with his own life;" and well he keeps his vow. Three hours pass of desperate valour, during which, so narrow is the passage, only seven English ships, thrusting past each other, all but quarrelling in their noble rivalry, engage the whole Spanish fleet of fifty-seven sail, and destroy it utterly. The Philip and Thomas burn themselves despairing. The English boats save the Andrew and Matthew. One passes over the hideous record. "If any man," says Raleigh, "had a desire to see hell itself, it was there most lively figured." Keymis's prayer is answered in part, even while he writes it; and the cry of the Indians has not ascended in vain before the throne of God!

The soldiers are landed; the city stormed and sacked, not without mercies and courtesies, though, to women and unarmed folk, which win the hearts of the vanquished, and live till this day in well-known ballads. The Flemings begin a "merciless slaughter." Raleigh and the Lord Admiral beat them off. Raleigh is carried on shore for an hour with a splinter wound in the leg, which lames him for life: but returns on board in an hour in agony; for there is no admiral left to order the fleet, and all are run headlong to the sack. In vain he attempts to get together sailors the following morning, and attack the Indian fleet in Porto Real Roads; within twenty-four hours it is burnt

by the Spaniards themselves; and all Raleigh wins is no booty, a lame leg, and the honour of having been the real author of a victory even more glorious than that of 1588.

So he returns, having written to Cecil the highest praises of Essex, whom he treats with all courtesy and fairness; which those who will may call cunning: we have as good a right to say that he was returning good for evil. There were noble qualities in Essex. All the world gave him credit for them, and far more than he deserved; why should not Raleigh have been just to him, even have conceived, like the rest of the world, high hopes of him, till he himself destroyed these hopes? For now storms are rising fast. On their return Cecil is in power. He has been made Secretary of State instead of Bodley, Essex's pet, and the spoilt child begins to sulk. On which matter, we are sorry to say, Mr. Tytler and others talk much unwisdom, about Essex's being too "open and generous, &c. for a courtier," and "presuming on his mistress' passion for him;" and represent Elizabeth as desiring to be thought beautiful, and "affecting at sixty, the sighs, loves, tears, and tastes, of a girl of sixteen,"—and so forth. It is really time to get rid of some of this fulsome talk, culled from such triflers as Osborne, if not from the darker and fouler sources of Parsons and the Jesuit slanderers, which we meet with a flat denial. There is simply no proof. She in love with Essex or Cecil? Yes, as a mother with a son. Were they not the children of her dearest and most faithful servants, men who had lived heroic lives for her sake? What wonder if she fancied that she saw the fathers in the sons? They had been trained under her eye. What wonder if she fancied that they could work as their fathers worked before them? And what shame if her childless heart yearned over them with unspeakable affection, and longed in her old age to lay her hands upon the shoulders of those two young men, and say to England, "Behold the children which God, and not the flesh, has given me?" Most strange it is, too, that women, who ought at least to know a woman's heart, have been especially forward in publishing these stupid scandals, and sullyng their pages by retailing prurient slander against such a one as Queen Elizabeth.

But to return. Raleigh attaches himself to Cecil; and he has good reason. Cecil is the cleverest man in England, saving himself. He has trusted and helped him, too, in two Guiana voyages; so the connection is one of gratitude as well as prudence. We know not whether he helped him in the third Guiana voyage in the same year, under Captain Berry, (a north Devon man, from Grenville's country,) who found a mighty folk, who were "something pleasant, having drunk much that day," and

carried bows with golden handles ; but failed in finding the Lake Parima, and so came home.

Raleigh's first use of his friendship with Cecil, is to reconcile him, to the astonishment of the world, with Essex, alleging how much good may grow by it ; for now, "the Queen's continual unquietness will grow to contentment." That, too, those who will may call policy. We have as good a right to call it the act of a wise and faithful subject, and to say, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." He has his reward for it, in full restoration to the Queen's favour ; he deserves it. He proves himself once more worthy of power, and it is given to him. Then there is to be a second great expedition ; but this time its aim is the Azores. Philip, only saddened by the loss at Cadiz, is preparing a third armament for the invasion of England and Ireland, and it is said to lie at the islands to protect the Indian fleet. Raleigh has the victualling of the land-forces, and like every thing else he takes in hand, "it is very well done." Lord Howard declines the chief command, and it is given to Essex. Raleigh is to be rear-admiral.

By the time they reach the Azores, Essex has got up a foolish quarrel against Raleigh for disrespect in having staid behind to bring up some stragglers. But when no armada is to be found at the Azores, Essex has after all to ask Raleigh what he shall do next. Conquer the Azores, says Raleigh, and the thing is agreed on. Raleigh and Essex are to attack Fayal. Essex sails away before Raleigh has watered. Raleigh follows as fast as he can, and at Fayal finds no Essex. He must water there, then and at once. His own veterans want him to attack forthwith, for the Spaniards are fortifying fast ; but he will wait for Essex. Still no Essex comes. Raleigh attempts to water, is defied, finds himself "in for it," and takes the island out of hand in the most masterly fashion, to the infuriation of Essex. Good Lord Howard patches up the matter, and the hot-headed coxcomb is once more pacified. They go on to Graciosa, where Essex's weakness of will again comes out, and he does not take the island. Three rich caracks, however, are picked up. "Though we shall be little the better for them," says Raleigh privately to Sir Arthur Gorges, his faithful captain, "yet I am heartily glad for our General's sake ; because they will in great measure give content to her Majesty, so that there may be no repining against this poor Lord for the expense of the voyage."

Raleigh begins to see that Essex is only to be pitied that the voyage is not over likely to end well ; but he takes it, in spite of ill-usage, as a kind-hearted man should. Again Essex makes a fool of himself. They are to steer one way in order to interrupt

the Plate-fleet. Essex having agreed to the course pointed out, alters his course on a fancy ; then alters it a second time, though the hapless Monson, with the whole Plate-fleet in sight, is hanging out lights, firing guns, and shrieking vainly for the General, who is gone on a new course, in which he might have caught the fleet after all, in spite of his two mistakes, but that he chooses to go a round-about way instead of a short one ; and away goes the whole fleet safe, save one carack, which runs itself on shore and burns, and the game is played out, and lost.

All want Essex to go home as the season is getting late : but the wilful and weak man will linger still, and while he is hovering to the south, Philip's armament has sailed from the Groyne, on the undefended shores of England, and only God's hand saves us from the effects of Essex's folly. A third time the armadas of Spain are overwhelmed by the avenging tempests, and Essex returns to disgrace, having proved himself at once intemperate and incapable. Even in coming home there is confusion, and Essex is all but lost on the Bishop and Clerks, by Scilly, in spite of the warnings of Raleigh's sailing-master "Old Broadbent," who is so exasperated at the general stupidity that he wants Raleigh to leave Essex and his squadron to get out of their own scrape as they can.

Essex goes off to salt at Wanstead ; but Vere excuses him, and in a few days he comes back, and will needs fight good Lord Howard for being made Earl of Nottingham for his services against the Armada, and at Cadiz. Balked of this, he begins laying the blame of the failure at the Azores on Raleigh. Let the spoilt naughty boy take care ; even that "admirable temper" for which Raleigh is famed, may be worn out at last.

These years are Raleigh's noon—stormy enough at best, yet brilliant. There is a pomp about him, outward and inward, which is terrible to others, dangerous to himself. One has gorgeous glimpses of that grand Durham House of his, with its carvings and its antique marbles, armorial escutcheons, "beds with green silk hangings and legs like dolphins, overlaid with gold ;" and the man himself, tall, beautiful, and graceful, perfect alike in body and in mind, walking to and fro, his beautiful wife upon his arm, his noble boy beside his knee, in his "white satin doublet embroidered with pearls, and a great chain of pearls about his neck," lording it among the lords with "an awfulness and ascendancy above other mortals," for which men say that "his næve is, that he is damnable proud ;" and no wonder. The reduced squire's younger son has gone forth to conquer the world ; and he fancies, poor fool, that he has conquered it, just as it really has conquered him ; and he will stand now on his blood and his pedigree, (no

bad one either,) and all the more stiffly because puppies like Lord Oxford, who instead of making their fortunes have squandered them, call him "jack and upstart," and make impertinent faces while the queen is playing the virginals, about "how when jacks go up, heads go down." Proud? No wonder if the man be proud. "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built?" And yet all the while he has the most affecting consciousness that all this is not God's will, but the will of the flesh; that the house of fame is not the house of God; that its floor is not the rock of ages, but the sea of glass mingled with fire, which may crack beneath him any moment, and let the nether flame burst up. He knows that he is living in a splendid lie; that he is not what God meant him to be. He longs to flee away and be at peace. It is to this period, not to his death-hour, that "The Lie" belongs; \* saddest of poems, with its melodious contempt and life-weariness. All is a lie—court, church, statesmen, courtiers, wit and science, town and country, all are shams; the days are evil; the canker is at the root of all things; the old heroes are dying one by one; the Elizabethan age is rotting down, as all human things do, and nothing is left but to bewail with Spenser "The Ruins of Time;" the glory and virtue which have been—the greater glory and virtue which might be even now, if men would but arise and repent, and work righteousness, as their fathers did before them. But no. Even to such a world as this he will cling, and flaunt it about as captain of the guard in the Queen's progresses and masques and pageants, with sword-belt studded with diamonds and rubies, or at tournaments, in armour of solid silver, and a gallant train with orange-tawny feathers, provoking puppy Essex to bring in a far larger train in the same colours, and swallow up Raleigh's pomp in his own, so achieving that famous "feather-triumph" by which he gains little but bad blood and a good jest. For Essex is no better tilter than he is general; and having "run very ill" in his orange-tawny, comes next day in green, and runs still worse, and yet is seen to be the same cavalier; whereon a spectator shrewdly observes, that he changed his colours "that it may be reported that there was one in green who ran worse than he in orange-tawny." But enough of these toys, while God's handwriting is upon the wall above all heads.

Raleigh knows that the handwriting is there. The spirit which drove him forth to Virginia and Guiana is fallen asleep: but he longs for Sherborne and quiet country life, and escapes thither during Essex's imprisonment, taking Cecil's son with him, and writes as only he can write, about the shepherd's peaceful

\* It is to be found in a MS. of 1596.

joys, contrasted with "courts" and "masques" and "proud towers."—

"Here are no false entrapping baits  
 Too hasty for too hasty fates,  
 Unless it be  
 The fond credulity  
 Of silly fish, that worldling who still look  
 Upon the bait, but never on the hook;  
 Nor envy, unless among  
 The birds, for prize of their sweet song.

"Go! let the diving negro seek  
 For pearls hid in some forlorn creek,  
 We all pearls scorn,  
 Save what the dewy morn  
 Congeals upon some little spire of grass,  
 Which careless shepherds beat down as they pass;  
 And gold ne'er here appears  
 Save what the yellow Ceres bears."

Tragic enough are the after scenes of Raleigh's life; but most tragic of all are these scenes of vainglory, in which he sees the better part, and yet chooses the worse, and pours out his self-discontent in song which proves the fount of delicacy and beauty which lies pure and bright beneath the gaudy artificial crust. What might not this man have been! And he knows that too. The stately rooms of Durham House pall on him, and he delights to hide up in his little study among his books and his chemical experiments, and smoke his silver pipe, and look out on the clear Thames and the green Surrey hills, and dream about Guiana and the Tropics; or to sit in the society of antiquaries with Selden and Cotton, Camden and Stow; or in his own Mermaid club, with Ben Jonson, Fletcher, Beaumont, and at last with Shakspeare's self, to hear and utter

"Words that have been  
 So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,  
 As if that every one from whom they came  
 Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest." \*

Any thing to forget the handwriting on the wall, which will not be forgotten.

But he will do all the good which he can meanwhile, nevertheless. He will serve God and Mammon. So complete a man will surely be able to do both. Unfortunately the thing is impossible, as he discovers too late; but he certainly goes as near success in the attempt as ever man did. Everywhere we find him doing justly, and loving mercy. Wherever this man steps he leaves his footprint ineffaceably in deeds of benevolence. For one year

\* Beaumont on the Mermaid Club; Letter to B. Jonson.



only, it seems, he is governor of Jersey: yet to this day, it is said, the islanders honour his name, only second to that of Duke Rollo, as their great benefactor, the founder of their Newfoundland trade. In the west country he is "as a king," "with ears and mouth always open to hear and deliver their grievances, feet and hands ready to go and work their redress." The tin merchants have become usurers "of fifty in the hundred." Raleigh works till he has put down their "abominable and cut-throat dealing." There is a burdensome west-country tax on curing fish; Raleigh works till it is revoked. In parliament he is busy with liberal measures, always before his generation. He puts down a foolish act for compulsory sowing of hemp, in a speech on the freedom of labour, worthy of the nineteenth century. He argues against raising the subsidy from the three pound men—"Call you this, Mr. Francis Bacon, *par jugum* when a poor man pays as much as a rich?" He is equally rational and spirited against the exportation of ordnance to the enemy; and when the question of abolishing monopolies is mooted he has his wise word. He too is a monopolist of tin, as Lord Warden of the Stannaries. But he has so wrought as to bring good out of evil; for before the granting of his patent, let the price of tin be never so high, the poor workman never had but two shillings a week; yet now, so has he extended and organized the tin-works, that any man who will can find work, and, be tin at what price soever, have four shillings a week truly paid. . . . "Yet if all others may be repealed, I will give my consent as freely to the cancelling of this, as any member of this house." Most of the monopolies were repealed: but we do not find that Raleigh's was among them. Why should it be if its issue was more tin, and full work, and double wages? In all things this man approves himself faithful in his generation. His sins are not against man, but against God; such as the world thinks no sins; and hates them, not from morality, but from envy.

In the meanwhile, the evil which, so Spenser had prophesied, only waited Raleigh's death, breaks out in his absence, and Ireland is all aflame with Tyrone's rebellion. Raleigh is sent for. He will not accept the post of Lord Deputy, and go to put it down. Perhaps he does not expect fair play as long as Essex is at home. Perhaps he knows too much of the common weal, or rather common woe, and thinks that what is crooked cannot be made straight. Perhaps he is afraid to lose by absence his ground at court. Would that he had gone, for Ireland's sake and his own. However, it must not be. Ormond is recalled and Knolles shall be sent; but Essex will have none but Sir George Carew; whom, Naunton says, he hates, and wishes to oust from

court. He and Elizabeth argue it out. He turns his back on her, and she gives him (or does not give him, for one has found so many of these racy anecdotes vanish on inspection into simple wind, that one believes none of them) a box on the ear; which if she did, she did the most wise, just, and practical thing which she could do with such a puppy. He clasps his hand (or does not) to his sword—"He would not have taken it from Henry the VIII.," and is turned out forthwith. In vain Egerton, the lord keeper, tries to bring him to reason. He storms insanely. Every one on earth is wrong but he; every one is conspiring against him; he talks of "Solomon's fool" too. Had he read the Proverbs a little more closely, he might have left the said fool alone, as being a too painfully exact likeness of himself. It ends by his being worsted, and Raleigh rising higher than ever. We never could see why Raleigh should be represented as henceforth becoming Essex's "avowed enemy," save on the ground that all good men are and ought to be the enemies of bad men, when they see them about to do harm, and to ruin the country. Essex is one of the many persons upon whom this age has lavished a quantity of maudlin sentimentality, which suits oddly enough with its professions of impartiality. But there is an impartiality which ends in utter injustice, which, by saying carelessly to every quarrel, "Both are right, and both are wrong," leaves only the impression that all men are wrong, and ends by being unjust to every one. So has Elizabeth and Essex's quarrel been treated. There was some evil in Essex; therefore Elizabeth was a fool for liking him. There was some good in Essex; therefore Elizabeth was cruel in punishing him. This is the sort of slipshod dilemma by which Elizabeth is proved to be wrong, even while Essex is confessed to be wrong too; while the patent facts of the case are, that Elizabeth bore with him as long as she could, and a great deal longer than any one else could. Why Raleigh should be accused of helping to send Essex into Ireland, we do not know. Camden confesses (at the same time that he gives a hint of the kind) that Essex would let no one go but himself. And if this was his humour, one can hardly wonder at Cecil and Raleigh, as well as Elizabeth, bidding the man begone and try his hand at government, and be filled with the fruit of his own devices. He goes; does nothing; or rather worse than nothing; for in addition to the notorious ill-management of the whole matter, we may fairly say that he killed Elizabeth. She never held up her head again after Tyrone's rebellion. Elizabeth still clings to him, changing her mind about him every hour, and at last writes him such a letter as he deserves. He has had power, money, men, such as no one ever

had before, why has he done nothing but bring England to shame? He comes home frantically (the story of his bursting into the dressing-room rests on no good authority) with a party of friends at his heels, leaving Ireland to take care of itself. Whatever entertainment he met with from the fond old woman, he met with the coldness which he deserved from Raleigh and Cecil. Who can wonder? What had he done to deserve aught else? But he all but conquers; and Raleigh takes to his bed in consequence, sick of the whole matter; as one would have been inclined to do one's self. He is examined and arraigned; writes a maudlin letter to Elizabeth, of which Mr. Tytler says, that it "says little for the heart which could resist it;" another instance of the strange self-contradictions into which his brains will run. In one page, forsooth, Elizabeth is a fool for listening to these pathetic "love letters;" in the next page she is hard-hearted for not listening to them. Poor thing! Do what she would she found it hard enough to please all parties while alive; must she be condemned over and above *in æternum* to be wrong whatsoever she does? Why is she not to have the benefit of the plain, straightforward interpretation which would be allowed to any other human being, namely, that she approved of such fine talk, as long as it was proved to be sincere by fine deeds; but that when these were wanting, the fine talk became hollow, fulsome, a fresh cause of anger and disgust? Yet still she weeps over him when he falls sick, as any mother would; and would visit him if she could with honour. But a "malignant influence counteracts every disposition to relent." No doubt, a man's own folly, passion, and insolence, has generally a very malignant influence on his fortunes, and he may consider himself a very happy man if all that befalls to him thereby is what befell Essex, deprivation of his offices, and imprisonment in his own house. He is forgiven after all; but the spoilt child refuses his bread and butter without sugar. What is the pardon to him without a renewal of his license of sweet wines? Because he is not to have that, the Queen's "conditions are as crooked as her carcase." Flesh and blood can stand no more, and ought to stand no more. After all that Elizabeth has been to him, that speech is the speech of a brutal and ungrateful nature. And such he shows himself to be in the hour of trial. What if the patent for sweet wines is refused him? Such gifts were meant as the reward of merit; and what merit has he to show? He never thinks of that. Blind with fury he begins to intrigue with James, and slanders to him, under colour of helping his succession, all whom he fancies opposed to him. What is worse, he intrigues with Tyrone about bringing over an army of Irish Papists to help

him against the Queen, and this at the very time that his sole claim to popularity rests on his being the leader of the Puritans. A man must have been very far gone, either in baseness, or blind fury, who represents Raleigh to James as dangerous to the commonweal, on account of his great power in the west of England and Jersey, "places fit for the Spaniard to land in." Cobham, as warden of the Cinque ports, is included in his slander; and both he and Raleigh will hear of it again.

Some make much of a letter, supposed to be written about this time by Raleigh to Cecil, bidding Cecil keep down Essex, even crush him, now that he is once down. We do not happen to think the letter to be Raleigh's. His initials are subscribed to it; but not his name; and the style is not like his. But as for seeing "unforgiveness and revenge in it," whose soever it may be, we hold and say there is not a word which can bear such a construction. It is a dark letter: but about a dark matter, and a dark man. It is a worldly and expeditious letter, appealing to low motives in Cecil, though for a right end; such a letter, in short, as statesmen are wont to write now-a-days. If Raleigh wrote it, God punished him for doing so speedily enough. He does not punish statesmen now-a-days for such letters; perhaps because He does not love them as well as Raleigh. But as for the letter itself. Essex is called a "tyrant," because he had shown himself one. The Queen is to "hold Bothwell," because "while she hath him, he will even be the canker of her estate and safety," and the writer has "seen the last of her good days, and of ours, after his liberty." On which accounts, Cecil is not to be deterred from doing what is right and necessary "by any fear of after-revenges," and "conjectures from causes remote," as many a stronger instance (given) will prove, but "look to the present," and so "do wisely." There is no real cause for Cecil's fear. If the man who has now lost a power which he ought never to have had, be now kept down, neither he nor his son will ever be able to harm the man who has kept him at his just level. What "revenge, selfishness, and craft," there can be in all this, it is difficult to see, as difficult as to see why Essex is to be talked of as "unfortunate," and the blame of his frightful end thrown on every one but himself: or why Mr. Tytler finds it unnecessary to pursue his "well-known story further," after having proved Raleigh to be all on a sudden turned into a fiend: unless, indeed, it was inconvenient to bring before the reader's mind the curious and now forgotten fact, that Essex's end was brought on by his having chosen one Sunday morning for breaking out into open rebellion, for the purpose of seizing the city of London and the Queen's person, and compelling her to make

him lord and master of the British isles ; in which attempt he and his fought with the civil and military authorities, till artillery had to be brought up, and many lives were lost. Such little escapades may be pardonable enough in "noble and unfortunate" earls : but our readers will perhaps agree that if they chose to try a similar experiment, they could not complain if they found themselves shortly after in company with Mr. Mitchell at Spike Island, or Mr. Oxford in Bedlam. But those were days in which such Sabbath amusements on the part of one of the most important and powerful personages of the realm could not be passed over so lightly, especially when accompanied by severe loss of life ; and as there existed in England certain statutes concerning rebellion and high treason, which must needs have been framed for some purpose or other, the authorities of England may be excused for fancying that they bore some reference to such acts as that which the noble and unfortunate earl had just committed, as wantonly, selfishly, and needlessly, it seems to us, as ever did man on earth.

We may seem to jest too much upon so solemn a matter as the life of a human being : but if we are not to touch the popular talk about Essex in this tone, we can only touch it in a far sterner one ; and if ridicule is forbidden, express disgust instead.

We have entered into this matter of Essex somewhat at length, because on it is founded one of the mean slanders from which Raleigh never completely recovered. The very mob who, after Raleigh's death, made him a Protestant martyr, (as, indeed he was,) soon looked upon Essex in the same light, hated Raleigh as the cause of his death, and accused him of glutting his eyes with Essex's misery, puffing tobacco out of a window, and what not,—all mere inventions, as Raleigh declared upon the scaffold. He was there in his office, as captain of the guard, and could do no less than be there. Essex, it is said, asked for Raleigh just before he died : but Raleigh had withdrawn, the mob murmuring. What had Essex to say to him ? Was it, asks Oldys, shrewdly enough, to ask him pardon for the wicked slanders which he had been pouring into James's credulous and cowardly ears ? We will hope so, and leave poor Essex to God and the mercy of God, asserting once more, that no man ever brought ruin and death more thoroughly on himself by his own act, needing no imaginary help downwards from Raleigh, Cecil, or other human being.

And now begins the fourth act of this strange tragedy. Queen Elizabeth dies ; and dies of grief. It has been the fashion to attribute to her, we know not what, remorse for Essex's death ;

and the foolish and false tale about Lady Nottingham and the ring has been accepted as history. The fact seems to be that she never really held up her head after Burleigh's death. She could not speak of him without tears; forbade his name to be mentioned in the Council. No wonder; never had mistress a better servant. For nearly half a century have these two noble souls loved each other, trusted each other, worked with each other; and God's blessing has been on their deeds; and now the faithful God-fearing man is gone to his reward; and she is growing old, and knows that the ancient fire is dying out in her; and who will be to her what he was? Buckhurst is a good man, and one of her old pupils; and she makes him Lord Treasurer in Raleigh's place: but beyond that, all is dark. "I am a miserable forlorn woman, there is none about me that I can trust!" She sees through false Cecil; through false Henry Howard. Essex has proved himself worthless, and pays the penalty of his sins. Men are growing worse than their fathers. Spanish gold is bringing in luxury and sin. The ten last years of her reign are years of decadence, profligacy, falsehood; and she cannot but see it. Tyrone's rebellion is the last drop which fills the cup. After fifty years of war, after a drain of money all but fabulous, expended on keeping Ireland quiet, the volcano bursts forth again just as it seemed extinguished, more fiercely than ever, and the whole work has to be done over again, when there is neither time, nor a man to do it. And ahead, what hope is there for England? Who will be her successor? She knows in her heart that it will be James: but she cannot bring herself to name him. To bequeathe the fruit of all her labours to a tyrant, a liar, and a coward! (for she knows the man but too well.) It is too hideous to be faced. This is the end, then? "Oh that I were a milke maide, with a paile upon mine arm!" But it cannot be. It never could have been; and she must endure to the end.

"Therefore I hated life; yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun; because I should leave it to the man that shall be after me. And who knows whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have showed myself wise, in wisdom, and knowledge, and equity. . . . Vanity of vanities, and vexation of spirit!" And so, with a whole book of Ecclesiastes written on that mighty heart, the old lioness coils herself up in her lair, refuses food, and dies. We know few passages in the world's history so tragic as that death.

Why did she not trust Raleigh? First, because Raleigh (as we have seen) was not the sort of man whom she needed. He

was not the steadfast single-eyed man of business ; but the many-sided genius. Beside, he was the ringleader of the war-party. And she, like Burleigh before his death, was tired of the war ; saw that it was demoralizing England ; was anxious for peace. Raleigh would not see that. It was to him a divine mission which must be fulfilled at all risks. As long as the Spaniards were opposing the Indians, conquering America, there must be no peace. Both were right from their own point of view. God ordered the matter from a third point of view ; for His wrath was gone out against this people.

Beside, we know that Essex, and after him Cecil and Henry Howard, have been slandering Raleigh basely to James. Can we doubt that the same poison had been poured into Elizabeth's ears ? She might distrust Cecil too much to act upon what he said of Raleigh ; and yet distrust Raleigh too much to put the kingdom into his hands. However, she is gone now, and a new king has arisen, who knoweth not Joseph.

James comes down to take possession. Insolence, luxury, and lawlessness mark his first steps on his going amid the adulations of a fallen people ; he hangs a poor wretch without trial ; wastes his time in hunting by the way ;—a bad and base man, whose only redeeming point (and it is a great one) is his fondness for little children. But that will not make a king. The wise elders take counsel together. Raleigh and good Judge Fortescue are for requiring conditions from the new comer, and constitutional liberty makes its last stand among the men of Devon, the old county of warriors, discoverers, and statesmen, of which Queen Bess had said, that the men of Devon were her right hand. But in vain ; James has his way ; Cecil and Henry Howard are willing enough to give it him. Let their memory be accursed ; for never did two bad men more deliberately betray the freedom of their country. So down comes Rehoboam, taking counsel with the young men, and makes answer to England, " My father chastised you with whips ; but I will chastise you with scorpions." He takes a base pleasure, shocking to the French ambassador, in sneering at the memory of Queen Elizabeth ; a perverse delight in honouring every rascal whom she had punished. Tyrone must come to England to be received into favour, maddening the soul of honest Sir John Harrington. Essex is christened " my martyr," apparently for having plotted treason against Elizabeth with Tyrone. Raleigh is received with a pun—" By my soul, I have heard rawly of thee, mon ;" and when the great nobles and gentlemen come to Court with their retinues, James tries to hide his dread of them in an insult, pooh poohs their splendour, and says, " he doubts not that he should have been

able to win England for himself, had they kept him out." Raleigh answers boldly, "Would God that had been put to the trial." "Why?" "Because then you would have known your friends from your foes." "A reason" (says old Aubrey) "never forgotten or forgiven." Aubrey is no great authority; but the speech smacks so of Raleigh's offhand daring, that one cannot but believe it, as one does also the other story of his having advised the lords to keep out James and erect a republic. Not that he could have been silly enough to propose such a thing seriously at that moment; but that he most likely, in his offhand way, may have said, "Well, if we are to have this man in without conditions, better a republic at once." Which, if he did say, he said what the next forty years proved to be strictly true. However, he will go on his own way as best he can. If James will give him a loan, he and the rest of the old heroes will join, fit out a fleet against Spain, and crush her, now that she is tottering and impoverished, once and for ever. Alas! James has no stomach for fighting, cannot abide the sight of a drawn sword—would not provoke Spain for the world—why, they might send Jesuits and assassinate him; and as for the money, he wants that for very different purposes. So the answer which he makes to Raleigh's proposal of war against Spain, is to send him to the Tower, and sentence him to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, on a charge of plotting with Spain.

Having read, we believe, nearly all that has been written on the subject of this dark "Cobham plot," we find but one thing come brightly out of the infinite confusion and mystery, which will never be cleared up till the day of judgment, and that is, Raleigh's innocence. He, and all England, and the very man who condemned him, knew that he was innocent. Every biographer is forced to confess this, more or less, in spite of all efforts to be what is called "impartial." So we shall waste no words upon the matter, only observing, that whereas Raleigh is said to have slandered Cecil to James, in the same way that Cecil had slandered him, one passage of this Cobham plot disproves utterly such a story, which, after all, rests (as far as we know) only on hearsay, being "spoken of in a manuscript written by one Buck, secretary to Chancellor Egerton." For in writing to his own wife, in the expectation of immediate death, Raleigh speaks of Cecil in a very different tone, as one in whom he trusted most, and who has left him in the hour of need. We ask the reader to peruse that letter, and say whether any man would write thus, with death and judgment before his face, of one whom he knew that he had betrayed; or, indeed, of one who he knew had betrayed him. We see no reason to doubt that Raleigh kept good faith



with Cecil, and that he was ignorant, till after his trial, that Cecil was the manager of the whole plot against him, and as accomplished a villain as one meets with in history.

We do not care to enter into the tracasseries of this Cobham plot. Every one knows them; no one can unravel them. To us the moral and spiritual significance of the fact is more interesting than all questions as to Cobham's lies, Brooke's lies, Aremberg's lies, Coke's lies, James's lies:—Let the dead bury their dead. It is the broad aspect of the thing which is so wonderful to us; to see how

“The eagle, towering in his pride of place,  
Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.”

This is the man who six months ago, perhaps, thought that he and Cecil were to rule England together, while all else were the puppets whose wires they pulled. “The Lord hath taken him up, and dashed him down:” and by such means, too, and on such a charge! Betraying his country to Spain! Absurd—incredible. He would laugh it to scorn; but it is bitter earnest. There is no escape. True or false, he sees that his enemies will have his head. It is maddening; a horrible nightmare. He cannot bear it; he cannot face (so he writes to that beloved wife) the scorn, the taunts, the loss of honour, the cruel words of lawyers. He stabs himself. Read that letter of his, written after the mad blow had been struck; it is sublime from intensity of agony. The way in which the chastisement was taken proves how utterly it was needed, ere that proud, success-swollen, world-entangled heart could be brought right with God.

And it is brought right. The wound is not mortal. He comes slowly to a better mind, and takes his doom like a man. That first farewell to his wife was written out of hell. The second rather out of heaven. Read it, too, and compare; and then see how the Lord has been working upon this great soul: infinite sadness, infinite tenderness and patience, and trust in God for himself and his poor wife: “God is my witness, it was for you and yours that I desired life; but it is true that I disdain myself for begging it. For know, dear wife, that your son is the son of a true man, and one who, in his own respect, despiseth death and all his ugly and misshapen forms. . . . The everlasting, powerful, infinite, and omnipotent God, who is goodness itself, the true life and light, keep thee and thine, have mercy upon me, and teach me to forgive my persecutors and accusers, and send us to meet in his glorious kingdom.”

Is it come to this, then? Is he fit to die, at last? Then he

is fit to live ; and live he shall. The tyrants have not the heart to carry out their own crime, and Raleigh shall be respited.

But not pardoned. No more return for him into that sinful world, where he flaunted on the edge of the precipice, and dropped heedless over it. God will hide him in the secret place of his presence, and keep him in his tabernacle from the strife of tongues ; and a new life shall begin for him ; a wiser, perhaps a happier, than he has known since he was a little lad in the farm-house in pleasant Devon far away. On the 15th of December he enters the Tower. Little dreams he that for more than twelve years those doleful walls would be his home. Lady Raleigh obtains leave to share his prison with him, and, after having passed ten years without a child, brings him a boy to comfort the weary heart. The child of sorrow is christened Carew. Little think those around him what strange things that child will see before his hairs be gray. She has her maid, and he his three servants ; some five or six friends are allowed "to repair to him at convenient times." He has a chamber-door always open into the lieutenant's garden, where he "has converted a little hen-house into a still-room, and spends his time all the day in distillation." The next spring a grant is made of his goods and chattels, forfeited by attainder, to trustees named by himself, for the benefit of his family. So far, so well : or, at least, not as ill as it might be : but there are those who cannot leave the caged lion in peace.

Sanderson, who had married his niece, instead of paying up the arrears which he owes on the wine and other offices, brings in a claim of £2,000. But the rogue meets his match, and finds himself, at the end of a lawsuit, in prison for debt. Greater rogues, however, will have better fortune, and break through the law cobwebs which have stopped a poor little fly like Sanderson. For Carr, afterward Lord Somerset, casts his eyes on the Sherborne land. It has been included in the conveyance, and should be safe ; but there are others who, by instigation surely of the devil himself, have had eyes to see a flaw in the deed. Sir John Popham is appealed to. Who could doubt the result ? He answers, that there is no doubt that the words were omitted by the inattention of the engrosser—(Carew Raleigh says that but one single word was wanting, which word was found notwithstanding in the paper-book, *i. e.*, the draft ;) but that the word not being there, the deed is worthless, and the devil may have his way. To Carr, who has nothing of his own, it seems reasonable enough to help himself to what belongs to others ; and James gives him the land. Raleigh writes to him, gently, gracefully, loftily. Here is an extract : "And for your-

self, sir, seeing your fair day is now in the dawn, and mine drawn to the evening, your own virtues and the king's grace assuring you of many favours and much honour, I beseech you not to begin your first building upon the ruins of the innocent; and that their sorrows, with mine, may not attend your first plantation." He speaks strongly of the fairness, sympathy, and pity, by which the Scots in general had laid him under obligation; argues from it his own evident innocence; and ends with a quiet warning to the young favourite, not to "undergo the curse of them that enter into the fields of the fatherless." In vain. Lady Raleigh, with her children, entreats James on her knees: in vain, again. "I mun ha' the land," is the answer; "I mun ha' it for Carr." And he has it; patching up the matter after awhile by a gift of £8,000 to her and her elder son, in requital for an estate of £5,000 a-year.

So there sits Raleigh, growing poorer day by day, and clinging more and more to that fair young wife, and her noble boy, and the babe whose laughter makes music within that dreary cage. And all day long, as we have seen, he sits over his still, compounding and discovering, and sometimes showing himself on the wall to the people, who gather to gaze at him, till Wade forbids it, fearing popular feeling. In fact, the world outside has a sort of mysterious awe of him, as if he were a chained magician, who, if he were let loose, might do with them all what he would. Salisbury and Somerset are of the same mind. Woe to them if that silver tongue should once again be unlocked!

The Queen, with a woman's faith in greatness, sends to him for "cordials." Here is one of them, famous in Charles the Second's days as "Sir Walter's Cordial:"—

"℞ Zedoary (	) and saffron, each,	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
Distilled water,	.	3 pints.
Macerate, &c., and reduced to $1\frac{1}{2}$ pint.		
Compound powder of crabs' claws,	.	16 oz.
Cinnamon and Nutmegs,	.	2 "
Cloves,	.	1 "
Cardamom seeds,	.	$\frac{1}{2}$ "
Double refined sugar,	.	2 lb.
Make a confection."		

Which, so the world believes, will cure all ills which flesh is heir to. It does not seem that Raleigh so boasted himself; but the people, after the fashion of the time, seem to have called all his medicines "cordials," and probably took for granted that it was by this particular one that the enchanter cured Queen Anne of a desperate sickness, "whereof the physicians were at the farthest

end of their studies" (no great way to go in those days) "to find the cause, and at a nonplus for the cure."

Raleigh (this is Sir Anthony Welden's account) asks for his reward only justice. Will the Queen ask that certain lords may be sent to examine Cobham, "whether he had at any time accused Sir Walter of any treason under his hand?" Six are sent; Salisbury among them. Cobham answers, "Never; nor could I: that villain Wade often solicited me, and not so prevailing, got me by a trick to write my name on a piece of white paper. So that if a charge came under my hand, it was forged by that villain Wade, by writing something above my hand, without my consent or knowledge." They return. Salisbury acts as spokesman; and has his equivocation ready. "Sir, my Lord Cobham has made good all that ever he wrote or said;" having, by his own account, written nothing but his name. This is Sir Anthony Welden's story. One hopes, for the six lords' sake, it may not be true; but we can see no reason, in the morality of James's court, why it should not have been.

So Raleigh must remain where he is, and work on. And he does work. As his captivity becomes more and more hopeless, so comes out more and more the stateliness, self-help, and energy of the man. Till now he has played with his pen: now he will use it in earnest; and use it as perhaps no prisoner ever did. Many a good book has been written in a dungeon. Don Quixote, the Pilgrim's Progress: beautiful each in its way, and destined to immortality: but none like the History of the World, the most God-fearing and God-seeing history which we know of among human writings. Of Raleigh's prison works we have no space to speak, save to say, that there is one fault in them. They are written thirty years too late; they express the creed of a buried generation, of the men who defied Spain in the name of a God of righteousness,—not of men who cringe before her in the name of a god of power and cunning. The captive eagle has written with a quill from his own wing—a quill which has been wont ere now to soar to heaven. Every line smacks of the memories of Nombre and of Zutphen, of Tilbury Fort and of Calais Roads; and many a gray-headed veteran, as he read them, must have turned away his face to hide the noble tears, as Ulysses from Demodocus when he sang the song of Troy. So there sits Raleigh, like the prophet of old, in his lonely tower above the Thames, watching the darkness gather upon the land year by year, "like the morning spread over the mountains," the darkness which comes before the dawn of the Day of The Lord; which he shall never see on earth, though it be very near at hand; and asks of each new-comer, Watchman, what of the night?

But there is one bright point at least in the darkness; one on whom Raleigh's eyes, and those of all England, are fixed in boundless hope; one who, by the sympathy which attracts all noble natures to each other, clings to the hero utterly; Henry, the Crown Prince. "No king but my father would keep such a bird in a cage." The noble lad tries to open the door for the captive eagle; but in vain. At least he will make what use he can of his wisdom. He asks him for advice about the new ship he is building, and has a simple, practical letter in return, and over and above probably the two pamphlets, "Of the Invention of Ships," and "Observations on the Navy and Sea Service;" which the Prince will never see. In 1611 he asks Raleigh's advice about the foolish double marriage with the Prince and Princess of Savoy, and receives for answer two plain-spoken discourses as full of historical learning as of practical sound sense.

These are benefits which must be repaid. The father will repay them hereafter in his own way. In the meanwhile the son does so in his way, by soliciting the Sherborne estate as for himself, intending to restore it to Raleigh. He succeeds. Carr is bought off for £25,000, where Lady Raleigh had been bought off with £8,000; but neither Raleigh nor his widow will ever be the better for that bargain, and Carr will get Sherborne back again, and probably, in the king's silly dotage, keep the £25,000 also.

For, as we said, the Day of The Lord is at hand; and he whose virtues might have postponed it, must be taken away, that vengeance may fall where vengeance is due, and men may know that verily there is a God who judgeth the earth.

In November, 1612, Prince Henry falls sick.

When he is at the last gasp, the poor Queen sends to Raleigh for some of the same cordial which had cured her. Medicine is sent, with a tender letter, as it well might be; for Raleigh knew how much hung, not only for himself, but for England, on the cracking threads of that fair young life. It is questioned at first whether it shall be administered. "The cordial," Raleigh says, "will cure him or any other of a fever, except in case of poison."

The cordial is administered: but it comes too late. The Prince dies, and with him the hopes of all good men.

\* \* \* \* \*

At last after twelve years of prison, Raleigh is free. He is sixty-six years old now, gray-headed and worn down by confinement, study, and want of exercise: but he will not remember that

"Still in his ashes live their wonted fires."

Now for Guiana, at last! which he has never forgotten; to which he has been sending, with his slender means, ship after ship to keep the Indians in hope.

He is freed in March. At once he is busy at his project. In August he has obtained the King's commission by the help of Sir Ralph Winwood, Secretary of State, who seems to have believed in Raleigh. At least Raleigh believed in him. In March next year he has sailed, and with him thirteen ships, and more than a hundred knights and gentlemen, and among them, strange to say, Sir Warham St. Leger. Can this be the quondam Marshal of Munster, under whom Raleigh served at Smerwick, six-and-thirty years ago? The question can hardly be answered but by reference to Lord Doneraile's pedigree; but we know of no other Sir Warham among the St. Legers. And if it be so, it is a strong argument in Raleigh's favour that a man once his superior in command, and now probably long past seventy, should keep his faith in Raleigh after all his reverses. Nevertheless, the mere fact of an unpardoned criminal, said to be "*non ens*" in law, being able in a few months to gather round him such a party, is proof patent of what slender grounds there are for calling Raleigh "suspected" and "unpopular."

But he does not sail without a struggle or two. James is too proud to allow his heir to match with any but a mighty king, is infatuated about the Spanish marriage; and Gondomar is with him, playing with his hopes and with his fears also.

The people are furious; and have to be silenced again and again; there is even fear of rioting. The charming and smooth-tongued Gondomar can hate; and can revenge, too. Five 'prentices, who have insulted him for striking a little child, are imprisoned and fined several hundred pounds each. And as for hating Raleigh, Gondomar had been no Spaniard (to let alone the private reasons which some have supposed) had he not hated Spain's ancient scourge and unswerving enemy. He comes to James, complaining that Raleigh is about to break the peace with Spain. Nothing is to be refused him which can further the one darling fancy of James; and Raleigh has to give in writing the number of his ships, men, and ordnance, and, moreover, the name of the country and the very river whither he is going. This paper was given, Carew Raleigh asserts positively, under James's solemn promise not to reveal it; and Raleigh himself seems to have believed that it was to be kept private; for he writes afterwards to Secretary Winwood, in a tone of astonishment and indignation, that the information contained in his paper had been sent on to the king of Spain, before he sailed from the Thames. Winwood could have told him as much already; for

Buckingham had written to Winwood, on March 28, to ask him why he had not been to the Spanish Ambassador "to acquaint him with the order taken by his Majesty about Sir W. R.'s voyage." But however unwilling the Secretary (as one of the furtherers of the voyage) may have been to meddle in the matter, Gondomar had had news enough from another source; perhaps from James's own mouth. For the first letter to the West Indies, about Raleigh, was dated from Madrid, March 19; and most remarkable it is, that in James's "Declaration," or rather apology, for his own conduct, no mention whatsoever is made of his having given information to Gondomar.

Gondomar offered, says James, to let Raleigh go with one or two ships only. He might work a mine, and that the King of Spain should give him a safe convoy home with all his gold. How kind! And how likely would Raleigh and his fellow adventurers have been to accept such an offer; how likely, too, to find men who would sail with them on such an errand, to be "flayed alive," as many who travelled to the Indies of late years had been, or to have their throats cut, tied back to back, after trading unarmed and peaceably for a month, as thirty-six of Raleigh's men had been but two or three years before in that very Orinoco. So James is forced to let the large fleet go; and to let it go well armed also; for the plain reason, that otherwise it dare not go at all; and in the meanwhile, letters are sent from Spain in which the Spaniards call the fleet "English enemies," and ships and troops are moved up as fast as possible from the Spanish Main.

But, say some, James was as much justified in telling Gondomar, and the Spaniards in defending themselves. On the latter point there is no doubt.

"They may get who have the will,  
And they may keep who can."

But it does seem hard on Raleigh, after having laboured in this Guiana business for years; after having spent his money in vain attempts to deliver these Guianians from their oppressors. It is hard, and he feels it so. He sees that he is not trusted; that, as James himself confesses, his pardon is refused simply to keep a hold on him; that, if he fails, he is ruined.

As he well asks afterward, "If the king did not think that Guiana was his, why let me go thither at all? He knows that it was his by the law of nations, for he made Mr. Harcourt a grant of part of it. If it be, as Gondomar says, the King of Spain's, then I had no more right to work a mine in it than to burn a town." Argument which seems to us unanswerable. But,

says James, and others with him, he was forbid to meddle with any country occupate or possessed by Spaniards. Southey, too, blames him severely for not having told James that the country was already settled by Spaniards. We can excuse Southey, but not James, for overlooking the broad fact, that all England knew it; that if they did not, Gondomar would have taken care to tell them; and that he could not go to Guiana without meddling with Spaniards. His former voyages and publications made no secret of it. On the contrary, one chief argument for the plan had been all through the delivery of the Indians from these very Spaniards, who, though they could not conquer them, ill used them in every way; and in his agreement with the Lords about the Guiana voyage in 1611, he makes especial mention of the very place, which will soon fill such a part in our story, "San Thomé, where the Spaniards inhabit," and tells the Lords whom to ask, as to the number of men who will be wanted "to secure Keymish's passage to the mine" against these very Spaniards.

The plain fact is, that Raleigh went, with his eyes open, to take possession of a country to which he believed that he and King James had a right, and that James and his favourites, when they, as he pleads, might have stopped him by a word, let him go, knowing as well as the Spaniards what he intended; for what purpose, but to have an excuse for the tragedy which ended all, it is difficult to conceive. "It is evident," says Sir Richard Schomburgk, "that they winked at consequences which they must have foreseen."

And here Mr. Napier, on the authority of Count Desmarets, brings a grave charge against Raleigh. Raleigh, in his apology, protests that he only saw Desmarets once on board of his vessel. Desmarets says in his dispatches, that he was on board of her several times, (whether he saw Raleigh or not more than once does not appear,) and that Raleigh complained to him of having been unjustly imprisoned, stripped of his estate, and so forth, (which, indeed, was true enough,) and that he was on that account resolved to abandon his country, and, if the expedition succeeded, offer himself and the fruit of his labour to the King of France.

If this be true, Raleigh was very wrong. But Sir Richard Schomburgk points out that this passage, which Mr. Napier says occurs in the last dispatch, was written a month after Raleigh had sailed; and that the previous dispatch, written only four days after Raleigh sailed, says nothing about the matter. So that it could not have been a very important or fixed resolution on Raleigh's part, if it was only to be recollected a month after. We do not say (as Sir Richard Schomburgk is very much in-



clined to do) that it was altogether a bubble of French fancy. It is probable and natural enough that Raleigh, in his just rage at finding that James was betraying him, and sending him out with a halter round his neck, to all but certain ruin, did say wild words—that it was better for him to serve the Frenchman than such a master—that perhaps he might go over to the Frenchman after all—or some folly of the kind, in that same rash tone which, as we have seen, has got him into trouble so often already: and so we leave the matter, saying, Beware of making any man an offender for a word, much less one who is being hunted to death in his old age, and knows it.

However this may be, the fleet sails; but with no bright auguries. The mass of the sailors are “a scum of men;” they are mutinous and troublesome; and what is worse, have got among them (as, perhaps, they were intended to have) the notion that Raleigh’s being still *non ens* in law absolves them from obeying him when they do not choose, and permits them to say of him behind his back what they list. They have long delays at Plymouth. Sir Warham’s ship cannot get out of the Thames. Pennington, at the Isle of Wright, “cannot redeem his bread from the bakers,” and has to ride back to London to get money from Lady Raleigh. The poor Lady has it not, and gives a note of hand to Mr. Wood of Portsmouth. Alas for her! She has sunk her £8,000, and, beside that, sold her Wickham estate for £2,500; and all is on board the fleet. “A hundred pieces” are all the ready money the hapless pair had left on earth, and they have parted them together. Raleigh has fifty-five, and she forty-five, till God send it back—if, indeed, he ever send it. The star is sinking low in the west. Trouble on trouble. Sir John Fane has neither men nor money; Captain Witney has not provisions enough, and Raleigh has to sell his plate in Plymouth to help him. Courage! one last struggle to redeem his good name!

Then storms off Scilly—a pinnace is sunk; faithful Captain King driven back into Bristol; the rest have to lie by awhile in some Irish port for a fair wind. Then Bailey deserts with the Southampton at the Canaries; then “unnatural weather,” so that a fourteen days’ voyage takes forty days. Then “the distemper” breaks out under the line. The simple diary of that sad voyage still remains, full of curious and valuable nautical hints; but recording the loss of friend on friend, four or five officers, and, to our great grief, our principal refiner, Mr. Fowler. “Crab, my old servant.” Next, a lamentable twenty-four hours, in which they lose Pigott the lieutenant-general, “mine honest frinde Mr. John Talbot, one that had lived with me a leven yeres

in the Tower, an excellent general skoller, and a faithful and true man as ever lived," with two "very fair conditioned gentlemen," and "mine own cook Francis." Then more officers and men, and my "cusen Payton." Then the water is near spent, and they are forced to come to half allowance, till they save and drink greedily whole canfuls of the bitter rain water. At last Raleigh's own turn comes; running on deck in a squall, he gets wet through, and has twenty days of burning fever; "never man suffered a more furious heat," during which he eats nothing but now and then a stewed prune.

At last they make the land, at the mouth of the Urapoho, far south of their intended goal. They ask for Leonard the Indian, "who lived with me in England three or four years, the same man that took Mr. Harcourt's brother, and fifty men, when they were in extreme distress, and had no means to live there but by the help of this Indian, whom they made believe that they were my men;" but the faithful Indian is gone up the country, and they stood away for Cayenne, "where the cacique (Harry) was also my servant, and had lived with me in the Tower two years."

Courage once more, brave old heart! Here, at least, thou art among friends, who know thee for what thou art, and look out longingly for thee as their deliverer.

Courage! for thou art in fairy land once more; the land of boundless hope and possibility. Though England and England's heart be changed, yet God's earth endures, and the harvest is still here, waiting to be reaped by those who dare. Twenty stormy years may have changed thee, but they have not changed the fairy land of thy prison dreams. Still the mighty Ceiba trees with their silk pods, tower on the palm-fringed islets; still the dark mangrove thickets guard the mouths of unknown streams, whose granite sands are rich with gold. Friendly Indians come, and Harry (an old friend) with them, bringing maize, peccari pork, and armadillos, plantains, and pine apples, and all eat and gather strength; and Raleigh writes home to his wife, "to say that I may yet be king of the Indians here were a vanity. But my name hath lived among them"—as well it might. For many a year those simple hearts shall look for him in vain, and more than two centuries and a half afterwards, dim traditions of the great white chief who bade them stand out to the last against the Spaniards, and he would come and dwell among them, shall linger among the Carib tribes; even, say some, the tattered relics of an English flag, which he left among them that they might distinguish his countrymen.

Happy for him had he stayed there indeed, and been their king.

How easy for him to have grown old in peace at Cayenne. But no; he must on for honour's sake, and bring home if it were but a basket full of that ore, to show the king, that he may save his credit. And he has promised Arundel that he will return. And return he will. So onward he goes to the "Triangle Islands." There he sends off five small vessels for Orinoco, with four hundred men. The faithful Keymis has to command and guide the expedition. Sir Warham is lying ill of the fever, all but dead; so George Raleigh is sent in his place as serjeant-major, and with him five land companies, one of which is commanded by young Walter, Raleigh's son; another by a Captain Parker, of whom we shall have a word to say presently.

Keymis's orders are explicit. He is to go up; find the mine, and open it; and if the Spaniards attack him, repel force by force: but he is to avoid, if possible, an encounter with them: not for fear of breaking the peace, but because he has "a scum of men, a few gentlemen excepted, and I would not for all the world receive a blow from the Spaniards to the dishonour of our nation." There we have no concealment of hostile instructions, any more than in Raleigh's admirable instructions to his fleet, which after laying down excellent laws for morality, religion, and discipline, goes on with clause after clause as to what is to be done if they meet "the enemy." What enemy? Why, all Spanish ships which sail the seas; and who, if they happen to be sufficiently numerous, will assuredly attack, sink, burn, and destroy Raleigh's whole squadron, for daring to sail for that continent which Spain claims as its own.

Raleigh runs up the coast to Trinidad, and in through the serpent's mouth, round Punto Gallo to the famous lake of Pitch, where all recruit themselves with fish and armadillos, pheasants (*Penelope Cristata*), palmitos and guavas, and await the return of the expedition from the last day of December to the middle of February. They see something of the Spaniards meanwhile, and what they see is characteristic. Sir John Ferns is sent up to the Spanish town, to try if they will trade for tobacco. The Spaniards parley, in the midst of the parley pour a volley of musketry into them at forty paces, yet hurt never a man, and send them off calling them thieves and traitors. Fray Simon's Spanish account of the matter is, that Raleigh intended to disembark his men, that they might march inland on San Joseph. How he found out the fact remains to be proved. In the meanwhile, we shall prefer believing that Raleigh is not likely to have told a lie for his own private amusement in his own private diary. We cannot blame the Spaniards much; the advices from Spain are sufficient to explain their hostility.

On the 29th the Spaniards attack three men and a boy who are ashore boiling the fossil pitch; kill one man, and carry off the boy. Raleigh, instead of going up to the Spanish port and demanding satisfaction, as he would have been justified in doing after this second outrage, remains quietly where he is, expecting daily to be attacked by Spanish armadas, and resolved to "burn by their sides." Happily, or unhappily he escapes them. Probably he thinks they waited for him at Margarita, expecting him to range the Spanish Main.

At last the weary days of sickness and anxiety succeed to days of terror. On the 1st of February a strange report comes by an Indian. An inland savage has brought confused and contradictory news down the river, that San Thomé is sacked, the governor and two Spanish captains slain, (names given) and two English captains, nameless. After this entry follow a few confused ones, set down as happening in January, as to attempts to extract the truth from the Indians and negligence of the mariners, who are diligent in nothing but pillaging and stealing.—And so ends abruptly this sad document.

The truth comes at last; but when, does not appear, in a letter from Keymis, dated January 8. San Thomé has been stormed, sacked, and burnt. Four refiners' houses were found in it; the best in the town; so that the Spaniards have been mining there: but no coin or bullion except a little plate. One English captain is killed, and that captain is Walter Raleigh, his first-born. He died leading them on, when some, "more careful of valour and safety, began to recoil shamefully." His last words were, "Lord have mercy on me, and prosper our enterprise." A Spanish captain, Erinetta, struck him down with the butt of a musket after he had received a bullet. John Plessington, his serjeant, avenged him by running Erinetta through with his halbert.

Keymis has not yet been to the mine; he could not, "by reason of the murmurings, discords, and vexations;" but he will go at once, make trial of the mine, and come down to Trinidad by the Macareo mouth. He sends a parcel of scattered papers, (probably among them the three letters from the king of Spain,) a roll of tobacco, a tortoise, some oranges and lemons. "Praying God to give you health and strength of body, and a mind armed against all extremities, I rest ever to be commanded, your lordship's, Keymish."

"O Absalom, my son, my son, would God I had died for thee!" But weeping is in vain. The noble lad sleeps there under the palm-trees, beside the mighty tropic stream, while the fair Basset, "his bride in the sight of God," reckes not of him as she wanders in the woods of Umberleigh, wife to the son of

Raleigh's deadliest foe. Raleigh, Raleigh, surely God's blessing is not on this voyage of thine. Surely He hath set thy misdeeds before him, and thy secret sins in the light of his countenance.

Another blank of misery: but his honour is still safe. Keymis will return with that gold ore, that pledge of his good faith for which he has ventured all. Surely God will let that come after all, now that he has paid as its price his first-born's blood? . . .

At last Keymis returns with thinned numbers. All are weary, spirit-broken, discontented, mutinous. Where is the gold ore?

There is none. Keymis has never been to the mine after all. His companions curse him as a traitor who has helped Raleigh to deceive them into ruin; the mine is imaginary, a lie. The crews are ready to break into open mutiny; after awhile they will do so.

Yes, God is setting this man's secret sins in the light of his countenance. If he has been ambitious, his ambition has punished itself now. If he has cared more for his own honour than for his wife and children, that sin too has punished itself. If he has (which we affirm not) tampered with truth for the sake of what seemed to him noble and just ends, that too has punished itself; for his men do not trust him. If he has (which we affirm not) done any wrong in that matter of Cobham, that too has punished itself; for his men, counting him as "*non ens*" in law, will not respect or obey him. If he has spoken after his old fashion, rash and exaggerated words, and goes on speaking them, even though it be through the pressure of despair, that too shall punish itself; and for every idle word that he shall say, God will bring him into judgment. And why, but because he is noble? Why, but because he is nearer to God by a whole heaven than Buckingham, Henry Howards, Salisburys, and others whom God lets fatten on their own sins, having no understanding, because they are in honour, and have children at their hearts desire, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes? Not so does God deal with his elect, when they will try to worship at once self and Him; He requires truth in the inward parts, and will purge them till they are true, and single-eyed, and full of light.

Keymis returns with the wreck of his party. The scene between him and Raleigh may be guessed. Keymis has excuse on excuse. He could not get obeyed after young Raleigh's death: he expected to find that Sir Walter was either dead of his sickness, or of grief for his son, and had no wish "to enrich a com-

pany of rascals who made no account of him." He dare not go up to the mine, because (and here Raleigh thinks his excuse fair) the fugitive Spaniards lay in the craggy woods through which he would have to pass, and that he had not men enough even to hold the town securely. If he reached the mine, and left a company there, he had no provisions for them; and he dared not send backward and forward to the town, while the Spaniards were in the woods. The warnings sent by Gondomar had undone all, and James's treachery had done its work. So Keymis, "thinking it a greater error, (so he said,) to discover the mine to the Spaniards, than to excuse himself to the Company, said that he could not find it." From all which, one thing at least is evident, that Keymis believed in the existence of the mine.

Raleigh "rejects these fancies;" tells him before divers gentlemen, that "a blind man might find it, by the marks which Keymis himself had set down under his hand;" that "his case of losing so many men in the woods," was a mere pretence: after Walter was slain, he knew that Keymis had no care of any man's surviving. "You have undone me, wounded my credit with the King, past recovery." "As you have followed your own advice, and not mine, you must satisfy his Majesty. I shall be glad if you can do it: but I cannot." There is no use dwelling on such vain regrets and reproaches. Raleigh perhaps is bitter, unjust, though we cannot see that he was; as he himself writes twice, to his wife and to Sir Ralph Winwood, his "brains are broken." He writes to them both, and reopens the letters to add long postscripts, at his wits' end. Keymis goes off; spends a few miserable days; and then enters Raleigh's cabin. He has written his apology to Lord Arundel, and begs Raleigh to allow of it. "No. You have undone me by your obstinacy, I will not favour or colour your former folly." "Is that your resolution, sir?" "It is." "I know not then, sir, what course to take." And so he goes out, and into his own cabin overhead. A minute after, a pistol shot is heard. Raleigh sends up a boy to know the reason. Keymis answers from within, that he has fired it off because it had been long charged, and all is quiet.

Half-an-hour after, the boy goes into the cabin. Keymis is lying on his bed, the pistol by him. The boy moves him. The pistol shot has broken a rib, and gone no further; but as the corpse is turned over, a long knife is buried in that desperate heart. Another of the old heroes is gone to his wild account.

Gradually drops of explanation ooze out. The "Serjeant-Major, Raleigh's nephew, and others, confess that Keymis told them that he could have brought them in two hours to the mine:

but as the young heir was slain, and his father was unpardoned, and not like to live, he had no reason to open the mine, either for the Spaniard *or the King.*" Those latter words are significant. What cared the old Elizabethan seaman for the weal of such a king? And, indeed, what good to such a king would all the mines in Guiana be? They answered that the king, nevertheless, had "granted Raleigh his heart's desire under the great seal." He replied that "the grant to Raleigh was to a man *non ens* in law, and therefore of no force." Here, too, James's policy has worked well. How could men dare or persevere under such a cloud?

How, indeed, could they have found heart to sail at all? The only answer is, that they knew Raleigh well enough to have utter faith in him, and that Keymis himself knew of the mine.

Puppies at home in England gave out that he had killed himself from remorse at having deceived so many gentlemen with an imaginary phantom. Every one of course, according to his measure of charity, has power and liberty to assume any motive which he will. Ours is simply the one which shows upon the face of the documents; that the old follower, devoted alike to the dead son and to the doomed father, feeling that he had, he scarce knew how, failed in the hour of need, frittered away the last chance of a mighty enterprise, which had been his fixed idea for years, and ruined the man whom he adored, avenged upon himself the fault of having disobeyed orders, given peremptorily, and to be peremptorily executed.

Here, perhaps, our tale should end; for all beyond is but the waking of the corpse. The last death-struggle of the Elizabethan, heroism is over, and all its remains vanish slowly, in an undignified sickening way. All epics end so. After the war of Troy, Achilles must die by coward Paris' arrow, in some mysterious confused pitiful fashion; and stately Hecuba must rail herself into a very dog, and bark for ever shamefully around lonely Cynossema. Young David ends as a dotard—Solomon as worse. Glorious Alexander must die half of fever, half of drunkenness, as the fool dieth. Charles the Fifth, having thrown away all but his follies, ends in a convent, a superstitious imbecile; Napoleon squabbles to the last with Sir Hudson Lowe about champagne. It must be so; and the glory must be God's alone. For in great men, and great times, there is nothing good or vital, but what is of God, and not of man's self. And when he taketh away that divine breath they die, and return again to their dust. But the earth does not lose; for when He sendeth forth his spirit they live, and renew the face of the earth. A new generation

arises, with clearer sight, with fuller experience, sometimes with nobler aims ; and,—

“The old order changeth, giving place to the new,  
And God fulfils himself in many ways.”

The Elizabethan epic did not end a day too soon. There was no more life left in it ; and God had something better in store for England. Raleigh's ideal was a noble one : but God's was nobler far. Raleigh would have made her a gold kingdom, like Spain, and destroyed her very vitals by that gold, as Spain was destroyed. And all the while the great and good God was looking steadfastly upon that little struggling Virginian village, Raleigh's first-born, forgotten in his new mighty dreams, and saying, “Here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.” There, and not in Guiana ; upon the simple tillers of the soil, not among wild reckless gold-hunters, would His blessing rest. The very coming darkness would bring brighter light. The evil age itself would be the parent of new good, and drive across the seas steadfast Pilgrim Fathers, and generous Royalist Cavaliers, to be the parents of a mightier nation than has ever yet possessed the earth. Verily, God's ways are wonderful, and his counsels in the great deep.

So ends the Elizabethan epic. Must we follow the corpse to the grave ? It is necessary.

And now, “you gentlemen of England, who sit at home at ease,” what would you have done in like case ?—Your last die thrown ; your last stake lost ; your honour, as you fancy, stained for ever ; your eldest son dead in battle—What would you have done ? What Walter Raleigh did was this. He kept his promise. He had promised Lord Arundel to return to England ; and return he did.

But it is said, his real intention, as he himself confessed, was to turn pirate, and take the Mexico fleet.

That wild thoughts of such a deed may have crossed his mind, may have been a terrible temptation to him, may even have broken out in hasty words, one does not deny. He himself says that he spoke of such a thing, “to keep his men together.” All depends on how the words were spoken. The form of the sentence, the tone of voice, is every thing. Who could blame him, if, seeing some of the captains whom he had most trusted deserting him, his men heaping him with every slander, and as he solemnly swore on the scaffold, calling witnesses thereto by name, forcing him to take an oath that he would not return to England before they would have him, and locking him into his own cabin—who could blame him, we ask, for saying, in



that daring off-hand way of his, which has so often before got him into trouble, "Come, my lads, do not despair. If the worst comes to the worst, there is the Plate-fleet to fall back upon?" When we remember, too, that the taking of the said Plate-fleet was, in Raleigh's eyes, an altogether just thing; and that he knew perfectly, that if he succeeded therein, he would be backed by the public opinion of all England, and probably buy his pardon of James, who, if he loved Spain well, loved money better; our surprise rather is, that he did not go and do it. As for any meeting of captains in his cabin, and serious proposal of such a plan, we believe it to be simply one of the innumerable lies which James inserted in his declaration, gathered from the tales of men, who fearing, (and reasonably,) lest their heads should follow Raleigh's, tried to curry favour by slandering him. This "Declaration" has been so often exposed, that we may safely pass it by; and pass by almost as safely, the argument which some have drawn from a chance expression of his in his pathetic letter to Lady Raleigh, in which he "hopes that God would send him somewhat before his return." To prove an intention of piracy in the despairing words of a ruined man writing to comfort a ruined wife for the loss of her first-born, is surely to deal out hard measure. Heaven have mercy upon us, if all the hasty words which woe has wrung from our hearts are to be so judged either by man or God!

Sir Julius Cæsar, again, one of the commission appointed to examine him, informs us, that on being confronted with Captains St. Leger and Pennington, he confessed that he proposed the taking of the Mexico fleet, if the mine failed. To which we can only answer, that all depends on how the thing was said, and that this is the last fact which we should find in Sir Julius's notes, which are, it is confessed, so confused, obscure, and full of gaps, as to be often hardly intelligible. The same remark applies to Wilson's story, which we agree with Mr. Tytler in thinking worthless. Wilson, it must be understood, is employed, after Raleigh's return, as a spy upon him, which office he executes, all confess, (and Wilson himself as much as any,) as falsely, treacherously, and hypocritically as did ever sinful man; and, *inter alia*, he has this, "This day he told me what discourse he and the Lord Chancellor had about taking the Plate-fleet, which he confessed he would have taken had he lighted on it. To which my Lord Chancellor said, "Why, you would have been a pirate." "Oh," quoth he, "did you ever know of any that were pirates for millions? They only that wish for small things are pirates." Now, setting aside the improbability that Raleigh should go out of his way to impeach himself to the man whom

he must have known was set there to find matter for his death, all, we say, depends on how it was said. If the Lord Chancellor ever said to Raleigh, "To take the Mexico fleet would be piracy," it would have been just like Raleigh to give such an answer. The speech is a perfectly true one: Raleigh knew the world, no man better; and saw through its hollowness, and the cant and hypocrisy of his generation; and he sardonically states an undeniable fact. He is not expressing his own morality, but that of the world, just as he is doing in that passage of his apology, about which we must complain of Mr. Napier. "It was a maxim of his," says Mr. Napier, "that good success admits of no examination." This is not fair. The sentence in the original goes on, "so the contrary allows of no excuse, however reasonable and just whatsoever." His argument all through the beginning of the apology, supported by instance on instance from history, is,—I cannot get a just hearing, because I have failed in opening this mine. So it is always. Glory covers the multitude of sins. But a man who has failed is a fair mark for every slanderer, puppy, ignoramus, discontented mutineer; as I am now. What else, in the name of common sense, could have been his argument? Does Mr. Napier really think that Raleigh, even if in the face of all the noble and pious words which he had written, he held so immoral a doctrine, would have been shameless and senseless enough to assert his own rascality in an apology addressed to the most "religious" of kings in the most canting of generations?

But still more astonished are we at the use which Mr. Napier has made of Captain Parker's letter. The letter is written by a man in a state of frantic rage and disappointment. There never was any mine, he believes now. Keymis's "delays we found mere illusions; for he was false to all men and hateful to himself, loathing to live since he could do no more villainy. I will speak no more of this hateful fellow to God and man." And it is on the testimony of a man in this temper that we are asked to believe that "the admiral and vice-admiral," Raleigh and St. Leger, are going to the Western Islands "to look for homeward-bound men," if, indeed, the looking for homeward-bound men means really looking for the Spanish fleet, and not merely for recruits for their crews. We never recollect (and we have read pretty fully the sea-records of those days) such a synonym used either for the Mexican or Indian fleet. But let this be as it may, the letter proves too much. For, first, it proves, that whosoever is not going to turn pirate, our calm and charitable friend Captain Parker is; for "for my part, by the permission of God, I will either *make a voyage*, or bury myself in the sea."

Now, what making a voyage is, all men know; and the sum total of the letter is, that a man intending to turn pirate himself, accuses, under the influence of violent passion, his comrades of doing the like. We may believe him about himself: about others, we shall wait for testimony a little less interested.

But the letter proves too much again. For Parker says that "Witney and Woolaston are gone off a-head to look for homeward bound men," thus agreeing with Raleigh's message to his wife, that "Witney, for whom I sold all my plate at Plymouth, and to whom I gave more credit and countenance than to all the captains of my fleet, ran from me at the Grenadas, and Woolaston with him."

And now, reader, how does this of Witney, and Woolaston, and Parker's intentions to pirate separately, (if it be true,) agree with King James's story of Raleigh's calling a council of war and proposing an attack on the Plate-fleet? One or the other must needs be a lie; probably both. Witney's ship was of only 160 tons; Woolaston's probably smaller. Five such ships would be required, as any reader of Hakluyt must know, to take a single carack; and it would be no use running the risk of hanging for any less prize. The Spanish Main was warned and armed, and the Western Isles also. Is it possible that these two men would have been insane enough in such circumstances, to go without Raleigh, if they could have gone with him? And is it possible that he, if he had any set purpose of attacking the Plate-fleet, would not have kept them, in order to attempt that with him, which neither they nor he could do without each other? Moreover, no piratical act ever took place, (and if any had, we would have heard enough about it;) and why is Parker to be believed against Raleigh alone, when there is little doubt that he slandered all the rest of the captains? Lastly, it was to this very Parker, with Mr. Tresham, and another gentleman, that Raleigh appealed by name on the scaffold, as witnesses that it was his crew who tried to keep him from going home, and not he them.

Our own belief is, and it is surely simple and rational enough, that Raleigh's "brains," as he said, "were broken;" that he had no distinct plan: but that loth to leave the new world without a second attempt on Guiana, he went up to Newfoundland to revictual, "and with good hope," (as he wrote to Winwood himself,) "of keeping the sea till August with some four reasonable good ships," (probably, as Oldys remarks, to try a trading voyage,) but found his gentlemen too dispirited and incredulous, his men too mutinous to do any thing; and seeing his ships go home one by one, at last followed them himself, because he had

promised Arundel and Pembroke so to do, having, after all, as he declared on the scaffold, extreme difficulty in persuading his men to land at all in England. The other lies about him, as of his having intended to desert his soldiers in Guiana, his having taken no tools to work the mine, and so forth, one only notices to say, that the declaration takes care to make the most of them, without deigning (after its fashion) to adduce any proof but anonymous hearsays. If it be true that Bacon drew up that famous document, it reflects no credit either on his honesty or his "inductive science."

So Raleigh returns, anchors in Plymouth. He finds that Captain North has brought home the news of his mishaps, and that there is a proclamation against him, (which by-the-bye lies, for it talks of limitations and cautions given to Raleigh which do not appear in his commission,) and, moreover, a warrant out for his apprehension. He sends his men on shore, and starts for London to surrender himself, in company with faithful Captain King, who alone clings to him to the last, and from whom we have details the next few days. Near Ashburton, he is met by Sir Lewis Stukely, his near kinsman, vice-admiral of Devon, who has orders to arrest him. Raleigh tells him that he has saved him the trouble; and the two return to Plymouth, where Stukely, strangely enough, leaves him at liberty, and rides about the country. We are slow in imputing baseness: but we cannot help suspecting from Stukely's subsequent conduct, that he had from the first private orders to give Raleigh a chance of trying to escape, in order to have a handle against him, such as his own deeds had not yet given.

The ruse, if it existed then (as it did afterwards) succeeds. Raleigh hears bad news. Gondomar has (or has not) told his story to the king by crying, "Piratas! piratas! piratas!" and then rushing out without explanation. James is in terror lest what has happened should break off the darling Spanish match. Raleigh foresees ruin, perhaps death. Life is sweet, and Guiana is yet where it was. He may win a basketful of the ore still and prove himself no liar. He will escape to France. Faithful King finds him a Rochelle ship; he takes boat to her, goes half-way, and returns. Honour is sweeter than life, and James may yet be just. The next day he bribes the master to wait for him one more day, starts for the ship once more, and again returns to Plymouth, (King will make oath) of his own free will. The temptation must have been terrible, and the sin none. What kept him from yielding, but innocence and honour? He will clear himself; and if not, abide the worst. Stukely and James found out these facts, and made good use of them afterwards.

For now comes "a severe letter from my Lords" to bring Raleigh up as speedily as his health will permit; and with it comes one Mannourie, a French quack, of whom honest King takes little note at the time, but who will make himself remembered.

And now begins a series of scenes most pitiable. Raleigh's brains are indeed broken. He is old, worn out with the effects of his fever, lame, ruined, broken-hearted, and for the first time in his life, weak and silly. He takes into his head the paltriest notion that he can gain time to pacify the king by feigning himself sick. He puts implicit faith in the rogue Mannourie, whom he has never seen before. He sends forward Lady Raleigh to London—perhaps ashamed, (as who would not have been?) to play the fool in that sweet presence; and with her good Captain King, who is to engage one Cotterell, an old servant of Raleigh's, to find a ship wherein to escape, if the worst comes to the worst. Cotterell sends King to an old boatswain of his, who owns a ketch. She is to lie off Tilbury; and so King waits Raleigh's arrival. What passed in the next four or five days will never be truly known, for our only account comes from two self-convicted villains, Stukely and Mannourie. On these disgusting details we shall not enter. First, because we cannot trust a word of them; secondly, because no one will wish to hear them who feels, as we do, how pitiable and painful is the sight of a great heart and mind utterly broken. Neither shall we spend time on Stukely's villainous treatment of Raleigh, (for which he had a commission from James in writing,) his pretending to help him to escape, going down the Thames in a boat with him, trying in vain to make honest King as great a rogue as himself. Like most rascalities, Stukely's conduct, even as he himself states it, is very obscure. All that we can see is, that Cotterell told Stukely every thing; that Stukely bade Cotterell carry on the deceit; that Stukely had orders from head-quarters to incite Raleigh to say or do something which might form a fresh ground of accusal; that being a clumsy rogue, he failed, and fell back on abetting Raleigh's escape, as a last resource. Be it as it may, he throws off the mask as soon as Raleigh has done enough to prove an intent to escape; arrests him, and conducts him to the Tower.

There two shameful months are spent in trying to find out some excuse for Raleigh's murder. Wilson is set over him as a spy; his letters to his wife are intercepted. Every art is used to extort a confession of a great plot with France, and every art fails utterly—simply, it seems to us, because there was no plot. Raleigh writes an apology, letters of entreaty, self-justifi-

cation, what not ; all, in our opinion, just and true enough ; but like his speech on the scaffold, weak, confused—the product of a “broken brain.” However, his head must come off ; and as a last resource, it must be taken off upon the sentence of fifteen years ago, and he who was condemned for plotting with Spain, must die for plotting against her. It is a pitiable business : but, as Osborne says, in a passage, (p. 108 of his *Memoirs of James*,) for which we freely forgive him all his sins and lies, (and they are many,)—

“As the foolish idolaters were wont to sacrifice the choicest of their children to the devil, so our king gave up his incomparable jewel to the will of this monster of ambition, (the Spaniard,) under the pretence of a superannuated transgression, contrary to the opinion of the more honest sort of gownsmen, who maintained that his Majesty’s pardon lay inclusively in the commission he gave him on his setting out to sea ; it being incongruous that he, who remained under the notion of one dead in the law, should as a general dispose of the lives of others, not being himself master of his own.”

But no matter. He must die. The Queen intercedes for him, as do all honest men : but in vain. He has twenty-four hours’ notice to prepare for death ; eats a good breakfast, takes a cup of sack and a pipe ; makes a rambling speech, in which one notes only the intense belief that he is an honest man, and the intense desire to make others believe so, in the very smallest matters ; and then dies smilingly, as one weary of life. One makes no comment. Raleigh’s life really ended on the day that poor Keymis returned from San Thomé.

And then ?

As we said, Truth is stranger than fiction. No dramatist dare invent a “poetic justice” more perfect than fell upon the traitor. It is not always so, no doubt. God reserves many a great sinner for that most awful of all punishments, impunity. But there are crises in a nation’s life in which God makes terrible examples, to put before the most stupid and sensual the choice of Hercules, the upward road of life, the downward one which leads to the pit. Since the time of Pharaoh and the Red Sea host, history is full of such palpable, unmistakable revelations of the Divine Nemesis ; and in England, too, at that moment, the crisis was there ; and the judgment of God was revealed accordingly. Sir Lewis Stukely remained it seems at Court ; high in favour with James : but he found, nevertheless, that people looked darkly on him. Like all self-convicted rogues, he must needs thrust his head into his own shame, and one day he goes to good old Lord Charles Howard’s house ; for being Vice-Admiral of Devon, he has affairs with the old Armada hero.

The old lion explodes in an unexpected roar, "Darest thou come into my presence, thou base fellow, who art reputed the common scorn and contempt of all men? Were it not in mine own house, I would cudgel thee with my staff for presuming to speak to me!" Stukely, his tail between his legs, goes off and complains to James. "What should I do with him? Hang him? On my sawle, mon, if I hung all that spoke ill of thee, all the trees in the island were too few." Such is the gratitude of kings, thinks Stukely, and retires to write foolish pamphlets in self-justification, which, unfortunately for his memory, still remain to make bad worse.

Within twelve months he, the rich and proud Vice-Admiral of Devon, with a shield of sixteen quarterings, and the blood-royal in his veins, was detected debasing the King's coin within the precincts of the royal palace, together with his old accomplice, who, being taken, confessed that his charges against Raleigh were false. He fled, a ruined man, back to his native county, and his noble old seat of Affton; but *Até* is on the heels of such,—

"Slowly she tracks him and sure, as a lyme-hound,  
  sudden she grips him,  
Crushing him, blind in his pride, for a sign and a terror to mortals."

A terrible plebiscitum had been passed in the West country against the betrayer of its last Worthy. The gentlemen closed their doors against him; the poor refused him (so goes the legend) fire and water. Driven by the Furies, he fled from Affton, and wandered northward down the vale of Taw, away to Appledore, and there took boat, and out into the boundless Atlantic, over the bar, now crowded with shipping for which Raleigh's genius had discovered a new trade and a new world.

Sixteen miles to the westward, like a blue cloud on the horizon, rises the Ultima Thule of Devon, the little isle of Lundy. There one outlying peak of granite, carrying up a shelf of slate upon its southern flank, has risen through the waves, and formed an island some three miles long, desolate, flat-headed, fretted by every frost and storm, walled all round with four hundred feet of granite cliff, sacred only, (then at least,) to puffins and to pirates. Over the single landing-place frowns from the cliff the keep of an old ruin, "*Moresco Castle*," as they call it still, where some bold rover, Sir John De Moresco, in the times of the old Edwards, worked his works of darkness; a gray, weird, uncanny pile of moorstone, through which all the winds of heaven howl day and night.

In a chamber of that ruin died Sir Lewis Stukely, Lord of Affton, cursing God and man.

His family perished out of Devon. His noble name is now absorbed in that of an ancient Virginian merchant of Bideford; and Afton, burned to the ground a few years after, mouldered to an ivied ruin, on whose dark arch the benighted peasant even now looks askance as on an evil place, and remembers the tale of "the wicked Sir Lewis," and the curse which fell on him and on his house.

These things are true. Said we not well that reality is stranger than romance?

But no Nemesis followed James.

The answer will depend much upon what readers consider to be a Nemesis. If to have found England one of the greatest countries in Europe, and to have left it one of the most inconsiderable and despicable; if to be fooled by flatterers to the top of his vent, until he fancied himself all but a god, while he was not even a man, and could neither speak the truth, keep himself sober, or look on a drawn sword without shrinking; if, lastly, to have left behind him a son who, in spite of many chivalrous instincts, unknown to his father, had been so indoctrinated in that father's vices, as to find it impossible to speak the truth even when it served his purpose; if all these things be no Nemesis, then none fell on James Stuart.

But of that son, at least, the innocent blood was required. He, too, had his share in the sin. In Carew Raleigh's simple and manful petition to the Commons of England for the restoration of his inheritance, we find a significant fact, stated without one word of comment, bitter or otherwise. At Prince Henry's death, the Sherborne lands had been given again to Carr, Lord Somerset. To him, too, "the whirligig of time brought round its revenges," and he lost them when arraigned and condemned for poisoning Sir Thomas Overbury. Then Sir John Digby, afterwards Earl of Bristol, begged Sherborne of the king, and had it. Pembroke (Shakspeare's Pembroke) brought young Carew to Court, hoping to move the tyrant's heart. James saw him and shuddered; perhaps conscience-stricken, perhaps of mere cowardice. "He looked like the ghost of his father," as he well might, to that guilty soul. Good Pembroke advised his young kinsman to travel, which he did till James's death in the next year. Then coming over, (this is his own story,) he asked of Parliament to be restored in blood, that he might inherit aught that might fall to him in England. His petition was read twice in the Lords. Whereon "King Charles sent Sir James Fullarton (then of the bed-chamber) to Mr. Raleigh, to command him to come to him; and being brought in, the king, after using him with great civility, notwithstanding told him plainly, that when



he was prince, he had promised the Earl of Bristol to secure his title to Sherborne against the heirs of Sir Walter Raleigh ; whereon the earl had given him, then prince, ten thousand pounds ; that now he was bound to make good his promise, being king ; that, therefore, unless he would quit his right and title to Sherborne, he neither could nor would pass his bill of restoration."

Young Raleigh, like a good Englishman, "urged," he says, "the justness of his cause ; that he desired only the liberty of the subject, and to be left to the law, which was never denied any freeman." The king remained obstinate. His noble brother's love for the mighty dead weighed nothing with him, much less justice. Poor young Raleigh was forced to submit. The act for his restoration was past, reserving Sherborne for Lord Bristol, and Charles patched up the scoundrelly affair by allowing to Lady Raleigh, and her son after her, a life pension of four hundred a year.

Young Carew tells his story simply, and without a note of bitterness ; though he professes his intent to range himself and his two sons for the future under the banner of the Commons of England, he may be a royalist for any word beside. Even where he mentions the awful curse of his mother, he only alludes to its fulfilment by—"that which hath happened since to that royal family, is too sad and disastrous for me to repeat, and yet too visible not to be discerned." We can have no doubt that he tells the exact truth. Indeed the whole story fits Charles's character to the smallest details. The want of any real sense of justice, combined with the false notion of honour ; the implacable obstinacy ; the contempt for that law by which alone he held his crown ; the combination of unkingly meanness in commanding a private interview, and shamelessness in confessing his own rascality—all these are true notes of the man who could attempt to imprison the five members, and yet organized the Irish rebellion ; who gave up Stafford and Laud to death as his scapegoats, and yet pretended to die himself a martyr for that episcopacy which they brave, though insane, had defended to death long before. But he must have been a rogue early in life, and a needy rogue too. That ten thousand pounds of Lord Bristol's money should make many a sentimentalist reconsider (if, indeed, sentimentalsists can be made to reconsider, or even to consider, any thing) their notion of him as the incarnation of pious chivalry.

At least the ten thousand pounds cost Charles dear. The widow's curse followed him home. Naseby fight and the Whitehall scaffold were God's judgment of such deeds, whatever man's may be.

## PLAYS AND PURITANS.

[*North British Review.*]

THE British isles have been ringing, for the last few years, with the word "Art," in its German sense, with "High Art," "Symbolic Art," "Ecclesiastical Art," "Dramatic Art," "Tragic Art," and so forth; and every well-educated person is expected, now-a-days, to know something about Art. Meanwhile, in spite of all translations of German "Æsthetic" treatises, and "Kunstnovellen," the mass of the British people cares very little about the matter, and sits contented under the imputation of "bad taste." Our stage, long since dead, does not revive; our poetry is dying; our music, like our architecture, only reproduces the past; our painting is only good when it handles landscapes and animals, and will so remain unless Mr. Millais succeed in raising up some higher school: but, meanwhile, nobody cares. Some of the deepest and most earnest minds vote the question, in general, a "sham and a snare," and whisper to each other confidentially, that Gothic art is beginning to be a "bore," and that Sir Christopher Wren was a very good fellow after all; while the middle classes look on at the Art movement half amused, as with a pretty toy, half sulkily suspicious of Popery and Paganism; and think, apparently, that Art is very well when it means nothing, and is merely used to beautify drawing-rooms and shawl patterns; not to mention that if there were no painters, Mr. Smith could not hand down to posterity likenesses of himself, Mrs. Smith, and family. But when "Art" dares to be in earnest, and

1. *Works of Beaumont and Fletcher.* 2. *Works of Ben Jonson.* 3. *Massinger's Plays.* Edited by WILLIAM GIFFORD, Esq. 4. *Works of John Webster.* Edited, &c., by Rev. ALEXANDER DYCE. 5. *Works of James Shirley.* Edited by Rev. A. DYCE. 6. *Works of T. Middleton.* Edited by Rev. A. DYCE. 7. *Comedies, &c.* By Mr. WILLIAM CARTWRIGHT. 8. *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets.* By CHARLES LAMB. 9. *Histrionastix.* By W. PRYNNE, Utter-Barrister of Lincoln's Inn. 10. *Northbrooke's Treatise against Plays, &c.* 11. *The Works of Bishop Hall.* 12. *Marston's Satires.* 13. *Jeremy Collier's Short View of the Profaneness, &c., of the English Stage.* 14. *Langbaine's English Dramatists.* 15. *Companion to the Playhouse.* 16. *Riccoboni's Account of the Theatres in Europe.*

to mean something, much more to connect itself with religion, Smith's tone alters. He will teach "Art" to keep in what he considers its place, and if it refuses, take the law of it, and put it into the Ecclesiastical Court. So he says; and what is more, he means what he says; and as all the world, from Hindostan to Canada, knows by most practical proof, what he means, he sooner or later does, perhaps not always in the wisest way, but still he does it.

Thus, in fact, the temper of the British nation toward "Art," is simply that of the old Puritans, softened, no doubt, and widened; but only enough so as to permit Art, not to encourage it.

Were we Germans, our thoughts on this curious fact would probably take the form of some æsthetic *à priori* disquisition, beginning with "the tendency of the infinite to reveal itself in the finite," and ending—who can tell where? But being Britons, we cannot honestly arrogate to ourselves, as our German brothers seem so fond of doing, any skill in the *scientia scientiarum*, or say, "The Lord possessed *me* in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. When he prepared the heavens, I was there, when he set a compass upon the face of the deep." Leaving, therefore, æsthetic science to those who think that they comprehend it, we will, as simple disciples of Bacon, deal with facts, and with history as "the will of God revealed in facts." We will leave those who choose to settle what ought to be, and ourselves look patiently at that which actually was once, and which may be again; that so out of the conduct of our old Puritan forefathers, (right or wrong,) and their long war against "Art," we may learn a wholesome lesson, as we doubtless shall, if we will believe firmly that our history is neither more nor less than what the old Hebrew prophets called "God's gracious dealings with his people," and not say in our hearts, like some sentimental girl who sings Jacobite ballads, (written forty years ago by men who cared no more for the Stuarts than for the Ptolemies, and were ready to kiss the dust off George the Fourth's feet at his visit to Edinburgh)—"Victrix causa Deis placuit, sed victa puellis."

The historian of a time of change has always a difficult and invidious task. For revolutions, in the great majority of cases, arise, not merely from the crimes of a few great men, but from a general viciousness and decay of the whole, or the majority of the nation; and that viciousness is certain to be made up, in great part, of a loosening of domestic ties, of breaches of the Seventh Commandment, and of sins connected with them, which

a writer is now hardly permitted to mention. An "evil and adulterous generation" has been in all ages and countries the one marked out for intestine and internecine strife. That description is always applicable to a revolutionary generation, whether or not it also comes under the class of a superstitious one, "seeking after a sign from heaven," only half believing its own creed, and, therefore, on tiptoe for miraculous confirmations of it at the same time that it fiercely persecutes any one who, by attempting innovation or reform, seems about to snatch from weak faith the last plank which keeps it from sinking into the abyss. In describing such an age, the historian lies under this paradoxical disadvantage, that his case is actually too strong for him to state it. If he tells the whole truth, the easy-going and respectable multitude, in easy-going and respectable days like these, will either shut their ears prudishly to his painful facts, or reject them as incredible, unaccustomed as they are to find similar horrors and abominations among people of their own rank, of whom they are naturally inclined to judge by their own standard of civilization. Thus if any one, in justification of the Reformation, and the British hatred of Popery during the sixteenth century, should dare to detail the undoubted facts of the Inquisition, and to comment on them dramatically enough to make his readers feel about them what men who witnessed them felt, he would be accused of a "morbid love of horrors." If any one, in order to show how the French Revolution of 1793 was really God's judgment on the profligacy of the *ancien régime*, were to paint that profligacy as the men of the *ancien régime* unblushingly painted it themselves, respectability would have a right to demand, "How dare you, sir, drag such disgusting facts from their merited oblivion?" Those, again, who are really acquainted with the history of Henry the Eighth's marriages, are well aware of facts which prove him to have been, not a man of violent and lawless passions, but of a cold temperament and a scrupulous conscience; but they cannot be stated in print, save in the most delicate and passing hints, which will be taken only by those who at once understand such matters, and really wish to know the truth; while young ladies in general will still look on Henry as the monster in human form, because no one dares, or indeed ought, to undeceive them by anything beyond bare assertion without proof.

"But what matter," some one may say, "what young ladies think about history?" This it matters; that these young ladies will some day be mothers, and as such will teach their children their own notions of modern history; and that, as long as men confine themselves to the teaching of Roman and Greek history,

and leave the history of their own country to be handled exclusively by their unmarried sisters, so long will slanders, superstitions, and false political principles be perpetuated in the minds of our boys and girls.

But still a worse evil arises from the fact that the historian's case is often too strong to be stated. There is always a reactionary party, or one at least which lingers sentimentally over the dream of past golden ages, such as that of which Cowley says, with a sort of *naïve* blasphemy, at which one knows not whether to smile or sigh,—

“When God, the cause to me and men unknown,  
Forsook the royal houses, and his own.”

These have full liberty to say all that they can in praise of the defeated system; but the historian has no such liberty to state the case against it. If he dare even to assert that he has counter-facts, but dare not state them, he is at once met with a *præjudicium*. The mere fact of his having ascertained the truth is imputed as a blame to him, in a sort of prudish cant. “What a very improper person he must be to like to dabble in such improper books that they must not even be quoted.” If in self-defence he desperately gives his facts, he only increases the feeling against him, whilst the reactionists, hiding their blushing faces, find in their modesty an excuse for avoiding the truth; if, on the other hand, he content himself with bare assertion, and indicating the sources from whence his conclusions are drawn, what care the reactionists? They know well that the public will not take the trouble to consult manuscripts, State papers, pamphlets, rare biographies, but will content themselves with ready-made history from the pen of Hume or Clarendon, Fraser Tytler, or Miss Strickland; and they therefore go on unblushing to republish their old romance, leaving poor truth, after she has been painfully haled up to the well's mouth, to tumble miserably to the bottom of it again.

In the face of this danger, we will go on to lay as much as we dare of the great cause, Puritans *v.* Players, before our readers, trusting to find some of them at least sufficiently unacquainted with the common notions on the point, to form a fair decision.

What those notions are, is well known. Very many of her Majesty's subjects are now of opinion that the first half of the Seventeenth Century, (if the Puritans had not interfered and spoilt all,) was the most beautiful period of the English nation's life; that in it the chivalry and ardent piety of the middle age

were happily combined with modern art and civilization; that the Puritan hatred of the Court, of stage-plays, of the fashions of the time, was only a scrupulous and fantastical niceness, barbaric and tasteless, if sincere; if insincere, the basest hypocrisy; that the stage-plays, though coarse, were no worse than Shakspeare, whom everybody reads; and that if the Stuarts patronized the stage they also raised it, and exercised a purifying censorship. And very many more who do not go all these lengths with the reactionists, and cannot make up their mind to look to the Stuart reigns either for model churchmen, or model landlords, are still inclined to sneer with Walter Scott at the Puritan "preciseness;" and to say lazily, that though, of course, something may have been wrong, yet there was no need to make such a fuss about the matter; and that at all events the Puritans were men of very bad taste.

Mr. Gifford, in his introduction to Massinger's Plays, (1813,) was probably the spokesman of his own generation, certainly of a great part of this generation also, when he informs us, that "with Massinger terminated the triumph of dramatic poetry; indeed, the stage itself survived him but a short time. The nation was convulsed to its centre by contending factions, and a set of austere and gloomy fanatics, enemies to every elegant amusement, and every social relaxation, rose upon the ruins of the State. Exasperated by the ridicule with which they had long been covered by the stage, they persecuted the actors with unrelenting severity, and consigned them, together with the writers, to hopeless obscurity and wretchedness. Taylor died in the extreme of poverty, Shirley opened a little school at Brentford, and Downe, the boast of the stage, kept an ale-house at Brentford. Others, and those the far greater number, joined the royal standard, and exerted themselves with more gallantry than good fortune in the service of their old and indulgent master.

"We have not yet, perhaps, fully estimated, and certainly not yet fully recovered what was lost in that unfortunate struggle. The arts were rapidly advancing to perfection under the fostering wing of a monarch who united in himself taste to feel, spirit to undertake, and munificence to reward. Architecture, painting, and poetry, were by turns the objects of his paternal care. Shakspeare was his 'closet companion,' Jonson his poet, and in conjunction with Inigo Jones, his favoured architect, produced those magnificent entertainments," &c.

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He then goes on to account for the supposed sudden fall of dramatic art at the Restoration, by the somewhat far-fetched theory that—

“Such was the horror created in the general mind by the perverse and unsocial government from which they had so fortunately escaped, that the people appear to have anxiously avoided all retrospect, and with Prynne and Vicars, to have lost sight of Shakspeare and ‘his fellows.’ Instead, therefore, of taking up dramatic poetry where it abruptly ceased in the labours of Massinger, they elicited, as it were, a manner of their own, or fetched it from the heavy monotony of their continental neighbours.”

So is history written, and, what is more, believed. The amount of misrepresentation in this passage (which would probably pass current with most readers in the present day) is quite ludicrous. In the first place, it will hardly be believed that these words occur in an essay, which after extolling Massinger as one of the greatest poets of his age, second, indeed, only to Shakspeare, also informs us, (and, it seems, quite truly,) that so far from having been really appreciated or patronized, he maintained a constant struggle with adversity,—“that even the bounty of his particular friends, on which he chiefly relied, left him in a state of absolute dependence,”—that while “other writers for the stage had their periods of good fortune, Massinger seems to have enjoyed no gleam of sunshine; his life was all one misty day, and ‘shadows, clouds, and darkness rested on it.’”

So much for Charles’s patronage of a really great poet. What sort of men he did patronize, practically and in earnest, we shall see hereafter, when we come to speak of Mr. Shirley.

But Mr. Gifford must needs give an instance to prove that Charles was “not inattentive to the success of Massinger,” and a curious one it is; of the same class, unfortunately, as that with the man in the old story, who recorded with pride that the King had spoken to him, and—had told him to get out of the way.

Massinger, in his *King and the Subject* had introduced Don Pedro of Spain thus speaking—

“Moneys! We’ll raise supplies which way we please,  
And force you to subscribe to blanks, in which  
We’ll mulct you as we shall think fit. The Cæsars  
In Rome were wise, acknowledging no law  
But what their swords did ratify, the wives  
And daughters of the senators bowing to  
Their will, as deities,” &c.

Against which passage, Charles, reading over the play before he allowed of it, had written, “This is too insolent, and not to be printed.” Too insolent it certainly was, considering the state of public matters in the year 1638. It would be interesting enough to analyze the reasons which made Charles dislike in the mouth of Pedro sentiments so very like his own; but we must proceed, only pointing out the way in which men determined to repeat the

traditional clap-trap about the Stuarts, are actually blind to the meaning of the very facts which they themselves quote.

Where, then, do the facts of history contradict Mr. Gifford?

We believe, that so far from the triumph of dramatic poetry terminating with Massinger, dramatic art had been steadily growing worse from the first years of James; that instead of the arts advancing to perfection under Charles the First, they steadily deteriorated in quality, though the supply became more abundant; that so far from there having been a sudden change for the worse in the drama after the Restoration, the taste of Charles the First's and of Charles the Second's court, are indistinguishable; that the court poets, and probably the actors, also, of the early part of Charles the Second's reign, had many of them belonged to the Court of Charles the First, as did Davenant, the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle, Fanshaw, and Shirley himself; that the common notion of a "new manner" having been introduced from France, after the Restoration, or, indeed, having come in at all, is not founded on fact, the only change being that the plays of Charles the Second's time were somewhat more stupid, and that while five of the seven deadly sins had always had free license on the stage, blasphemy and profane swearing were now enfranchised to fill up the seven. As for the assertion that the new manner (supposing it to have existed) was imported from France, there is far more reason to believe that the French copied us than we them, and that, if they did not learn from Charles the First's poets the superstition of "the three unities," they at least learnt to make ancient kings and heroes talk and act like seventeenth century courtiers, and to exchange their old clumsy masques and translations of Italian and Spanish farces for a comedy depicting native scoundrelism. Probably enough, indeed, the great and sudden development of the French stage, which took place between 1650 and 1660, under Corneille and Molière, was excited by the English cavalier playwrights who took refuge in France.

No doubt, as Mr. Gifford says, the Puritans were exasperated against the stage-players by the insults heaped on them; but the cause of quarrel lay far deeper than any such personal soreness. The Puritans had attacked the players before the players meddled with them, and that on principle, with what justification must be considered hereafter. But the fact is, (and this seems to have been, like many other facts, conveniently forgotten,) that the Puritans were by no means alone in their protest against the stage, and that the war was not begun exclusively by them. As early as the latter half of the sixteenth century, not merely Northbrooke, Gosson, Stubs, and Reynolds, had lifted up their



voices against them, but Archbishop Parker, Bishop Babington, Bishop Hall, and the author of the *Mirror for Magistrates*. The University of Oxford, in 1584, had passed a statute forbidding common plays and players in the university, on the very same moral grounds on which the Puritans objected to them. The city of London, in 1580, had obtained from the queen the suppression of plays on Sunday, and not long after, "considering that play-houses and dicing-houses were traps for young gentlemen and others," obtained leave from the queen and privy-council to thrust the players out of the city, and to pull down the play-houses, five in number; and, paradoxical as it may seem, there is little doubt that, by the letter of the law, "stage-plays and interludes" were, even to the end of Charles the First's reign, "unlawful pastime," being forbidden by 14 Eliz., 39 Eliz., 1 Jacobi, 3 Jacobi, and 1 Caroli, and the players subject to severe punishment as "rogues and vagabonds." The Act of 1 Jacobi seems even to have gone so far as to repeal the clauses which, in Elizabeth's reign, had allowed companies of players the protection of a "baron or honourable person of greater degree," who might "authorize them to play under his hand and seal of arms." So that the Puritans were only demanding of the sovereigns that they should enforce the very laws which they themselves had made, and which they and their nobles were setting at defiance. Whether the plays ought to have been put down, and whether the laws were necessary, are different questions; but certainly the court and the aristocracy stood in the questionable, though too common, position of men who made laws to prohibit to the poor amusements in which they themselves indulged without restraint.

But were these plays objectionable? As far as the comedies are concerned, that will depend on the answer to the question, Are plays objectionable, the staple subject of which is adultery? Now, we cannot but agree with the Puritans, that adultery is not a subject for comedy at all. It may be for tragedy; but for comedy never. It is a sin; not merely theologically, but socially, one of the very worst sins, the parent of seven other sins—of falsehood, suspicion, hate, murder, and a whole bevy of devils. The prevalence of adultery in any country has always been a sign and a cause of social insincerity, division, and revolution; and where a people has learnt to connive and laugh at it, and to treat it as a light thing, that people has been always careless, base, selfish, cowardly—ripe for slavery. And we must say, that either the courtiers and Londoners of James and Charles the First were in that state, or that the poets were doing their best to make them so.

We shall not shock our readers by any disgusting details on this point; we shall only say, that there is hardly a comedy of the seventeenth century, with the exception of Shakspeare's, in which adultery is not introduced as a subject of laughter, and often made the staple of the whole plot. The seducer is, if not openly applauded, at least let to pass as a "handsome gentleman;" the injured husband is, as in that Italian literature of which we shall speak shortly, the object of every kind of scorn and ridicule. In this latter habit (common to most European nations) there is a sort of justice. A man can generally retain his wife's affections if he will behave himself like a man, and "injured husbands" have for the most part no one to blame but themselves. But the matter is not a subject for comedy; not even in that case which has been always too common in France, Italy, and the Romish countries, and which seems to have been painfully common in England in the seventeenth century, when, by a *marriage de convenance*, a young girl is married up to a rich idiot or a decrepit old man. Such things are not comedies, but tragedies; subjects for pity and for silence, not for brutal ribaldry. And the men who look on them in the light which the Stuart dramatists did are not good men, and do no good service to the country, especially when they erect adultery into a science, and seem to take a perverse pleasure in teaching their audience every possible method, accident, cause, and consequence of it; always, too, when they have an opportunity, pointing "Eastward, Ho!" *i. e.* to the city of London, as the quarter where court gallants can find boundless indulgence for their passions, amid the fair wives of dull and cowardly citizens. If the citizens drove the players out of London, the play-wrights took good care to have their revenge. The citizen is their standard butt. These shallow parasites, and their shallower sovereigns, seem to have taken a perverse, and, as it happened, a fatal pleasure, in insulting them. Sad it is to see in Shirley's *Gamester*, Charles the First's favourite play, a passage like that in Act I. Scene 1, where old Barnacle proclaims, unblushing, his own shame and that of his fellow-merchants. Surely, if Charles ever could have repented of any act of his own, he must have repented, in many a humiliating after-passage with that same city of London, of having given those base words his royal warrant and approbation.

The tragedies of the seventeenth century are, on the whole, as questionable as the comedies. That there are noble plays among them here and there, no one denies—no more than that there are exquisitely amusing plays among the comedies; but as the staple interest of the comedies is dulness, so the staple interest of the trage-

dies is crime. Revenge, hatred, villainy, incest, and murder upon murder, are the constant themes, and (with the exception of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson in his earlier plays, and perhaps Massinger) they handle these horrors with little or no moral purpose, save that of exciting and amusing the audience, and of displaying their own power of delineation, in a way which makes one but too ready to believe the accusations of the Puritans, (supported as they are by many painful anecdotes,) that the play-writers and actors were mostly men of fierce and reckless lives, who had but too practical an acquaintance with the dark passions which they sketch. This is notoriously the case with most of the French novelists of the modern "Literature of Horror," and the two literatures are morally identical. We do not know of a complaint which can be justly brought against the School of Victor Hugo and Dumas, which will not equally apply to the average tragedy of the whole period preceding the civil wars.

This public appetite for horrors, for which they catered so greedily, tempted them toward another mistake, which brought upon them (and not undeservedly) heavy odium.

One of the worst counts against Dramatic Art, (as well as against Pictorial,) was the simple fact that it came from Italy. We must fairly put ourselves into the position of an honest Englishman of the seventeenth century, before we can appreciate the huge *præjudicium* which must needs arise in his mind against any thing which could claim a Transalpine parentage. Italy was then not merely the stronghold of Popery, though that in itself would have been a fair reason for any man's saying, "If the root be corrupt, the fruit will be also; any expression of Italian thought and feeling must be probably unwholesome, while her vitals are being eaten out by an abominable falsehood, only half believed by the masses, and not believed at all by the higher classes even of the priesthood, but only kept up for their private aggrandizement." But there was more than hypothesis in favour of the man who might say this; there was universal, notorious, shocking fact. It was a fact that Italy was the centre where sins were invented worthy of the doom of the Cities of the Plain, and from whence they spread to all nations who had connection with her. We dare give no proof of this assertion. The Italian morals and the Italian lighter literature of the sixteenth and of the beginning of the seventeenth century were such, that one is almost ashamed to confess that one has looked into them, although the painful task is absolutely necessary for one who wishes to understand either the European society of the time, or the Puritan hatred of the drama: *Non ragionam di lor: ma guarda è passa.*

It is equally a fact, that these vices were imported into England by the young men who, under pretence of learning the Italian polish, travelled to Italy. From the days of Gabriel Harvey and Lord Oxford, about the middle of Elizabeth's reign, this foul tide had begun to set toward England, gaining an additional coarseness and frivolity in passing through the French Court (then an utter Gehenna) in its course hitherward; till, to judge by Marston's satires, certain members of the higher classes had, by the beginning of James's reign, learnt nearly all which the Italians had to teach them. Marston writes in a rage, it is true—foaming, stamping, and vapouring too much to escape the suspicion of exaggeration; yet he dared not have published the things which he does, had he not fair ground for some at least of his assertions. And Marston, be it remembered, was no Puritan, but a play-wright, and Ben Jonson's friend.

Bishop Hall, in his Satires, described things as bad enough, though not so bad as Marston does; but what is even more to the purpose, he wrote and dedicated to James, a long dissuasive against the fashion of running abroad. Whatever may be thought of the arguments of "*Quo vadis, or a Censure of Travel*," its main drift is clear enough. Young gentlemen, by going to Italy, learnt to be fops and profligates, and probably Papists into the bargain. These assertions there is no denying. Since the days of Lord Oxford, most of the ridiculous and expensive fashions in dress had come from Italy, as well as the newest modes of sin; and the play-wrights themselves make no secret of the fact. There is no need to quote instances; they are innumerable, and the stronger ones are not fit to be quoted, any more than the titles of the plays in which they occur; but justifying almost every line of Bishop Hall's fierce questions, (of which some of the strongest expressions have necessarily been omitted,)—

"What mischief have we among us which we have not borrowed?"

"To begin at our skin: who knows not whence we had the variety of our vain disguises? As if we had not wit enough to be foolish unless we were taught it. These dresses being constant in their mutability, show us our masters. What is it that we have not learned of our neighbours, save only to be proud good-cheap? whom would it not vex, to see how that the other sex hath learned to make anticks and monsters of themselves? Whence come their" (absurd fashions); "but the one from some ill-shaped dame of France, the other from the worse-minded courtezans of Italy? Whence else learned they to daub these mud-walls with apothecaries' mortar; and those high washes, which are so cunningly licked on, that the wet napkin of Phryne should be deceived? Whence the frizzled and powdered bushes of their borrowed excrement? As if they were ashamed of the head of God's making, and proud of the tire-woman's. Where

learned we that devilish art and practice of duel, wherein men seek honour in blood, and are taught the ambition of being glorious butchers of men? Where had we that luxurious delicacy in our feasts, in which the nose is no less pleased than the palate, and the eye no less than either? wherein the piles of dishes make barricadoes against the appetite, and with a pleasing incumbrance trouble a hungry guest. Where those forms of ceremonious quaffing, in which men have learned to make gods of others and beasts of themselves, and lose their reason while they pretend to do reason? Where the lawlessness (miscalled freedom) of a wild tongue, that runs, with reins in the neck, through the bed-chambers of princes, their closets, their council tables, and spares not the very cabinet of their breasts, much less can be barred out of the most retired secrecy of inferior greatness? Where, the change of noble attendance and hospitality into four wheels and some few butterflies? Where, the art of dishonesty in practical Machiavelism, in false equivocations? Where, the slight account of that filthiness, which is but condemned as venial, and tolerated as not unnecessary? Where, the skill of civil and honourable hypocrisy, in those formal compliments, which do neither expect belief from others, nor carry any from ourselves? Where," (and here Bishop Hall begins to speak concerning things on which we must be silent, as of matters notorious and undeniable.) "Where, that close Atheism, which secretly laughs God in the face, and thinks it weakness to believe, wisdom to profess any religion? Where, the bloody and tragical science of king-killing, the new divinity of disobedience and rebellion? with too many other evils, wherewith foreign conversation hath endangered the infection of our peace?"—Bishop Hall's *Quo Vadis, or a Censure of Travel*, vol. xii. sect. 22.

Add to these a third plain fact, that Italy was the mother-country of the drama, where it had thriven with wonderful fertility, ever since the beginning of the sixteenth century. However much truth there may be in the common assertion, that the old "miracle plays" and "mysteries" were the parents of the English drama, (as they certainly were of the Spanish and the Italian,) we have yet to learn how much our stage owed, from its first rise under Elizabeth, to direct importations from Italy. This is merely thrown out as a suggestion; to establish the fact would require a wide acquaintance with the early Italian drama; meanwhile, let two patent facts have their due weight. The names of the characters in most of our early regular comedies are Italian; so are the scenes, and so, one hopes, are the manners; at least they profess to be so. Next, the plots of many of the dramas are notoriously taken from the Italian novelists; and if Shakspeare (who had a truly divine instinct for finding honey where others found poison,) went to Cinthio for *Othello* and *Measure for Measure*, to Bandello for *Romeo and Juliet*, and to Boccaccio for *Cymbeline*, there were plenty of other playwrights

who would go to the same sources for worse matter, or at least, catch from these profligate writers somewhat of their Italian morality, which exalts adultery into a virtue, seduction into a science, and revenge into a duty; which revels in the horrible as freely as any French novelist of the romantic school; and whose only value is its pitiless exposure of the profligacy of the Romish priesthood: if an exposure can be valuable which makes a mock equally of things truly and falsely sacred, and leaves on the reader's mind the fear that the writer saw nothing in heaven or earth worthy of belief, respect, or self-sacrifice, save personal enjoyment.

Now this is the morality of the Italian novelists; and to judge from their vivid sketches, (which, they do not scruple to assert, were drawn from life, and for which they unblushingly give names, places, and all details which might amuse the noble gentlemen and ladies to whom the stories are dedicated,) this had been the morality of Italy for some centuries past. This, also, is the general morality of the English stage in the seventeenth century. Can we wonder that thinking men should have seen a connection between Italy and the stage? Certainly the playwrights put themselves between the horns of an ugly dilemma. Either the vices which they depicted were those of general English society, and of themselves also, (for they lived in the very heart of town and court foppery,) or else they were the vices of a foreign country, with which the English were comparatively unacquainted. In the first case, we can only say, that the Stuart age in England was one which deserved purgation of the most terrible kind, and to get rid of which the severest and most abnormal measures would have been not only justifiable, but, to judge by the experience of all history, necessary; for extraordinary diseases never have been, and never will be, eradicated save by extraordinary medicines. In the second case, the playwrights were wantonly defiling the minds of the people, and instead of "holding up a mirror to vice," instructing frail virtue in vices which she had not learned, and fully justifying old Prynne's indignant complaint:—

"The acting of foreign, obsolete, and long since forgotten villainies, on the stage, is so far from working a detestation of them in the spectators' minds, (who, perchance, were utterly ignorant of them, till they were acquainted with them at the playhouse, and so needed no dehortation from them,) that it often excites degenerate dunghill spirits, who have nothing in them for to make them eminent, to reduce them into practice, of purpose to perpetuate their spurious ill-serving memories to posterity, least-wise in some tragic interlude."

That Prynne spoke herein nought but sober sense, our own police reports will sufficiently prove. It is notorious that the representation, in our own days, of *Tom and Jerry* and of *Jack Sheppard*, did excite dozens of young lads to imitate the scoundrel heroes of those base dramas; and such must have been the effect of similar and worse representations in the Stuart age. No rational man will need the authority of Bishop Babington, Doctor Layton, Archbishop Parker, Purchas, Sparkes, Reynolds, White, or any one else, Churchman or Puritan, prelate or "penitent reclaimed play-poet" like Stephen Gosson, to convince him that, as they assert, citizens' wives, (who are generally represented as the proper subjects for seduction,) \* have, even on their death-beds, with tears confest that they have received, at these spectacles, such evil infections as have turned their minds from chaste cogitations, and made them, of honest women, light hus-wives; . . . have brought their husbands into contempt, their children into question, . . . and their souls into the assault of a dangerous state; or that "The devices of carrying and recarrying letters by laundresses, practising with peddlers to transport their tokens by colorable means to sell their merchandise, and other kinds of policies to beguile fathers of their children, husbands of their wives, guardians of their wards, and masters of their servants, were aptly taught in these schools of abuse?"

The matter is simple enough. We should not allow these plays to be acted in our own day because we know that they would produce their effects. We should call him a madman who allowed his daughters or his servants to see such representations. Why, in all fairness, were the Puritans wrong in condemning that which we now have absolutely forbidden?

We will go no further into the sickening details of the licentiousness of the old playhouses. Gosson, and his colleague the anonymous Penitent, assert them, as does Prynne, to have been not only schools but ante-chambers to houses of a worse kind, and that the lessons learned in the pit were only not practised also in the pit. What reason have we to doubt it, who know that till Mr. Macready commenced a practical reformation of this abuse, for which his name will be ever respected, our own comparatively purified stage was just the same? Let any one who remembers the saloons of Drury Lane and Covent Garden thirty years ago judge for himself what the accessories of the Globe or the Fortune must have been, in days when players

\* *The Third Blast of Retreat from Plays and Theatres.* Penned by a Play-poet.

were allowed to talk inside, as freely as the public behaved outside.

Not that the poets or the players had any conscious intention of demoralizing their hearers, any more than they had of correcting them. We will lay on them the blame of no special *malus animus*; but, at the same time, we must treat their fine words about "holding a mirror up to vice," and "showing the age its own deformity," as mere cant, which the men themselves must have spoken tongue in cheek. It was as much an insincere cant in those days as it was when, two generations later, Jeremy Collier exposed its impudent falsehood in the mouth of Congreve. If the poets had really intended to show vice its own deformity they would have represented it, (as Shakspeare always does,) as punished, and not as triumphant. It is ridiculous to talk of moral purpose in works in which there is no moral justice. The only condition which can excuse the representation of evil is omitted. The simple fact is, that the poets wanted to draw a house; that this could most easily be done by the coarsest and most violent means, and that, not being able to find stories exciting enough, from their foulness or horror, in the past records of sober British society, they went to Italy and Spain for the violent passions and wild crimes of southern temperaments, excited, and yet left lawless, by a superstition believed in enough to darken and brutalize, but not enough to control its victims. Romish countries, then as now, furnished that strange mixture of inward savagery with outward civilization, which is the immoral playwright's fittest material, because, while the inward savagery moves the passions of the audience, the outward civilization brings the character near enough to them to give them a likeness of themselves in their worst moments, which no *Mystery of Cain and Abel*, or *Tragedy of Oronooko*, can do.

Does this seem too severe in the eyes of those who value the drama for its lessons in human nature? On that especial point something must be said hereafter. Meanwhile hear one of the sixteenth century poets; one who cannot be suspected of any leaning toward Puritanism; one who had as high notions of his vocation as any man; and one who so far fulfilled those notions as to become a dramatist inferior only to Shakspeare. Let Ben Jonson himself speak, and in his preface to *Volpone*, tell us, in his own noble prose, what he thought of the average morality of his contemporary playwrights:—

"For if men will impartially and not asquint look toward the offices and functions of a poet, they will easily conclude to themselves



the impossibility of any man's being a good poet without first being a good man. He that is said to be able to inform young men to all good discipline, inflame grown men to all great virtues, keep old men in their best and supreme state, or, as they decline to childhood, recover them to their first strength; that comes forth the interpreter and arbitrator of nature, a teacher of things divine no less than human, a master in manners; and can alone (or with a few) effect the business of mankind; this, I take him, is no subject for pride and ignorance to exercise their railing rhetoric upon. But it will here be hastily answered, that the writers of these days are other things, that not only their manners but their natures are inverted, and nothing remaining of them of the dignity of poet but the abused name, which every scribe usurps; that now, especially in dramatick, or (as they term it) stage poetry, nothing but ribaldry, profanation, blasphemies, all licence of offence toward God and man is practised. I dare not deny a great part of this, (and I am sorry I dare not,) because in some men's abortive features, (and would God they had never seen the light,) it is over true; but that all are bound on his bold adventure for hell, is a most uncharitable thought, and uttered, a more malicious slander. For every particular I can (and from a most clear conscience) affirm, that I have ever trembled to think toward the least profaneness, and have loathed the use of such foul and unwashed," . . . [his expression is too strong for quotation] "as is now made the food of the scene."

We are loth to curtail this splendid passage, both for its lofty ideal of poetry, and for its corroboration of the Puritan complaints against the stage: but a few lines on a still stronger sentence occurs,—

"The increase of which lust in liberty, together with the present trade of the stage, in all their masculine interludes, what liberal soul doth not abhor? Where nothing but filth of the mire is uttered, and that with such impropriety of phrase, such plenty of solecisms, such dearth of sense, so bold prolepses, such racked metaphors, with (indecent) able to violate the ear of a Pagan, and blasphemy to turn the blood of a Christian to water."

So speaks Ben Jonson in 1605, not finding, it seems, play-writing a peaceful trade, or play-poets and play-hearers improving company. After him, we should say, no farther testimony on this unpleasant matter ought to be necessary. He may have been morose, fanatical, exaggerative: but his bitter words suggest at least this dilemma. Either they are true, and the play-house atmosphere, (as Prynne says it was,) that of Gehenna: or they are untrue, and the mere fruits of spite and envy against more successful poets. And what does that latter prove, but that the greatest poet of his age (after Shakspeare was gone) was

not as much esteemed as some poets whom we know to have been more filthy, and more horrible than he? which, indeed, is the main complaint of Jonson himself. It will be rejoined, of course, that he was an altogether envious man; that he envied Shakspeare, girded at his York and Lancaster plays, at *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*, in the prologue to *Every Man in his Humor*; and, indeed, Jonson's writings, and those of many other playwrights, leave little doubt that stage rivalry called out the bitterest hatred, and the basest vanity; and that, perhaps, Shakspeare's great soul was giving way to the pettiest passions, when in Hamlet he had his fling at the "aiery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapp'd for't." It may be that he was girding in return at Jonson, when he complained that "their writers did them wrong to make them complain against their own succession," *i. e.* against themselves, when "grown to common players." Be that as it may. Great Shakspeare may have been unjust to only less great Jonson, as Jonson was to Shakspeare: but Jonson certainly is not so in all his charges. Some of the faults of which he complains are faults.

At all events, we know that he was not unjust to the average of his contemporaries, by the evidence of the men's own plays. We know that the decadence of the stage of which he complains went on uninterruptedly after his time, and in the very direction which he pointed out. On this point there can be no doubt; for these hodmen of poetry "made a wall in our father's house, and the bricks are alive to testify unto this day." So that we cannot do better than give a few samples thereof, at least samples decent enough for modern readers, and let us begin with Jonson himself.

Now, we love Ben Jonson and respect him too, for he was a very great genius, immaculate or not. "Rare Ben," with all his faults. We can never look without affection on the magnificent manhood of that rich free forehead, even though we sigh over the petulance and pride which brood upon the lip and eyebrow.

"Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,  
The love of love."

A Michael Angelo, who could laugh, which that Italian one (one fancies) never could. We have, too, a sort of delicacy about saying much against him; for he is dead, and can make (for the time being at least) no rejoinder. There are dead men whom one is not much ashamed to "upset" after their death, because one would not have been much afraid of doing so when they were

alive. But "Rare Ben" had terrible teeth, and used them too; we should have thought twice ere we snapt at him living, and therefore it seems somewhat a cowardly trick to bark securely at his ghost. Nevertheless, let us ask him, or at least his readers, Do not his own words justify the Puritan complaints? If so, why does he rail at the Puritans for making their complaints? His answer would have been that they railed in their ignorance, not merely at low art, as we call it now, but at high art and all art. Be it so. Here was their fault, if fault it was in those days. For to discriminate between high art and low art they must have seen both. And for Jonson's wrath to be fair and just he must have shown them both. Let us see what the pure drama is like which he wishes to substitute for the foul drama of his contemporaries, and, to bring the matter nearer home, let us take one of the plays in which he hits deliberately at the Puritans, namely, the *Alchemist*, said to have been first acted in 1610, "by the king's majesty's servants." Look, then, at this well-known play, and take Jonson at his word. Allow that Ananias and Tribulation Wholesome (as they very probably are) are fair portraits of a class among the sectaries of the day: but bear in mind, too, that if this be allowed, the other characters shall be held as fair portraits also. Otherwise, all must be held to be caricature; and then the onslaught on the Puritans vanishes into nothing, or worse: in either case, Ananias and Tribulation are the best men in the play. They palter with their consciences, no doubt; but they have consciences, which no one else in the play has, except poor Surly, and he, be it remembered, comes to shame, and is made a laughing-stock, and "cheats himself," as he complains at last, "by that same foolish vice of honesty," while in all the rest what have we but every form of human baseness? Lovell, the master, if he is to be considered a negative character, as doing no wrong, has, at all events, no more recorded of him than the noble act of marrying by deceit a young widow for the sake of her money, the philosopher's stone, by the by, and highest object of most of the seventeenth century dramatists. If most of the rascals meet with due disgrace, none of them is punished; and the greatest rascal of all, who, when escape is impossible, turns traitor, and after deserving the cart and pillory a dozen times for his last and most utter baseness, "is rewarded by full pardon, and the honour of addressing the audience at the play's end in the most smug and self-satisfied tone, and of putting himself on you that are my country," not doubting, it seems, that there were among them a fair majority who would think him a very smart fellow, worthy of all imitation.

Now, is this play a moral or an immoral one? Should we take our sons and daughters to see it? Of its coarseness we say nothing. We should not endure it, of course, now-a-days; and on that point something must be said hereafter; but if we were to endure plain speaking as the only method of properly exposing vice, should we endure the moral which, instead of punishing vice, rewards it?

And, meanwhile, what sort of a general state of society among the Anti-Puritan party does the play sketch? What but a horrible background of profligacy and frivolity?

A proof, indeed, of the general downward tendencies of the age may be found in the writings of Ben Jonson himself. Howsoever pure and lofty the ideal which he laid down for himself (and no doubt honestly) in the Preface to *Volpone*, he found it impossible to keep up to it. Nine years afterwards we find him, in his *Bartholomew Fair*, catering to the low tastes of James the First in ribaldry, at which, if one must needs laugh, (as who that was not more than man could help doing over that scene between Rabbi Busy and the puppets?) shallow and untrue as the gist of the humour is, one feels the next moment as if one had been indulging in unholy mirth at the expense of some grand old Noah who has come to shame in his cups.

But lower still does Jonson fall in that masque of the *Gypseys Metamorphosed*, presented to the king in 1621, when Jonson was forty-seven, old enough, one would have thought, to know better. It is not merely the insincere and all but blasphemous adulation which is shocking,—that was but the fashion of the times, but the treating these gypseys and beggars, and their “thieves’ Latin” dialect, their filthiness and cunning, ignorance and recklessness, merely as themes for immoral and inhuman laughter. Jonson was by no means the only poet of that day to whom the hordes of profligate and heathen nomads, which infested England, were only a comical phase of humanity, instead of being as they would be now, thank God! objects of national shame and sorrow, of pity and love, which would call out in the attempt to redeem them the talents and energies of great and good men. But Jonson certainly sins more in this respect than any of his contemporaries. He takes a low pleasure in parading his intimate acquaintance with these poor creatures’ foul slang and barbaric laws, and is, we should say, the natural father of that lowest form of all literature which has since amused the herd, though in a form greatly purified, in the form of “Beggars’ Operas,” “Dick Turpins,” “Pelhams,” and “Jack Sheppards.” Every thing which is objectionable in such modern publications as these was exhibited, in far grosser forms, by one of the greatest poets who

ever lived, for the amusement of a king of England ; and yet the world still is at a loss to know why sober and God-fearing men detested both the poet and the king.

And that *Masque* is all the more saddening exhibition of the degradation of a great soul, because in it, here and there, occur passages of the old sweetness and grandeur, *disjecta membra poetæ*, such as these which, even though addressed to James, are perfect :—

“ 3d *Gypsy*.

“ Look how the winds, upon the waves grown tame,  
 Take up land sounds upon their purple wings ;  
 And, catching each from other, bear the same  
 To every angle of their sacred springs.  
 So will we take his praise, and hurl his name  
 About the globe, in thousand airy rings,  
 \* \* \* \* \*

Let us pass on—why stay to look upon the fall of such a spirit ?

There is one point, nevertheless, which we may as well speak of here, and shortly ; for spoken of it must be as delicately as is possible. The laugh raised at Zeal-for-the-land Busy's expense, in *Bartholomew Fair*, turns on the Puritan dislike of seeing women's parts acted by boys. Jonson shirks the question by making poor Busy fall foul of puppets instead of live human beings ; but the question is shirked, nevertheless. What honest answer he could have given to the Puritans, is hard to conceive. Prynne, in his *Histriomastix*, may have pushed a little too far the argument drawn from the prohibition in the Mosaic law ; yet one would fancy that the practice was forbidden by Moses's law not arbitrarily, but because it was a bad practice, which did harm, as every antiquarian knows that it did ; and that, therefore, Prynne was but reasonable in supposing that in his day, a similar practice would produce a similar evil. Our firm conviction is that it did so, and that as to the matter of fact, Prynne was perfectly right, and that to make a boy a stage-player, was pretty certainly to send him to the Devil. Let any man of common sense imagine to himself the effect on a young boy's mind which would be produced by representing shamelessly before a public audience, not merely the language, but the passions, of the most profligate women, of such characters as occur in almost every play. We appeal to common sense—would any father allow his own children to personate, even in private, the basest of mankind ? And yet we must beg pardon : for common sense, it is to be supposed, has decided against us, as long as parents allow their sons to act yearly at Westminster the stupid low art of Terence, while grave and reverend prelates and divines

look on approving. But we have too good reason to know that the Westminster play has had no very purifying influence on the minds of the young gentlemen who personate heathen damsels "of easy virtue;" and we only ask, What must have been the effect of representing infinitely fouler characters than Terence's on the minds of uneducated lads of the lower classes? Prynne and others hint at still darker abominations than the mere defilement of the conscience; we shall say nothing of them, but that from collateral evidence, we believe every word they say; and that when pretty little Cupid's mother, in Jonson's Christmas masque, tells how "She could have had money enough for him, had she been tempted, and have let him out by the week to the king's players," and how "Master Burbadge has been about and about with her for him, and old Mr. Hemings too," she had better have tied a stone round the child's neck, and hove him over London Bridge, than have handed him over to thrifty Burbadge, that he might make, out of the degradation of Christ's lamb, more money to buy land withal, and settle comfortably in his native town, on the fruits of others' sin. Honour to old Prynne, bitter and narrow as he was, for his passionate and eloquent appeals to the humanity and Christianity of England, in behalf of those poor children, whom not a bishop on the bench interfered to save; but, while they were writing and persecuting in behalf of baptismal regeneration, left those to perish whom they declared so stoutly to be regenerate in baptism. Prynne used that argument too, and declared these stage-plays to be among the very "poms and vanities which Christians renounced at baptism." He may or may not have been wrong in identifying them with the old heathen pantomimes and games of the Circus, and in burying his adversaries under a mountain of quotations from the Fathers and the Romish divines, (for Prynne's reading seems to have been quite enormous.) Those very prelates could express reverence enough for the Fathers when they found aught in them which could be made to justify their own system, though perhaps it had really even less to do therewith than the Roman pantomimes had with the Globe Theatre; but the Church of England had retained in her Catechism the old Roman word "poms," as one of the things which were to be renounced; and as "poms" confessedly meant at first those very spectacles of the heathen circus and theatre, Prynne could not be very illogical in believing that, as it had been retained, it was retained to testify against something, and probably against the thing in England most like the "poms" of heathen Rome. Meanwhile, let Churchmen decide whether of the two was the better Churchman—Prynne, who tried to make the baptismal covenant mean something, or

Laud, who allowed such a play as *The Ordinary* to be written by his especial *protégé* Cartwright, the Oxford scholar, and acted probably by Oxford scholars, certainly by christened boys. We do not pretend to pry into the counsels of the Most High; but if unfaithfulness to a high and holy trust, when combined with lofty professions and pretensions, does (as all history tells us that it does) draw down the anger and vengeance of Almighty God, then we need look no further than this one neglect of the seventeenth century prelates, (whether its cause was stupidity, insincerity, or fear of the monarchs to whose tyranny they pandered,) to discover full reason why it pleased God to sweep them out awhile with the besom of destruction.

There is another feature in the plays of the seventeenth century, new, as far as we know, alike to English literature and manners; and that is, the apotheosis of Rakes. Let the faults of the Middle Age, or of the Tudors, have been what they may, that class of person was in their times simply an object of disgust. The word which then signified a Rake is, in the *Morte d'Arthur*, (temp. Ed. IV.) the foulest term of disgrace which can be cast upon a knight; while even up to the latter years of Elizabeth, the contempt of parents and elders seems to have been thought a grievous sin. In Italy even, fountain of all the abominations of the age, respect for the fifth commandment seems to have lingered after all the other nine had been forgotten; we find Castiglione, in his *Corteggiano*, (about 1520,) regretting the modest and respectful training of the generation which had preceded him; and to judge from facts, the Puritan method of education, stern as it was, was neither more nor less than the method which, a generation before, had been common to Romanist and to Protestant, Puritan and Churchman.

But with the Stuart era, (perhaps at the end of Elizabeth's reign,) fathers became gradually personages who are to be disobeyed, sucked of their money, fooled, even now and then robbed and beaten, by the young gentleman of spirit; and the most Christian kings, James and Charles, with their queens and court, sit by to see ruffling and roystering, beating the watch and breaking windows, dicing, drinking, and duelling, adultery and fornication, (provided the victim of the latter sin be not a damsel of gentle birth,) set forth not merely as harmless amusements for young gentlemen, but, (as in Beaumont and Fletcher's play of *Monsieur Thomas*,) virtues without which a man is despicable. On this point, as on many others, those who have, for ecclesiastical reasons, tried to represent the first half of the seventeenth century as a golden age, have been unfair. There is no immorality of the court plays of Charles II.'s time, which may not be

found in those of Charles I.'s. Sedley and Etherege are not a whit worse, but only more stupid, than Fletcher or Shirley; and Monsieur Thomas is the spiritual father of all angry lads, rufflers, blades, bullies, mohocks, Corinthians, and dandies, down to the last drunken clerk who wrenched off a knocker, or robbed his master's till to pay his losses at a betting-office. True; we of this generation can hardly afford to throw stones. The scape-grace ideal of humanity has enjoyed royal patronage within the last half century; and if Monsieur Thomas seemed fair in the eyes of James and Charles, so did Jerry and Corinthian Tom in those of "the first gentleman of Europe." Better days, however, have dawned: *Tom and Jerry*, instead of running three hundred nights, would be as little endured on the stage as *Monsieur Thomas* would be; the heroes who aspire toward that ideal, are now consigned by public opinion to Rhadamanthus and the treadmill; while if, like Monsieur Thomas, they knocked down their own father, they would, instead of winning a good wife, be "cut" by braver and finer gentlemen than Monsieur Thomas himself; but what does this fact prove, save that England has at last discovered that the Puritan opinion of this matter, (as of some others,) was the right one?

But there is another aspect in which we must look at the Stuart patronage of profligate scape-graces on the stage. They would not have been endured on the stage, had they not been very common off it; and if there had not been, too, in the hearts of spectators, some lurking excuse for them; it requires no great penetration to see what that excuse must have been. If the Stuart age, aristocracy, and court, were as perfect as some fancy them, such fellows would have been monstrous in it, and inexcusable, probably impossible. But if it was, (as it may be proved to have been,) an utterly deboshed, insincere, decrepit, and decaying age, then one cannot but look on Monsieur Thomas with something of sympathy as well as pity. Take him as he stands; he is a fellow of infinite kindness, wit, spirit, and courage: but with nothing on which to employ those powers. He would have done his work admirably in an earnest and enterprising age, as a Hudson's Bay Company clerk, an Indian civilian, a captain of a man-of-war,—any thing where he could find a purpose and a work. Doubt it not. How many a Monsieur Thomas of our own days, whom, two years ago, one had rashly fancied capable of nothing higher than coulisses and cigars, private theatricals and white kid-gloves, has been not only fighting and working like a man, but meditating and writing homeward like a Christian, through the dull misery of those trenches at Sevastopol; and has found, amid the Crimean snows, that merciful fire of



God, which could burn the chaff out of his heart, and thaw the crust of cold frivolity into warm and earnest life. And even at such a youth's worst, reason and conscience alike forbid us to deal out to him the same measure as we do to the offences of the cool and hoary profligate, or to the darker and subtler spiritual sins of the false professor. But if the wrath of God be not unmistakably and practically revealed from Heaven against youthful profligacy and disobedience, in after sorrow and shame of some kind or other, against what sin is it revealed? It was not left for our age to discover that the wages of sin is death: but Charles, his players, and his courtiers, refused to see what the very heathen had seen, and so had to be taught the truth over again by another and a more literal lesson; and what neither stage-plays nor sermons could teach them, sharp shot and cold steel did.

"But still the Puritans were barbarians for hating Art altogether." The fact was, that they hated what art they saw in England, and that this was low art, bad art, growing ever lower and worse. If it be said that Shakspeare's is the very highest art, the answer is, that what they hated in him was not his high art, but his low art, the foul and horrible elements which he had in common with his brother play-writers. True, there is far less of these elements in Shakspeare than in any of his compeers: but they are there. And what the Puritans hated in him was exactly what we have to expunge, before we can now represent his plays. If it be said that they ought to have discerned and appreciated the higher elements in him, so ought the rest of their generation. The Puritans were surely not bound to see in Shakspeare what his patrons and his brother poets did not see. And it is surely a matter of fact, that the deep spiritual knowledge which makes, and will make, Shakspeare's plays, (and them alone of all the seventeenth century plays,) a heritage for all men and all ages, quite escaped the insight of his contemporaries, who probably put him in the same rank which Webster, writing about 1612, has assigned to him.

"I have ever cherished a good opinion of other men's witty labours, especially of that full and heightened style of Master Chapman; the laboured and understanding works of Mr. Jonson; the no less witty composes of the both wittily excellent Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Fletcher; and lastly, (without wrong last to be named), the right happy and copious industry of Mr. Shakspeare, Mr. Dekker, and Mr. Heywood."

While Webster, then, the best poet of the reign of Charles the First, sees nothing in Shakspeare beyond the same "happy

and copious industry," which he sees in Dekker and Heywood,—while Cartwright, perhaps the only young poet of real genius in Charles the First's reign, places Fletcher's name "Twixt Jonson's grave and Shakspeare's lighter sound," and tells him that,

"Shakspeare to thee was dull, whose best wit lies  
 I' th' ladies' questions, and the fool's replies.  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Whose wit our nice times would obsceneness call.  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Nature was all his art; thy vein was free  
 As his, but without his scurrility;" \*

while even Milton, who, Puritan as he was, loved art with all his soul, only remarks on Shakspeare's marvellous lyrical sweetness, "his native wood-notes wild;" and what shame to the Puritans if they, too, did not discover the stork among the cranes?

An answer has been often given to arguments of this kind, which deserves a few moments' consideration. It is said, "the grossness of the old play-writers was their misfortune, not their crime. It was the fashion of the age. It is not our fashion, certainly; but they meant no harm by it. The age was a free-spoken one; and perhaps none the worse for that." Mr. Dyce, indeed, the editor of Webster's plays, seems inclined to exalt this habit into a virtue. After saying that the licentious and debauched are made "as odious in representation as they would be if they were actually present," (an assertion which must be flatly denied, save in the case of Shakspeare, who seldom or never to our remembrance, seems to forget that the wages of sin is death, and who, however coarse he may be, keeps stoutly on the side of virtue,) Mr. Dyce goes on to say, that "perhaps the language of the stage is purified in proportion as our morals are deteriorated; and we dread the mention of the vices which we are not ashamed to practise; while our forefathers, under the sway of a less fastidious, but a more energetic principle of virtue, were careless of words, and only considerate of actions."

To this clever piece of special pleading we can only answer, that the fact is directly contrary,—that there is a mass of unanimous evidence which cannot be controverted, to prove that England, in the first half of the seventeenth century, was far more immoral than in the nineteenth,—that the proofs lie patent to any dispassionate reader; but that we must be excused from defiling our pen by transcribing them.

\* What canon of cleanliness, now lost, did Cartwright possess, which enabled him to pronounce Fletcher, or indeed himself, purer than Shakspeare, and his times "nicer" than those of James? To our generation, less experienced in the quantitative analysis of moral dirt, they will appear all equally foul.

Let it be said that coarseness was "the fashion of the age." The simple question is, was it a good fashion or a bad? There is no doubt, that in simple states of society, much manly virtue, and much female purity, have often consisted with very broad language and very coarse manners. But what of that? Drunkards may very often be very honest and brave men; does that make drunkenness no sin? or will honesty and courage prevent a man's being the worse for hard drinking? If so, why have we given up coarseness of language; and why has it been the better, rather than the worse part of the nation, the educated and religious, rather than the ignorant and wicked, who have given it up. Why? Simply because the nation, and all other nations on the Continent, in proportion to their morality, have found out that coarseness of language is, to say the least, unfit and inexpedient; that if it be wrong to do certain things, it is also, on the whole, right not to talk of them; that even certain things which are right and blessed and holy, lose their sanctity by being dragged cynically to the light of day, instead of being left in the mystery in which God has wisely shrouded them. On the whole, one is inclined to suspect the defence of coarseness as insincere. Certainly, in our day, it will not hold. If any one wishes to hear coarse language in "good society," he can hear it in Paris; but one questions whether Parisian society be now "under the sway of a more energetic principle of virtue" than our own. The sum total of the matter seems to be, that we have found out that on this (and as we shall show hereafter, on several other points,) the old Puritans were right. And, quaintly enough, the party in the English Church who hold the Puritans most in abhorrence, are the most scrupulous now upon this very point, and, in their dread of contaminating the minds of youth, are carrying education, at school and college, to such a more than Puritan precision, that with the most virtuous and benevolent intentions, they are in danger of giving lads a merely conventual education,—a hot-house training which will render them incapable hereafter of facing either the temptations or the labour of the world. They themselves republished Massinger's *Virgin Martyr*, because it was a pretty Popish story, probably written by a Papist, (for there is every reason to believe that Massinger was one,) and setting forth how the heroine was attended all through by an angel in the form of a page, and how (not to mention the really beautiful ancient fiction about the fruits which Dorothea sends back from Paradise,) Theophilus overcomes the devil by means of a cross composed of flowers. Massinger's account of Theophilus's conversion, will, we fear, make those who know any thing of that great crisis of the human spirit, suspect that Mas-

singer's experience thereof was but small: the fact which is most interesting is, the *Virgin Martyr* is one of the foulest plays known. Every pains has been taken to prove that the indecent scenes in the play were not written by Massinger, but by Dekker; on what grounds we know not. If Dekker assisted Massinger in the play, as he is said to have done, we are aware of no canons of internal criticism, which will enable us to decide, as boldly as Mr. Gifford does, that all the indecency is Dekker's, and all the poetry Massinger's. He confesses (as indeed he is forced to do) that "Massinger himself is not free from dialogues of low wit and buffoonery;" and, then, after calling the scenes in question "detestable ribaldry," "a loathsome sorterkin, engendered of filth and dulness," recommends them to the reader's supreme scorn and contempt,—with which feelings the reader will doubtless regard them; but will also, if he be a thinking man, draw from them the following conclusions: that even if they be Dekker's, (of which there is no proof,) Massinger was forced, in order to the success of his play, to pander to the public taste, by allowing Dekker to interpolate these villainies; that the play which, above all others of the seventeenth century, contains the most supra-lunar rosepink of piety, devotion, and purity, also contains the stupidest abominations of any extant play; and lastly, that those who reprinted it for its rosepink piety and purity, as a sample of the Christianity of that past golden age of High-churchmanship had to leave out about one third of the play, for fear of becoming amenable to the laws against abominable publications.

No one denies that there are nobler words than any that we have quoted in Jonson, in Fletcher, or in Massinger: but nothing is stronger than its weakest part; and there is hardly a play (perhaps none) of theirs in which the immoralities of which we complain do not exist,—few of which they do not form an integral part.

Now, if this is the judgment which we have to pass on the morality of the greater poets, what must the lesser ones be like?

Look, then, at Webster's two masterpieces, *Vittoria Corromborea* and the *Duchess of Malfi*. A few words spent on them will surely not be wasted; for they are pretty generally agreed to be the two best tragedies written since Shakspeare's time.

The whole story of *Vittoria Corromborea* is one of sin and horror. The subject-matter of the play is altogether made up of the fiercest and the basest passions. But the play is not a study of those passions, from which we may gain a great insight into human nature. There is no trace (nor is there, again, in the *Duchess of Malfi*.) of that development of human souls for

good or evil, which is Shakspeare's especial power,—the power which (far more than any accidental "beauties") makes his plays, to this day, the delight alike of the simple and the wise, while his contemporaries are all but forgotten. The highest aim of dramatic art is to exhibit the development of the human soul; to construct dramas in which the conclusion shall depend, not on the events, but on the characters, and in which the characters shall not be mere embodiments of a certain passion, or a certain "humour," but persons, each unlike all others; each having a destiny of his own, by virtue of his own peculiarities, of his own will, and each proceeding toward that destiny, unfolding his own strength and weakness before the eyes of the audience, and in such a way, that, after his first introduction, they should be able (in proportion to their knowledge of human nature) to predict his conduct under any given circumstances. This is indeed "high art:" but we find no more of it in Webster than in the rest. His characters, be they old or young, come on the stage ready-made, full-grown, and stereotyped; and, therefore, in general, they are not characters at all, but mere passions or humours in a human form. Now and then he essays to draw a character; but it is analytically, by description, not dramatically, by letting the man exhibit himself in action; and in the *Duchess of Malfi*, he falls into the great mistake of telling, by Antonio's mouth, more about the Duke and the Cardinal than he afterwards makes them act. Very different is Shakspeare's method of giving, at the outset, some single delicate hint about his personages, which will serve as a clue to their whole future conduct, thus "showing the whole in each part," and stamping each man with a personality, to a degree which no other dramatist has ever approached. But the truth is, that the study of human nature is not Webster's aim. He has to arouse terror and pity, not thought, and he does it in his own way, by blood and fury, madmen and screech-owls, not without a rugged power.

There are scenes of his, certainly, like that of Vittoria's trial, which have been praised for their delineation of character; but it is one thing to solve the problem, which Shakspeare has so handled in *Lear*, and *Othello*, and *Richard the Third*, "given a mixed character to show how he may become criminal," and to solve Webster's "given a ready-made criminal, to show what he will say and do on a certain occasion." To us the knowledge of character shown in Vittoria's trial-scene, is not an insight into Vittoria's especial heart and brain, but a general acquaintance with the conduct of all bold, bad women when brought to bay. Poor Elia, who knew the world from books, and human nature principally from his own loving and gentle heart, talks of Vitto-

ria's innocence—resembling boldness\*—and seeming to see that matchless beauty of her face, which inspires such gay confidence in her, and so forth.

Perfectly just and true, not of Vittoria merely, but of the average of unfortunate females in the presence of a police magistrate, yet amounting in all merely to this, that the strength of Webster's confest master-scene lies simply in intimate acquaintance with vicious nature in general. We will say no more on this matter, save to ask, *cui bono?*—was the art of which this was the highest manifestation likely to be of much use to mankind, much less to excuse its palpably disgusting and injurious accompaniments?

The *Duchess of Malfi* is certainly in a purer and loftier strain; but in spite of the praise which has been lavished on her, we must take the liberty to doubt whether the poor Duchess is "a person" at all. General goodness and beauty, intense though pure affection for a man below her in rank, and a will to carry out her purpose at all hazards, are not enough to distinguish her from thousands of other women; but Webster has no such purpose. What he was thinking and writing of was, not truth, but effect; not the Duchess, but her story; not her brothers, but their rage; not Antonio, her major-domo and husband, but his good and bad fortunes; and thus he has made Antonio merely insipid, the brothers merely unnatural, and the Duchess, (in the critical moment of the play,) merely forward. That curious scene, in which she acquaints Antonio with her love for him, and makes him marry her, is, on the whole, painful. Webster himself seems to have felt that it was so; and, dreading lest he had gone too far, to have tried to redeem the Duchess at the end by making her break down in two exquisite lines of loving shame: but he has utterly forgotten to explain or justify her love, by giving to Antonio, (as Shakspeare would probably have done,) such strong specialties of character as would compel, and therefore excuse his mistress's affection. He has plenty of time to do this in the first scenes,—time which he wastes on irrelevant matter; and all that we gather from them is that Antonio is a worthy and thoughtful person. If he gives promise of being more, he utterly disappoints that promise afterwards. In the scene in which the Duchess tells her love, he is far smaller, rather than greater than the Antonio of the opening scene, though (as there) altogether passive. He hears his mistress's

\* C. Lamb. *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*, p. 229. From which specimens, be it remembered, he has had to expunge not only all the comic scenes, but generally the greater part of the plot itself, to make the book at all tolerable.

declaration just as any other respectable youth might; is exceedingly astonished, and a good deal frightened; has to be talked out of his fears till one naturally expects a revulsion on the Duchess's part into something like scorn or shame, (which might have given a good opportunity for calling out sudden strength in Antonio :) but so busy is Webster with his business of drawing mere blind love, that he leaves Antonio to be a mere puppet, whose worthiness we are to believe in only from the Duchess's assurance to him that he is perfection of all that a man should be; which, as all lovers are of the same opinion the day before the wedding, is not of much importance.

Neither in his subsequent misfortunes does Antonio make the least struggle to prove himself worthy of his mistress's affection. He is very resigned, and loving, and so forth. To win renown by great deeds, and so prove her in the right to her brothers and to all the world, never crosses his imagination. His highest aim (and that only at last) is slavishly to entreat pardon from his proud brothers-in-law, for the mere offence of marrying their sister; and he dies by an improbable accident, the same pious and respectable insipidity which he has lived,—“ne valant pas le peine qui se donne pour lui.” The prison-scenes between the Duchess and her tormentors are painful enough, if to give pain be a dramatic virtue; and she appears in them really noble, and might have appeared far more so, had Webster taken half as much pains with her as he has with the madmen, ruffians, ghosts, and screech-owls in which his heart really delights. The only character really worked out, so as to live and grow under his hand is Bosola, who, of course, is the villain of the piece, and being a rough fabric, is easily manufactured with rough tools. Still, Webster has his wonderful touches here and there,—

“*Cariola.* Hence, villains, tyrants, murderers! Alas!  
 What will you do with my lady? Call for help!  
*Duchess.* To whom? to our next neighbours? They are mad folk.  
 Farewell, Cariola.  
 I pray thee look thou giv'st my little boy  
 Some syrop for his cold; and let the girl  
 Say her prayers ere she sleep.—Now, what you please;  
 What death?”

And so the play ends; as does Vittoria Corrombona, with half-a-dozen murders *coram populo*, raving madness, despair, bedlam and the shambles; putting the reader marvellously in mind of that well-known old book of the same era, *Reynolds's God's Revenge against the Crying Sins of Murther and Adultery*, in which, with all due pious horror, and bombastic sermonizing, the national appetite for abominations is duly fed with some fifty unreadable Spanish histories, French histories, Italian histories,

and so forth, one or two of which, of course, are known to have furnished subjects for the playwrights of the day.

The next play-writer whom we are bound to notice is James Shirley, one of the many converts to Romanism which those days saw, who appears, up to the breaking out of the Civil War, to have been the queen's favourite poet, and who, according to Langdaine, was "one of such incomparable parts, that he was the chief of the second-rate poets, and by some has been thought even equal to Fletcher himself."

We must entreat the reader's attention while we examine Shirley's *Gamester*. Whether the examination be a pleasant business or not, it is somewhat important, "for," says Mr. Dyce, "the following memorandum respecting it occurs in the office-book of the Master of the Records: 'On Thursday night, 6th of February, 1633, *The Gamester* was acted at Court, made by Sherley, out of a plot of the king's, given him by mee, and well likte. The king sayd it was the best play he had seen for seven years.'"

This is, indeed, important. We shall now have an opportunity of fairly testing at the same time the taste of the Royal Martyr, and the average merit, at least in the opinion of the Caroline Court, of the dramatists of that day.

The plot which Charles sent to Shirley as a fit subject for his muse, is taken from one of those abominable collections of Italian novels, of which we have already had occasion to speak, and occurs in the second part of the *Ducento Novello* of Celio Malespini; and what it is we shall see forthwith.

The play opens with a scene between one Wilding and his ward Penelope, in which he attempts to seduce the young lady, in language which has certainly the merit of honesty; she refuses him, but civilly enough, and on her departure Mrs. Wilding enters, who, it seems, is the object of her husband's loathing, though young, handsome, and in all respects charming enough. After a scene of stupid and brutal insults he has the effrontery to ask her to bring Penelope to him, at which she naturally goes out in anger; and Hazard, the gamester enters,—a personage without a character in any sense of the word. There is next some talk against duelling, sensible enough, which arises out of a by-plot,—one Delamere having been wounded in a duel by one Beaumont, mortally as is supposed. This by-plot runs through the play, giving an opportunity for bringing in a father of the usual playhouse type,—a Sir Richard Hurry, who is, of course, as stupid, covetous, proud, and tyrannical, and unfeeling as playhouse fathers were then found to be; but it is of the most commonplace form, turning on the stale trick of a man expecting to be hanged for killing some one who turns out after all to have



recovered, and having no bearing whatsoever on the real plot, which is this : Mrs. Wilding, in order to win back her husband's affections, persuades Penelope to seem to grant his suit, while Mrs. Wilding herself is in reality to supply her niece's place, and shame her husband into virtue. Wilding tells Hazard of the good fortune which he fancies is coming, in scenes of which one can only say, that if they are not written for the purpose of exciting the passions, it is hard to see why they were written at all. But, being with Hazard in a gambling-house at the very hour at which he is to meet Penelope, and having had a run of bad luck, he borrows a hundred pounds of Hazard, stays at the table to recover his losses, and sends Hazard to supply his place with the supposed Penelope. A few hours before Penelope and Hazard have met for the first time, and Penelope considers him, as she says to herself aside, "a handsome gentleman." He begins, of course, talking lewdly to her ; and the lady, so far from being shocked with the freedom of her new acquaintance, pays him back in his own coin in such good earnest that she soon silences him in the battle of dirt-throwing. Of this sad scene, it is difficult to say, whether it indicates a lower standard of purity and courtesy in the poet, in the audience who endured it, or in the society of which it was, of course, intended to be a brilliant picture. If the cavaliers and damsels of Charles the First's day were in the habit of talking in that way to each other, (and if they had not been, Shirley would not have dared to represent them as doing so,) one cannot much wonder that the fire of God was needed to burn up (though alas ! only for a while) such a state of society, and that when needed the fire fell.

The rest of the story is equally bad. Hazard next day gives Wilding voluptuous descriptions of his guilt, and while Wilding is in the height of self-reproach at having handed over his victim to another, his wife meets him, and informs him that she herself and not Penelope has been the victim. Now comes the crisis of the plot, the conception which so delighted the taste of the Royal Martyr. Wilding finds himself, as he expresses it, "fitted with a pair of horns of his own making ;" and his rage, shame, and base attempts to patch up his own dishonour by marrying Penelope to Hazard, (even at the cost of disgorging the half of her portion, which he had intended to embezzle,) furnish amusement to the audience to the end of the play ; at last, on Hazard and Penelope coming in married, Wilding is informed that he has been deceived, and that his wife is unstained, having arranged with Hazard to keep up the delusion, in order to frighten him into good behaviour ; whereupon Mr. Wilding promises to be a good husband henceforth, and the play ends.

Throughout the whole of this farrago of improbable iniquity not a single personage has any mark of personal character, or even of any moral quality, save (in Mrs. Wilding's case) that of patience under injury. Hazard, the gamester, is chosen as the hero, for what reason it is impossible to say; he is a mere profligate nonentity, doing nothing which may distinguish him from any other gamester and blackguard, save that he is, as we are told,

"A man careless  
Of wounds; and though he have not had the luck  
To kill so many as another, dares  
Fight with all them that have."

He, nevertheless, being in want of money, takes a hundred pounds from a foolish old city merchant (city merchants are always fools in the seventeenth century) to let his nephew, young Barnacle, give him a box on the ear in a tavern, and (after the young cit has been transformed into an intolerable bully by the fame so acquired) takes another hundred pounds to the repentant uncle for kicking the youth back into his native state of peaceful cowardice. With the exception of some little humour in these scenes with young Barnacle the whole play is thoroughly stupid. We look in vain for any thing like a reflection, a sentiment, even a novel image. Its language, like its morality, is all but on a level with the laboured vulgarities of the *Relapse* or the *Provoked Wife*, save that (Shirley being a confessed copier of the great dramatists of the generation before him) there is enough of the manner of Fletcher and Ben Jonson kept up to hide, at first sight, the utter want of any thing like their matter; and as one sickens with contempt at the rakish swagger, and the artificial smartness of his coxcombs, one regrets the racy and unaffected blackguardism of the earlier poets' men.

This, forsooth, is the best comedy that Charles had heard for seven years, and the plot which he himself furnished for the occasion, fitted to an English audience by a Romish convert.

And yet there is one dramatist of that fallen generation over whose memory one cannot but linger, fancying what he would have become, and wondering why so great a spirit was checked suddenly ere half-developed, by the fever which carried him off, with several other Oxford worthies, in 1643, when he was at most thirty-two (and according to one account only twenty-eight) years old. Let which of the two dates be the true one, Cartwright must always rank among our wondrous youths, by the side of Prince Henry, the Admiral Crichton, and others, of whom one's only doubt is, whether they were not too wondrous, too precociously complete for future development. We find Dr.

Fell, sometime Bishop of Oxford, saying that "Cartwright was the utmost man could come to;" we read how his body was as handsome as his soul; how he was an expert linguist, not only in Greek and Latin, but in French and Italian, an excellent orator, admirable poet; how Aristotle was no less known to him than Cicero and Virgil, and his metaphysical lectures preferred to those of all his predecessors, the Bishop of Lincoln only excepted, "and his sermons, lastly," as much admired as his other composes, and how one fitly applied to him that saying of Aristotle concerning CEschron the poet, that "he could not tell what CEschron could not do." We find pages on pages of high-flown epitaphs and sonnets on him, in which the exceeding bad taste of his admirers makes one incline to doubt the taste of him whom they so bedaub with praise: and certainly, in spite of all due admiration for the Crichton of Oxford, one is unable to indorse Mr. Jasper Mayne's opinion, that

"In thee Ben Jonson still held Shakspeare's stile:"

or that he possest

"Lucan's bold heights match'd to staid Virgil's care,  
Martial's quick salt, joined to Musæus' tongue."

This superabundance of eulogy, when we remember the men and the age from which it comes, tempts one to form such a conception of Cartwright as, indeed, the portrait prefixed to his works (ed. 1651) gives us; the offspring of an over-educated and pedantic age, highly stored with every thing but strength and simplicity; one in whom genius has been rather shaped (perhaps cramped) than developed: but genius was present, without a doubt, under whatsoever artificial trappings; and Ben Jonson spoke but truth when he said, "My son Cartwright writes all like a man." It is impossible to open a page of *The Lady Errant*, *The Royal Slave*, *The Ordinary*, or *Love's Convert*, without feeling at once that we have to do with a man of a very different stamp from any (Massinger perhaps alone excepted) who was writing between 1630 and 1640. The specific density of the poems, so to speak, is far greater than that of any of his contemporaries; everywhere is thought, fancy, force, varied learning. He is never weak or dull, though he fails often enough, is often enough wrong-headed, fantastical, affected, and has never laid bare the deeper arteries of humanity, for good or for evil. Neither is he altogether an original thinker; as one would expect he has over-read himself; but then he has done so to good purpose. If he imitates he generally equals. The table of fare in

*The Ordinary* smacks of Rabelais, but then it is worthy of Rabelais; and if one cannot help suspecting that *The Ordinary* would never have been written had not Ben Jonson written *The Alchemist*, one confesses that Ben Jonson need not have been ashamed to have written the play himself, although the plot, as all Cartwright's are, is somewhat confused and inconsequent. If he be platonically sentimental in *Love's Convert*, his sentiment is of the noblest and purest; and the confessed moral of the play is one which that age needed, if ever age on earth did.

" 'Tis the good man's office  
 To serve and reverence woman, as it is  
 The fire's to burn; for as our souls consist  
 Of sense and reason, so do yours, more noble,  
 Of sense and love, which doth as easily calm  
 All your desires, as Reason quiets ours.  
 \* \* \* \* \*

Love, then, doth work in you, what Reason doth  
 In us, here only lies the difference,—  
 Ours wait the lingering steps of Age and Time,  
 But the woman's soul is ripe when it is young;  
 So that in us what we call learning, is  
 Divinity in you, whose operations,  
 Impatient of delay, do outstrip time."

For the sake of such words, in the midst of an evil and adulterous generation, we will love young Cartwright in spite of the suspicion that, addressed as the play is to Charles, and probably acted before his queen, the young rogue had been playing the courtier somewhat, and racking his brains for pretty sayings which would exhibit as a virtue that very uxoriousness of the poor king's, which at last cost him his head. *The Royal Slave*, too, is a gallant play, right-hearted and lofty from beginning to end, though enacted in an impossible court-cloud-world akin to that in which the classic heroes and heroines of Corneille and Racine call each other Monsieur and Madame.

As for his humour; he, alas! can be dirty like the rest, when necessary: but humour he has, of the highest quality. *The Ordinary* is full of it; and Moth, the Antiquary, though too much of a lay figure, and depending for his amusingness on his quaint antiquated language, is such a sketch as Mr. Dickens need not have been ashamed to draw.

*The Royal Slave* seems to have been considered, both by the Court and by his contemporaries, his masterpiece. And justly so; yet our pleasure at Charles's having shown, for once, good taste, is somewhat marred by Langbaine's story, that the good acting of the Oxford scholars, "stately scenes, and richness of the Persian habits," had as much to do with the success of the play as its "stately style," and "the excellency of the songs,

which were set by that admirable composer, Mr. Henry James." True it is, that the songs are excellent, as are all Cartwright's; for grace, simplicity, and sweetness, equal to any (save Shakspeare's) which the seventeenth century produced: but curiously enough, his lyric faculty seems to have exhausted itself in these half-dozen songs. His minor poems are utterly worthless, out-Cowleying Cowley in frigid and fantastic conceits; and his various addresses to the king and queen are as bombastic, and stupid, and artificial, as any thing which disgraced the reigns of Charles II. or his brother.

Are we to gather from this fact that Cartwright was not really an original genius, but only a magnificent imitator? that he could write plays well because others had written them well already, but only for that reason; and that for the same reason, when he attempted detached lyrics and addresses, he could only follow the abominable models which he saw around him? We know not: for surely in Jonson and Shakspeare's minor poems he might have found simpler and sweeter types; and even in those of Fletcher, who appears, from his own account, to have been his especial pattern; Shakspeare, however, as we have seen, he looked down on, as did the rest of his generation.

Cartwright, as an Oxford scholar, is of course a worshipper of Charles, and a hater of Puritans. We do not wish to raise a prejudice against so young a man, by quoting any of the ridiculous, and often somewhat abject, rant with which he addresses their majesties on their return from Scotland, on the queen's delivery, on the birth of the Duke of York, and so forth—for in that he did but copy the tone of grave divines and pious prelates; but he, unfortunately for his fame, is given (as young geniuses are sometimes) to prophesy; and two of his prophecies, at least, have hardly been fulfilled. He was somewhat mistaken, when, on the birth of the Duke of York, he informed the world that

"The state is now past fear; and all that we  
Need wish besides is perpetuity."

And, after indulging in various explanations of the reason why "Nature" showed no prodigies at the birth of the future patron of Judge Jeffreys, which if he did not believe them, are lies, and if he did, are very like blasphemies, declares that the infant is

"A son of Mirth,  
Of Peace and Friendship; 'tis a quiet birth."

Nor, again, if spirits in the other world have knowledge of human affairs, can we be now altogether satisfied with his augury as to the capacities of the New England Puritans,—

“ They are good silly people; souls that will  
 Be cheated without trouble: one eye is  
 Put out with zeal, th’ other with ignorance,  
 And yet they think they’re eagles.”

Whatsoever were the faults of Cotton Mather’s band of pioneers, and they were many, silliness was certainly not among them. But such was the Court fashion. Any insult, however shallow, ribald, and doggrel, (and all these terms are just of the mock-Puritan ballad which Sir Christopher sings in *The Ordinary*, just after an epithalamium so graceful and melodious, though a little “warm” in tone, as to really be out of place in such a fellow’s mouth,) passes current against men, who were abroad the founders of the United States, and the forefathers of the acutest and most enterprising nation on earth, and who at home proved themselves, by terrible fact, not only the physically stronger party, but the more cunning. But so it was fated to be. A deep mist of conceit, fed by the shallow breath of parasites, players, and pedants, wrapt that unhappy Court in blind security, till “the breaking was as the swelling out of a high wall, which cometh suddenly in an instant.”

“But after all, what Poetry and Art there was in that day, good or bad, all belonged to the royalists.”

All? There are those who think that, if mere conceitism be a part of poetry, Quarles is a ten times greater poet than Cowley or George Herbert, and equal, perhaps, to Vaughan and Withers. On this question, and on the real worth of the seventeenth century lyrists, something may be said hereafter in this Review. Meanwhile, there are those, too, who believe John Bunyan, considered simply as an artist, to be the greatest dramatic author whom England has seen since Shakspeare; and there linger, too, in the libraries and the ears of men, words of one John Milton. He was no rigid hater of the beautiful, merely because it was heathen and popish; no more, indeed, were many highly-educated and highly-born gentlemen of the Long Parliament; no more was Cromwell himself, whose delight was (if we may trust that double renegade Waller,) to talk over with him the worthies of Rome and Greece, and who is said (and we believe truly) to have preserved for the nation Raphael’s cartoons, and Andrea Mantegna’s triumph, when Charles’ pictures were sold. But Milton had steeped his whole soul in romance. He had felt the beauty and glory of the chivalrous middle age as deeply as Shakspeare himself; he had as much classical lore as any Oxford-pedant. He felt to his heart’s core, (for he *sang* of it, and had he not felt it he would only have written of it,) the magnificence

and worth of really high art, of the drama when it was worthy of man and of itself.

“ Of gorgeous tragedy,  
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,  
Or the tale of Troy divine,  
And what, though rare of later age,  
Ennobled hath the later stage.”

No poet, perhaps, shows wider and truer sympathy with every form of the really beautiful in art, and nature, and history ; and yet he was a Puritan.

Yes, Milton was a Puritan ; one, who instead of trusting himself, and his hopes of the universe, to second-hand hearsays, systems, and traditions, had looked God's Word and his own soul in the face, and determined to act on that which he had found. And therefore it is, that to open his works at any stray page, after these effeminate Carolists, is like falling asleep in a stifling city drawing-room, amid Rococo French furniture, not without untidy traces of last night's ball, and awaking in an alpine valley, amid the scent of sweet cyclamens and pine boughs, to the music of trickling rivulets and shouting hunters, and to see above your head the dark cathedral aisles of mighty pines, and here and there, above them and beyond, the spotless peaks of everlasting snow ; while far beneath your feet—

“ The hemisphere of earth, in clearest ken,  
Stretched to the amplest reach of prospect, lies.”

Take any,—the most hackneyed passage of *Comus*, the *Allegro*, the *Penseroso*, the *Paradise Lost*, and see the freshness, the sweetness, and the simplicity, which is strangely combined with the pomp, the self-restraint, the earnestness of every word ; take him even, as an *experimentum crucis*, when he trenches upon ground heathen and questionable, and tries the court poets at their own weapons,—

“ Or whether, (as some sages sing,)  
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,  
Zephyr with Aurora playing,  
As he met her once a-maying,  
There on beds of violets blue,  
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew ”—

but why quote what all the world knows ?—Where shall we find such real mirth, ease, sweetness, dance and song of words in any thing written for five-and-twenty years before him ? True, he was no great dramatist. He never tried to be one : but there was no one in his generation who could have written either *Comus* or *Samson Agonistes*. And if, as is commonly believed,

and as his countenance seems to indicate, he was deficient in humour, so were his contemporaries, with the sole exception of Cartwright. Witty he could be, and bitter: but he did not live in a really humorous age; and if he has none of the rollicking fun of the fox-hound puppy, at least he has none of the obscene gibber of the ape.

After all, the great fact stands, that the only lasting poet of that generation was a Puritan; one, who, if he did not write dramas in sport, at least acted dramas in earnest. For drama means, etymologically, action and doing; and of the drama there are, and always will be, two kinds: one the representative, the other the actual; and for a world wherein there is no superabundance of good deeds, the latter will be always the better kind. It is good to represent heroical action in verse, and on the stage: it is good to "purify," as old Aristotle has it, "the affections by pity and terror." There is an ideal tragedy, and an ideal comedy also, which one can imagine as an integral part of the highest Christian civilization. But when "Christian" tragedy sinks below the standard of heathen Greek tragedy; when, instead of setting forth heroical deeds, it teaches the audience new possibilities of crime, and new excuses for those crimes; when, instead of purifying the affections by pity and terror, it confounds the moral sense by exciting pity and terror merely for the sake of excitement, careless whether they be well or ill directed, then it is of the devil, and the sooner it returns to its father, the better for mankind. When, again, comedy, instead of stirring a divine scorn of baseness, or even a kindly and indulgent smile at the weaknesses and oddities of humanity, learns to make a mock of sin,—to find excuses for the popular frailties which it pretends to expose,—then it also is of the devil, and to the devil let it go; while honest and earnest men, who have no such exceeding love of "Art," that they must needs have bad art rather than none at all, do the duty which lies nearest them, amid clean whitewash and honest prose. The whole theory of "Art, its dignity and vocation," seems to us at times questionable, if coarse facts are to be allowed to weigh, (as we suppose they are,) against delicate theories. If we are to judge by the examples of Italy, the country which has been most of all devoted to the practice of "Art," and by that of Germany, the country which has raised the study of Art into a science, then a nation is not necessarily free, strong, moral, or happy, because it can "represent" facts, or can understand how other people have represented them. We do not hesitate to go further, and to say, that the present imbecility of Germany is to be traced in a great degree to that pernicious habit of mind which makes her educated men fancy it enough to



represent noble thoughts and feelings, or to analyze the representations of them: while they do not bestir themselves, or dream that there is the least moral need for bestirring themselves, toward putting these thoughts and feelings into practice. Goethe herein is indeed the typical German: God grant that no generation may ever see such a typical Englishman; and that our race, remembering ever that the golden age of the English drama was one of private immorality, public hypocrisy, ecclesiastical pedantry, and regal tyranny, and ended in the temporary downfall of Church and Crown, may be more ready to do fine things, than to write fine books; and act in their lives, as those old Puritans did, a drama which their descendants may be glad to put on paper for them, long after they are dead.

For surely these Puritans were dramatic enough, poetic enough, picturesque enough. We do not speak of such fanatics as Balfour of Burley, or any other extravagant person whom it may have suited Walter Scott to take as a typical personage. We speak of the average Puritan nobleman, gentleman, merchant, or farmer, and hold him to have been a picturesque and poetical man,—a man of higher imagination and deeper feeling than the average of Court poets, and a man of sound taste also. What is to be said for his opinions about the stage, has been seen already; but it seems to have escaped most persons' notice, that either all England is grown very foolish, or the Puritan opinions on several matters have been justified by time.

On the matter of the stage, the world has certainly come over to their way of thinking. Few educated men now think it worth while to go to see any play, and that exactly for the same reasons as the Puritans put forward; and still fewer educated men think it worth while to write plays: finding that since the grosser excitements of the imagination have become forbidden themes, there is really very little to write about.

But in the matter of dress and of manners, the Puritan triumph has been complete. Even their worst enemies have come over to their side, and "the whirligig of Time has brought in his revenges."

Their canons of taste have become those of all England, and High Churchmen, who still call them round-heads and cropped ears, go about rounder-headed and closer cropt than they ever went. They held it more rational to cut the hair to a comfortable length than to wear effeminate curls down the back. And we cut ours much shorter than they ever did. They held, (with the Spaniards, then the finest gentlemen in the world,) that sad, *i. e.* dark colours, above all black, were the fittest for stately and earnest gentlemen. We all, from the Tractarian to the Any-

thingarian, are exactly of the same opinion. They held that lace, perfumes, and jewelry on a man were marks of unmanly foppishness and vanity; and so hold the finest gentlemen in England now. They thought it equally absurd and sinful for a man to carry his income on his back, and bedizen himself out in reds, blues, and greens, ribbons, knots, slashes, and "treble quadruple dædalian ruffs, built up on iron and timber, (a fact,) which have more arches in them for pride than London Bridge for use." We, if we met such a ruffed and ruffled worthy as used to swagger by hundreds up and down Paul's Walk, not knowing how to get a dinner, much less to pay his tailor, should look on him as firstly a fool, and secondly a swindler; while, if we met an old Puritan, we should consider him a man gracefully and picturesquely drest, but withal in the most perfect sobriety of good taste; and when we discovered, (as we probably should,) over and above, that the harlequin cavalier had a box of salve and a pair of dice in one pocket, a pack of cards and a few pawn-brokers' duplicates in the other; that his thoughts were altogether of citizens' wives, and their too easy virtue; and that he could not open his mouth without a dozen oaths, we should consider the Puritan, (even though he did quote Scripture somewhat through his nose,) as the gentleman; and the courtier as a most offensive specimen of the "snob triumphant," glorying in his shame. The picture is not ours, nor even the Puritan's. It is Bishop Hall's, Bishop Earle's,—it is Beaumont's, Fletcher's, Jonson's, Shakspeare's,—the picture which every dramatist, as well as satirist, has drawn of the "gallant" of the seventeenth century. No one can read those writers honestly without seeing that the Puritan, and not the Cavalier conception of what a British gentleman should be, is the one accepted by the whole nation at this day.

In applying the same canon to the dress of women, they were wrong. As in other matters, they had hold of one pole of a double truth, and erred in applying it exclusively to all cases. But there are two things to be said for them; first, that the dress of that day was palpably an incentive to the profligacy of that day, and therefore had to be protested against; in these more moral times, ornaments and fashions may be harmlessly used, which then could not be used without harm. And next, it is undeniable that sober dressing is more and more becoming the fashion among well-bred women, and that among them, too, the Puritan canons are gaining ground.

We have just said that the Puritans held too exclusively to one pole of a double truth. They did so, no doubt, in their hatred of the drama. Their belief that human relations were, if

not exactly sinful, at least altogether carnal and unspiritual, prevented their conceiving the possibility of any truly Christian drama, and led them at times into strange and sad errors, like that New England ukase of Cotton Mather's, who punished the woman who should kiss her infant on the Sabbath day. Yet their extravagancies on this point were but the honest revulsion from other extravagancies on the opposite side. If the undistinguishing and immoral Autotheism of the playwrights, and the luxury and heathendom of the higher classes, first in Italy and then in England, were the natural revolt of the human mind against the Manichæism of Popish monkery, then the severity and exclusiveness of Puritanism was a natural and necessary revolt against that luxury and immorality; a protest for man's God-given superiority over nature, against that Naturalism which threatened to end in sheer brutality. While Italian prelates have found an apologist in Mr. Roscoe, and English playwrights in Mr. Gifford, the old Puritans, who felt and asserted, however extravagantly, that there was an eternal law, which was above all Borgias, and Machiavels, Stuarts, and Fletchers, have surely a right to a fair trial. If they went too far in their contempt for humanity, certainly no one interfered to set them right. The Anglicans of that time, who held intrinsically the same anthropologic notions, and yet wanted the courage and sincerity to carry them out as honestly, neither could nor would throw any light upon the controversy; and the only class who sided with the poor playwrights in asserting that there were more things in man, and more excuses for man, than were dreamt of in Prynne's philosophy, were the Jesuit Casuists, who, by a fatal perverseness, used all their little knowledge of human nature to the same undesirable purpose as the playwrights; namely, to prove how it was possible to commit every conceivable sinful action without sinning. No wonder that in an age in which courtiers and theatre haunTERS were turning Romanists by the dozen, and the priest-ridden Queen was the chief patroness of the theatre, the Puritans should have classed players and Jesuits in the same category, and deduced the parentage of both alike from the father of lies.

But as for these Puritans having been merely the sour, narrow, inhuman persons they are vulgarly supposed to have been, *credat Judæus*. There were sour and narrow men enough among them; so there were in the opposite party. No Puritan could have had less poetry in him, less taste, less feeling, than Laud himself. But is there no poetry save words? no drama save that which is presented on the stage? Is this glorious earth, and the souls of living men, mere prose, as long as *carere vate sacro*, who will, forsooth, do them the honour to make poetry

out of a little of them, (and of how little !) by translating them into words, which he himself, just in proportion as he is a good poet, will confess to be clumsy, tawdry, ineffectual? Was there no poetry in these Puritans, because they wrote no poetry? We do not mean now the unwritten tragedy of the battle-psalm and the charge; but simple idyllic poetry and quiet home-drama, love-poetry of the heart and the hearth, and the beauties of everyday human life? Take the most commonplace of them: was Zeal-for-Truth Thoresby, of Thoresby Rise in Deeping Fen, because his father had thought fit to give him an ugly and silly name, the less of a noble lad? Did his name prevent his being six feet high? Were his shoulders the less broad for it, his cheek the less ruddy for it? He wore his flaxen hair of the same length that every one now wears theirs, instead of letting it hang half-way to his waist in essenced curls; but was he therefore the less of a true Viking's son, bold-hearted as his sea-roving ancestors, who won the Danelagh by Canute's side, and settled there on Thoresby Rise, to grow wheat and breed horses, generation succeeding generation, in the old moated grange? He carried a Bible in his jack-boots; but did that prevent him, as Oliver rode past him with an approving smile on Naseby field, thinking himself a very handsome fellow, with his mustache and imperial, and bright-red coat, and cuirass well polished, in spite of many a dint, as he sate his father's great black horse as gracefully and firmly as any long-locked and essenced cavalier in front of him? Or did it prevent him thinking too, for a moment, with a throb of the heart, that sweet Cousin Patience, far away at home, could she but see him, might have the same opinion of him as he had of himself? Was he the worse for the thought? He was certainly not the worse for checking it the next instant, with manly shame for letting such "carnal vanities" rise in his heart, while he was "doing the Lord's work" in the teeth of death and hell: but was there no poetry in him then? No poetry in him, five minutes after, as the long rapier swung round his head, redder and redder at every sweep? We are befooled by names. Call him Crusader instead of Roundhead, and he seems at once (granting him only sincerity, which he had, and that of a right awful kind) as complete a knight-errant as ever watched and prayed, ere putting on his spurs, in fantastic Gothic chapel, beneath "storied windows richly dight." Was there no poetry in him, either, half an hour afterwards, as he lay bleeding across the corpse of the gallant horse, waiting for his turn with the surgeon, and fumbled for the Bible in his boot, and tried to hum a psalm, and thought of Cousin Patience, and his father and his mother, and how they would hear, at least, that he had played

the man in Israel that day, and resisted unto blood, striving against sin and the Man of Sin?

And was there no poetry in him, too, as he came wearied along Thoresby dyke, in the quiet autumn eve, home to the house of his forefathers, and saw afar off the knot of tall poplars rising over the broad misty flat, and the one great abele tossing its sheets of silver in the dying gusts, and knew that they stood before his father's door? Who can tell all the pretty child-memories which flitted across his brain at that sight, and made him forget that he was a wounded cripple? There is the dyke where he and his brothers snared the great pike which stole the ducklings—how many years ago? while pretty little Patience stood by trembling, and shrieked at each snap of the brute's wide jaws; and there—down that long dark lode, ruffling with crimson in the sunset breeze, he and his brother skated home in triumph with Patience when his uncle died. What a day that was! when, in the clear, bright winter noon, they laid the gate upon the ice, and tied the beef-bones under the four corners, and packed little Patience on it.—How pretty she looked, though her eyes were red with weeping, as she peeped out from among the heap of blankets and horse-hides, and how merrily their long fen-runners whistled along the ice-lane, between the high banks of sighing reed, as they towed home their new treasure in triumph, at a pace like the race horse's, to the dear old home among the poplar-trees. And now he was going home to meet her, after a mighty victory, a deliverance from heaven, second only in his eyes to that Red-Sea one. Was there no poetry in his heart at that thought? Did not the glowing sunset, and the reed-beds which it transfigured before him into sheets of golden flame, seem tokens that the glory of God was going before him in his path? Did not the sweet clamour of the wild-fowl, gathering for one rich pæan ere they sank into rest, seem to him as God's bells chiming him home in triumph, with peals sweeter and bolder than those of Lincoln or Peterborough steeple-house? Did not the very lapwing, as she tumbled, softly wailing, before his path, as she did years ago, seem to welcome the wanderer home in the name of heaven?

Fair Patience, too, though she was a Puritan, yet did not her cheek flush, her eye grow dim, like any other girl's, as she saw far off the red-coat, like a sliding spark of fire, coming slowly along the strait fen-bank, and fled up stairs into her chamber to pray, half that it might be, half that it might not be, he? Was there no happy storm of human tears and human laughter when he entered the court-yard gate? Did not the old dog lick his Puritan hand as lovingly as if it had been a Cavalier's? Did

not lads and lasses run out shouting? Did not the old yeoman father hug him, weep over him, hold him at arm's length, and hug him again, as heartily as any other John Bull, even though the next moment he called all to kneel down and thank Him who had sent his boy home again, after bestowing on him the grace to bind kings in chains and nobles with links of iron, and contend to death for the faith delivered to the saints? And did not Zeal-for-Truth look about as wistfully for Patience as any other man would have done, longing to see her, yet not daring even to ask for her? And when she came down at last, was she the less lovely in his eyes, because she came, not flaunting with bare bosom, in tawdry finery and paint, but shrouded close in coif and pinner, hiding from all the world beauty which was there still, but was meant for one alone, and that only if God willed, in God's good time? And was there no faltering of their voices, no light in their eyes, no trembling pressure of their hands, which said more, and was more, ay, and more beautiful in the sight of Him who made them, than all Herrick's Dianemes, Waller's Sacharissas, flames, darts, posies, love-knots, anagrams, and the rest of the insincere cant of the court? What if Zeal-for-Truth had never strung two rhymes together in his life? Did not his heart go for inspiration to a loftier Helicon, when it whispered to itself, "My love, my dove, my undefiled is but one," than if he had filled pages with sonnets, about Venuses, and Cupids, love-sick shepherds and cruel nymphs?

And was there no poetry, true idyllic poetry, as of Longfellow's *Evangeline* itself, in that trip round the old farm next morning; when Zeal-for-Truth, after looking over every heifer, and peeping into every sty, would needs canter down by his father's side to the horse-fen, with his arm in a sling; while the partridges whirred up before them, and the lurchers flashed like gray snakes after the hare, and the colts came whinnying round with staring eyes and streaming manes, and the two chatted on in the same sober business-like English tone, alternately of "The Lord's great dealings," by General Cromwell, the pride of all honest fen-men, and the price of troop-horses at the next Horncastle fair?

Poetry in those old Puritans? Why not? They were men of like passions with ourselves. They loved, they married, they brought up children; they feared, they sinned, they sorrowed, they fought—they conquered. There was poetry enough in them, be sure, though they acted it like men, instead of singing it like birds.

## BURNS AND HIS SCHOOL.

[*North British Review.*]

FOUR faces among the portraits of modern men, great or small, strike us as supremely beautiful; not merely in expression, but in the form and proportion and harmony of features: Shakspeare, Raffaele, Goethe, Burns. One would expect it to be so; for the mind makes the body, not the body the mind; and the inward beauty seldom fails to express itself in the outward, as a visible sign of the invisible grace or disgrace of the wearer. Not that it is so always. A Paul, Apostle of the Gentiles, may be ordained to be "in presence weak, in speech contemptible," hampered by some thorn in the flesh—to interfere apparently with the success of his mission, perhaps for the same wise purpose of Providence which sent Socrates to the Athenians, the worshippers of physical beauty, in the ugliest of human bodies, that they, or rather those of them to whom eyes to see had been given, might learn that soul is after all independent of matter, and not its creature and its slave. But, in the generality of cases, physiognomy is a sound and faithful science, and tells us, if not, alas! what the man might have been, still what he has become. Yet even this former problem, what he might have been, may often be solved for us by youthful portraits, before sin and sorrow and weakness have had their will upon the features; and, therefore, when we spoke of these four beautiful faces, we alluded, in each case, to the earliest portraits of each genius which we could recollect. Placing them side by side, we must be allowed to demand for that of Robert Burns an honourable station among them. Of Shakspeare's we do not speak, for it seems to us to combine in itself the elements of all the other three; but of the rest, we question whether Burns's be not, after all, if not the noblest, still the most lovable—the most like

1. *Elliott's Poems.* 2. *Poems of Robert Nicoll.* 3. *Life and Poems of John Bethune.* 4. *Memoirs of Alexander Bethune.* By W. M'COMBIE. 5. *Rhymes and Recollections of a Handloom Weaver.* By WILLIAM THOM of Inverury. 6. *The Purgatory of Suicides.* By THOMAS COOPER. 7. *The Book of Scottish Song.* By ALEXANDER WHITELAW.

what we should wish that of a teacher of men to be. Raffaele—the most striking portrait of him, perhaps, is the full-face pencil sketch by his own hand in the Taylor Gallery at Oxford—though without a taint of littleness or effeminacy, is soft, melancholy, formed entirely to receive and to elaborate in silence. His is a face to be kissed, not worshipped. Goethe, even in his earliest portraits, looks as if his expression depended too much on his own will. There is a self-conscious power, and purpose, and self-restraint, and all but scorn, upon those glorious lineaments, which might win worship, and did, but not love, except as the child of enthusiasm or of relationship. But Burns's face, to judge of it by the early portrait of him by Nasmyth, must have been a face like that of Joseph of old, of whom the Rabbis relate, that he was literally mobbed by the Egyptian ladies whenever he walked the streets. The magic of that countenance, making Burns at once tempter and tempted, may explain many a sad story. The features certainly are not as regular or well-proportioned as they might be; there is no superabundance of the charm of mere animal health in the outline or colour; but the marks of intellectual beauty in the face are of the highest order, capable of being but too triumphant among a people of deep thought and feeling. The lips, ripe, yet not coarse or loose, full of passion and the faculty of enjoyment, are parted, as if forced to speak, by the inner fulness of the heart, the features are rounded, rich, and tender, and yet the bones show thought massively and manfully everywhere; the eyes laugh out upon you with boundless good humour and sweetness, with simple, eager, gentle surprise—a gleam as of the morning star, looking forth upon the wonder of a new-born world—altogether

“ A station like the herald Mercury,  
New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill.”

Bestow on such a man the wittiest and most winning eloquence—a rich flow of spirits and fulness of health and life—a deep sense of wonder and beauty in the earth and man—an instinct of the dynamic and supernatural laws which underlie and vivify this material universe and its appearances, healthy, yet irregular and unscientific, only not superstitious—turn him loose in any country in Europe, during the latter half of the eighteenth century, and it will not be difficult, alas! to cast his horoscope.

And what an age in which to be turned loose!—for loose he must go, to solve the problem of existence for himself. The grand simple old Scottish education which he got from his parents must prove narrow and unsatisfying for so rich and manifold a character; not because it was in itself imperfect; not



because it did not contain implicitly all things necessary for his "salvation"—in every sense, all laws which he might require for his after-life guidance; but because it contained so much of them as yet *only* implicitly; because it was not yet conscious of its own breadth and depth, and power of satisfying the new doubts and cravings of such minds and such times as Burns's. It may be that Burns was the devoted victim by whose fall it was to be taught that it must awaken and expand and renew its youth in shapes equally sound, but more complex and scientific. But it had not done so then. And when Burns found himself gradually growing beyond his father's teaching in one direction, and tempted beyond it in another and a lower one, what was there in those times to take up his education at the point where it had been left unfinished? He saw around him in plenty animal good-nature and courage, barbaric honesty and hospitality—more, perhaps, than he would see now; for the upward progress into civilized excellences is sure to be balanced by some loss of savage ones—but all reckless, shallow, above all, drunken. It was a hard-drinking, coarse, materialist age. The higher culture, of Scotland especially, was all but exclusively French—not a good kind, while Voltaire and Volney still remained unanswered, and *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* were accepted by all young gentlemen, and a great many young ladies, who could read French, as the best account of the relation of the sexes.

Besides, the philosophy of that day, like its criticism, was altogether mechanical, nay, as it now seems, materialist in its ultimate and logical results. Criticism was outward, and of the form merely. The world was not believed to be already, and in itself, mysterious and supernatural, and the poet was not defined as the man who could see and proclaim that supernatural element. Before it was admired, it was to be raised above nature into the region of "the picturesque," or what not; and the poet was the man who gave it this factitious and superinduced beauty, by a certain "komsologia" and "meteoroepeia," called "poetic diction," now happily becoming extinct, mainly, we believe, under the influence of Burns, although he himself thought it his duty to bedizen his verses therewith, and though it was destined to flourish for many a year more in the temple of the father of lies, like a jar of paper flowers on a Popish altar.

No wonder that in such a time, a genius like Burns should receive not only no guidance, but no finer appreciation. True; he was admired, petted, flattered; for that the man was wonderful, no one could doubt. But we question whether he was understood; whether, if that very flowery and magniloquent

style which we now consider his great failing had been away, he would not have been passed over by the many as a writer of vulgar doggerel. True, the old simple ballad-muse of Scotland still dropped a gem from her treasures, here and there, even in the eighteenth century itself—witness *Auld Robin Gray*. But who suspected that they were gems, of which Scotland, fifty years afterwards, would be prouder and more greedy than of all the second-hand French culture which seemed to her then the highest earthly attainment? The review of Burns in an early number of the *Edinburgh Review*, said to be from the pen of the late Lord Jeffrey, shows, as clearly as any thing can, the utterly inconsistent and bewildered feeling with which the world must have regarded such a phenomenon. Alas! there was inconsistency and bewilderment enough in the phenomenon itself, but that only made confusion worse confounded; the confusion was already there, even in the mind of the more practical literary men, who ought, one would have thought, also to have been the most deep-sighted. But no. The reviewer turns the strange thing over and over, and inside out—and some fifteen years after it has vanished out of the world, having said out its say and done all that it had to do, he still finds it too utterly abnormal to make up his mind about in any clear or consistent way, and gets thoroughly cross with it, and calls it hard names, because it will not fit into any established pigeon-hole or drawer of the then existing anthropological museum. Burns is “a literary prodigy,” and yet it is “a derogation” to him to consider him as one. And that we find, not as we should have expected, because he possessed genius which would have made success a matter of course in any rank, but because he was so well educated—“having acquired a competent knowledge of French, together with the elements of Latin and Geometry,” and before he had composed a single stanza, was ‘far more intimately acquainted with Pope, Shakspeare, and Thomson, than nine tenths of the youths who leave school for the University,’ &c., &c.;—in short, because he was so well educated, that his becoming Robert Burns, the immortal poet, was a matter of course and necessity. And yet, a page or two on, the great reason why it was more easy for Robert Burns the cottar to become an original and vigorous poet, rather than for any one of “the herd of scholars and academical literati,” who are depressed and discouraged by “perusing the most celebrated writers, and conversing with the most intelligent judges,” is found to be, that “the literature and refinement of the age does not exist for a rustic and illiterate individual; and consequently the present time is to him what the rude times of old were to the vigorous writers who

adorned them.”—In short, the great reason of Robert Burns’s success was that he did not possess that education, the possession of which proves him to be no prodigy, though the review begins by calling him one, and coupling him with Stephen Duck and Thomas Dermody.

Now if the best critic of the age, writing fifteen years after Burns’s death, found himself between the horns of such a dilemma—which indeed, like those of an old Arnee bull, meet at the points, and form a complete circle of contradictions—what must have been the bewilderment of lesser folk during the prodigy’s very lifetime? what must, indeed, have been his own bewilderment at himself, however manfully he may have kept it down? No wonder that he was unguided, either by himself or by others. We do not blame them; him we must deeply blame; yet not as we ought to blame ourselves, did we yield in the least to those temptations under which Burns fell.

Biographies of Burns, and those good ones, according to the standard of biographies in these days, are said to exist; we cannot say that we have as yet cared to read them. There are several other biographies, even more important, to be read first, when they are written. Shakspeare has found as yet no biographer; has not even left behind him materials for a biography, such at least as are considered worth using. Indeed, we question whether such a biography would be of any use whatever to the world; for the man who cannot, by studying his dramas in some tolerably accurate chronological order, and using as a running accompaniment and closet commentary those awe-inspiring sonnets of his, attain to some clear notion of what sort of life William Shakspeare must have led, would not see him much the clearer for many folios of anecdote. For after all, the best biography of every sincere man is sure to be his own works; here he has set down, “transferred as in a figure,” all that has happened to him, inward or outward, or rather, all which has formed him, produced a permanent effect upon his mind and heart; and knowing that, you know all you need know, and are content, being glad to escape the personality and gossip of names, and places, and of dates even, except in as far as they enable you to place one step of his mental growth before or after another. Of the honest man this holds true always; and almost always of the dishonest man, the man of cant, affectation, hypocrisy; for even if he pretend in his novel or his poem to be what he is not, he still shows you thereby what he thinks he ought to have been, or at least what he thinks that the world thinks he ought to have been, and confesses to you, in the most *naïve* and confidential way, like one who talks in his sleep, what learning



The image, and the next few stanzas which dilate it, might be a translation from *Dante's Paradiso*, so broad, terse, vivid, the painter's touch.—Hints, too, of a humour, which, like that of Shakspeare, rises at times by sheer depth of insight into the sublime ; as when

“Hornie did the Laigh Kirk watch  
Just like a winking baudrons.”—

Hints of a power of verbal wit, which, had it been sharpened in such a perpetual word-battle as that amid which Shakspeare lived from the age of twenty, might have rivalled Shakspeare's own ; which even now asserts its force by a hundred little never-to-be-forgotten phrases scattered through his poems, which stick, like barbed arrows, in the memory of every reader.—And as for his tenderness,—the quality without which all other poetic excellence is barren,—it gushes forth toward every creature, animate and inanimate, with one exception, namely, the hypocrite, ever alike *spiacente a-Dio e ai nemici sui* ; and therefore intolerable to Robert Burns's honesty, whether he be fighting for or against the cause of right. Again we say, there are evidences of a versatile and manifold faculty in this man, which, with a stronger will and a larger education, might have placed him as an equal by the side of those great names which we mentioned together with his at the commencement of this Article.

But one thing Burns wanted ; and of that one thing his age helped to deprive him,—the education which comes by reverence. Looking round in such a time, with his keen power of insight, his keen sense of humour, what was there to worship ? Lord Jeffrey, or whosoever was the author of the review in the *Edinburgh*, says disparagingly, that Burns had as much education as Shakspeare. So he very probably had, if education mean book-learning. Nay, more, of the practical education of the fireside, the sober, industrious, God-fearing education, and “drawing out” of the manhood, by act and example, Burns may have had more under his good father than Shakspeare under his ; though the family life of the small English burgher in Elizabeth's time would have generally presented, as we suspect, the very same aspect of staid manfulness and godliness which a Scotch farmer's did fifty years ago. But let that be as it may, Burns was not born into an Elizabethan age. He did not see around him Raleighs and Sidneys, Cecils and Hookers, Drakes and Frobishers, Spensers and Johnsons, Southamptons and Wilmoughbys, with an Elizabeth, guiding and moulding the great whole, a crowned Titaness, terrible, and strong, and wise,—a woman who, whether right or wrong, bowed the proudest, if not to love, yet still to obey.

That was the secret of Shakspeare's power. Heroic himself, he was born into an age of heroes. You see it in his works. Not a play but gives patent evidence that to him all forms of human magnanimity were common and way-side flowers,—among the humours of men which he and Ben Jonson used to wander forth together to observe. And thus he could give living action and speech to the ancient noblenesses of Rome and the middle age; for he had walked and conversed with them, unchanged in every thing but in the dress. Had he known Greek literature he could have recalled to imperishable life such men as Cimon and Miltiades, Leonidas and Themistocles, such deeds as Marathon and Salamis. For had we not had our own Miltiades, our own Salamis, written within a few years of his birth; and were not the heroes of it still walking among men? It was surely this continual presence of "men of worship," this atmosphere of admiration and respect and trust, in which Shakspeare must have lived, which tamed down the wild self-will of the deer-stealing fugitive from Stratford, into the calm large-eyed philosopher, tolerant and loving, and full of faith in a species made in the likeness of God. Not so with Burns. One feels painfully in his poems the want of great characters; and still more painfully that he has not drawn them, simply because they were not there to draw. That he has a true eye for what is noble when he sees it, let his *Lament for Glencairn* testify, and the stanzas in his *Vision*, in which, with a high-bred grace which many a courtly poet of his day might have envied, he alludes to one and another Scottish worthy of his time. There is no vein of saucy and envious "banausia" in the man; even in his most graceless sneer, his fault—if fault it be—is, that he cannot and will not pretend to respect that which he knows to be unworthy of respect. He sees around him and above him, as well as below him, an average of men and things dishonest, sensual, ungodly, shallow, ridiculous by reason of their own lusts and passions, and he will not apply to the shams of dignity and worth, the words which were meant for their realities. After all, he does but say what every one round him was feeling and thinking: but he said it; and hypocritical respectability shrank shrieking from the mirror of her own inner heart. But it was all the worse for him. In the sins of others he saw an excuse for his own. Losing respect for and faith in his brother men, he lost, as a matter of course, respect for himself, faith in himself. The hypocrisy which persecutes in the name of law, whether political or moral, while in private it transgresses the very law which is for ever on its tongue, is turned by his passionate and sorely-tempted character into a too easy excuse for disbelieving in the obligation of any law whatsoever.

He ceases to worship, and therefore to be himself worshipful,—and we know the rest.

“He might have still worshipped God?” He might, and surely amid all his sins, doubts, and confusions, the remembrance of the old faith learned at his parent’s knee, *does* haunt him still as a beautiful regret,—and sometimes, in his bitterest hours, shine out before his poor broken heart as an everlasting Pharos, lighting him homewards after all. Whether he reached that home or not, none on earth can tell. But his writings show, if any thing can, that the vestal-fire of conscience still burned within, though choked again and again with bitter ashes and foul smoke. Consider the time in which he lived, when it was “as with the people, so with the priest,” and the grand old life-tree of the Scottish Church, now green and vigorous with fresh leaves and flowers, was all crusted with foul scurf and moss, and seemed to have ceased growing, and to be crumbling down into decay; consider the terrible contradiction between faith and practice which must have met the eyes of the man, before he could write with the same pen—and one as honestly as the other—*The Cottar’s Saturday Night* and *Holy Willie’s Prayer*. But those times are past, and the men who acted in them gone to another tribunal. Let the dead bury their dead; and, in the mean time, instead of cursing the misguided genius, let us consider whether we have not also something for which to thank him; whether, as competent judges of him aver from their own experience, those very seeming blasphemies of his have not produced more good than evil; whether, though “a savour of death unto death,” to conceited and rebellious spirits, they may not have helped to open the eyes of the wise to the extent to which the general eighteenth century rottenness had infected Scotland, and to make intolerable a state of things which ought to have been intolerable, even if Burns had never written.

We are not attacking the reviewer, far less the *Edinburgh Review*, which some years after this not only made the *amende honorable* to Burns, but showed a frank impartiality only too rare in the reviews of these days, by publishing in its pages the noble article on Burns which has since appeared separately in Mr. Carlyle’s *Miscellanies*; what we want to show from the reviewer’s own words, is the element in which Burns had to work, the judges before whom he had to plead, and the change which, as we think, very much by the influence of his own poems, has passed upon the minds of men. How few are there who would pen now about him such a sentence as this—“He is,” (that is, was, having gone to his account fifteen years before,) “perpetually making a parade of his own inflammability and

imprudence, and talking with much self-complacency and exultation of the offence he has occasioned to the sober and correct part of mankind,"—a very small part of mankind, one would have thought, in the British isles at least, about the end of the last century. But, it was the fashion then, as usual, to substitute the praise of virtues for the practice of them, and three-bottle and ten-tumbler men had a very good right, of course, to admire sobriety and correctness, and denounce any two-bottle and six-tumbler man who was not ashamed to confess in print the weaknesses which they confessed only by word of mouth. Just, and yet not just. True, Burns does make a parade of his thoughtlessness, and worse—but, why? because he gloried in it? He must be a very skin-deep critic who cannot see, even in the most insolent of those blameworthy utterances, an inward shame and self-reproach, which if any man had ever felt in himself, he would be in nowise inclined to laugh at it in others. Why, it is the very shame which wrings those poems out of him. They are the attempt of the strong man fettered to laugh at his own consciousness of slavery—to deny the existence of his chains—to pretend to himself that he likes them. To us, some of those wildest, "Rob the Ranter" bursts of blackguardism are most deeply mournful, hardly needing that the sympathies which they stir up should be heightened by the little scraps of prayer and bitter repentance, which lie up and down among their uglier brethren, the *disjecta membra* of a great "De Profundis," perhaps not all unheard. These latter pieces are most significant. The very doggerel of them, the total absence of any attempt at ornament in diction or polish in metre, is proof complete of their deep heart-wrung sincerity. They are like the wail of a lost child, rather than the remorse of a Titan. The heart of the man was so young to the last; the boy-vein in him, as perhaps in all great poets, beating on through manhood for good and for evil. No! there was parade there, as of the lost woman, who tries to hide her self-disgust by staring you out of countenance, but of complacency and exultation, none.

On one point, namely, politics, Burns's higher sympathies seem to have been awakened. It had been better for him, in a worldly point of view, that they had not. In an intellectual, and even in a moral point of view, far worse. A fellow-feeling with the French Revolution, in the mind of a young man of that day, was a sign of moral health, which we should have been sorry to miss in him. Unable to foresee the outcome of the great struggle, having lost faith in those everlasting truths, religious and political, which it was madly setting at nought, what could it appear to him but an awakening from the dead, a return to young



and genial health, a purifying thunder-storm. Such was his dream, the dream of thousands more, and not so wrong a one after all. For that, since that fearful outburst of the nether pit, all Europe has arisen and awakened into manifold and beautiful new life, who can deny? We are not what we were, but better; or rather, with boundless means of being better if we will. We have entered a fresh era of time for good and evil; the fact is patent in every sermon we hear, in every book we read, in every invention, even the most paltry, which we see registered. Shall we think hardly of the man who saw the dawn of our own day, and welcomed it cheerfully and hopefully, even though he fancied the mist-spectres to be elements of the true sunrise, and knew not—and who knows?—the purposes of Him whose paths are in the great deep, and his ways past finding out? At least, the greater part of his influence on the times which have followed him, is to be ascribed to that very “Radicalism” which in the eyes of the respectable around him, had sealed his doom, and consigned him to ignoble oblivion. It has been, with the working men who read him, a passport for the rest of his writings; it has allured them to listen to him, when he spoke of high and holy things, which but for him, they might have long ago tossed away as worthless, in the recklessness of ignorance and discontent. They could trust *his Cottar’s Saturday Night*; they could believe that he spoke from his heart, when in deep anguish he cries to the God whom he had forgotten, while they would have turned with a distrustful sneer from the sermon of the sleek and comfortable minister, who in their eyes, however humbly born, had deserted his class, and gone over to the camp of the enemy, and the flesh-pots of Egypt.

After the time of Burns, as was to be expected, Scottish song multiplies itself tenfold. The nation becomes awakened to the treasures of its own old literature, and attempts, what after all, alas! is but a revival; and like most revivals, not altogether a successful one. Of the twelve hundred songs contained in Mr. Whitelaw’s excellent collection, whereof more than a hundred and fifty are either wholly or partly Burns’s, the small proportion written before him are decidedly far superior in value to those written after him; a discouraging fact, though not difficult to explain, if we consider the great social changes which have been proceeding, the sterner subjects of thought which have been arising, during the last half century. True song requires for its atmosphere a state rather of careless arcadian prosperity, than of struggle and doubt, of earnest looking forward to an unknown future, and pardonable regret for a dying past; and in that state the mind of the masses, throughout North Britain, has been wel-

tering confusedly for the last few years. The new and more complex era into which we are passing has not yet sufficiently opened itself to be sung about; men hardly know what it is, much less what it will be; and while they are hard at work creating it, they have no breath to spare in talking of it: one thing they do see and feel, painfully enough at times, namely, that the old Scottish pastoral life is passing away before the combined influence of manufactures and the large-farm system, to be replaced, doubtless, hereafter by something better, but in the meanwhile dragging down with it in its decay but too much that can ill be spared of that old society which inspired Ramsay and Burns. Hence the later Scottish song writers seldom really sing; their proses want the unconscious lilt and flash of their old models; they will hardly go (the true test of a song) without music—the true test, we say, of a song. Who needs music, however fitting and beautiful the accustomed air may happen to be, to *Roy's Wife of Aldivalloch*, or *The Bride cam' out o' the Byre*, or either of the casts of *The Flowers of the Forest*, or to *Auld Lang Syne* itself? They bubble right up out of the heart, and by virtue of their inner and unconscious melody, which all that is true to the heart has in it, shape themselves into a song, and are not shaped by any notes whatsoever. So with many, most indeed, of Burns's and a few of Allan Cunningham's; the *Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sail*, for instance. But the great majority of these later songs seem, if the truth is to be spoken, inspirations at second hand, of people writing about things which they would like to feel, and which they ought to feel, because others used to feel them in old times, but which they do not feel as their forefathers felt—a sort of poetical Tractarianism, in short. Their metre betrays them, as well as their words; in both they are continually wandering, unconsciously to themselves, into the elegiac—except when on one subject, whereon the muse of Scotia still warbles at first hand, and from the depths of her heart—namely, alas! the *Barley Bree!* and yet never, even on this beloved theme, has she risen again to the height of Burns's bacchanalian songs.

But when sober, there is a sadness about the Scottish muse now-a-days—as perhaps there ought to be—and the utterances of hers which ring the truest are laments. We question whether in all Mr. Whitelaw's collection there is a single modern poem, (placing Burns as the transition point between the old and new,) which rises so high, or pierces so deep, with all its pastoral simplicity, as Smibert's *Widow's Lament*.

"Afore the Lammas tide  
Had dun'd the birken tree,

In a' our water side,  
 Nae wife was blest like me:  
 A kind gudeman, and twa  
 Sweet bairns were round me here;  
 But they're a' ta'en awa'  
 Sin' the fa' o' the year.

“Sair trouble cam' our gate,  
 And made me, when it cam',  
 A bird without a mate,  
 A ewe without a lamb.  
 Our hay was yet to maw,  
 And our corn was yet to shear;  
 When they a' dwined awa'  
 In the fa' o' the year.

“I daurna look a-field,  
 For aye I trow to see,  
 The form that was a bield  
 To my wee bairns and me;  
 But wind, and weet, and snaw,  
 They never mair can fear,  
 Sin' they a' got the ca',  
 In the fa' o' the year.

“Aft on the hill at e'ens  
 I see him 'mang the ferns,  
 The lover o' my teens,  
 The father o' my bairns:  
 For there his plaid I saw,  
 As gloamin' aye drew near—  
 But my a's now awa',  
 Sin' the fa' o' the year.

“Our bonnie rigs theirsel',  
 Reca' my waes to mind,  
 Our pair dumb beasties tell  
 O' a' that I ha'e tyned;  
 For whae our wheat will saw,  
 And whae our sheep will shear,  
 Sin' my a' gaed awa',  
 In the fa' o' the year?

“My heart is growing cauld,  
 And will be caulder still,  
 And sair, sair in the fauld,  
 Will be the winter's chill;  
 For peats were yet to ca',  
 Our sheep they were to smear,  
 When my a' dwined awa',  
 In the fa' o' the year.

“I ettle whiles to spin,  
 But wee wee patterin' feet  
 Come rinnin' out and in,  
 And then I first maun greet:  
 I ken its fancy a',  
 And faster rows the tear,  
 That my a' dwined awa'  
 In the fa' o' the year.

“ Be kind, O heav'n abune!  
 To ane sae wae and lane,  
 An' tak' her hamevards sune,  
 In pity o' her manè:  
 Lang ere the March winds blaw,  
 May she, far far frae here,  
 Meet them a' that's awa',  
 Sin' the fa' o' the year.”

It seems strange why the man who could write this, who shows, in the minor key of metre, which he has so skilfully chosen, such an instinct for the true music of words, could not have written much more. And yet, perhaps, we have ourselves given the reason already. There was not much more to sing about. The fashion of imitating old Jacobite songs is past, the mine now being exhausted, to the great comfort of sincerity and common sense. The peasantry, whose courtships, rich in animal health, yet not over pure or refined, Allan Ramsay sung a hundred years ago, are learning to think, and act, and emigrate, as well as to make love. The age of Theocritus and Bion has given place to—shall we say the age of the Cæsars, or the irruption of the barbarians?—and the love-singers of the North are beginning to feel, that if that passion is to retain any longer its rightful place in their popular poetry, it must be spoken of henceforth in words as lofty and refined as those in which the most educated and the most gifted speak of it. Hence, in the transition between the old animalism and the new spiritualism, a jumble of the two elements, not always felicitous; attempts at ambitious description, after Burns's worst manner; at subjective sentiment, after the worst manner of the world in general; and yet, all the while, a consciousness that there was something worth keeping in the simple objective style of the old school, without which the new thoughtfulness would be hollow, and barren, and windy; and so the two are patched together, “new cloth into an old garment, making the rent worse.” Accordingly, they are universally troubled with the disease of epithets, these new songs. Ryan's exquisite *Lass wi' the Bonny Blue Een*, is utterly spoiled by two offences of this kind.

“ She'll steal out to meet her *loved* Donald again,”

and—

“ The world's *false and vanishing* scene;”

as Allan Cunningham's still more exquisite *Lass of Preston Mill*, is by one subjective figure,—

“ Six hills are woolly with my sheep,  
 Six vales are lowing with my kye.”

Burns doubtless committed the same fault again and again; but in his time it was the fashion; and the older models (for models they are and will remain for ever) had not been studied and analyzed as they have been since. Burns, indeed, actually spoiled one or two of his own songs by altering them from their first cast to suit the sentimental taste of his time. The first version, for instance, of the *Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon*, is far superior to the second and more popular one, because it dares to go without epithets. Compare the second stanza of each:—

“Thoul't break my heart, thou bonnie bird,  
That sings upon the bough;  
Thou minds me o' the happy days  
When my fause love was true.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Thoul't break my heart, thou *warbling* bird,  
That *wantons* through the *flowery* thorn;  
Thou minds me o' *departed* joys,  
Departed *never to return*.”

What is said in the latter stanza which has not been said in the former, and said more dramatically, more as the images would really present themselves to the speaker's mind? It would be enough for him that the bird was bonnie, and singing; and his very sorrow would lead him to analyze and describe as little as possible a thing which so painfully contrasted with his own feelings; whether the thorn was flowery or not, would not have mattered to him, unless he had some distinct association with the thorn-flowers, in which case he would have brought out the image full and separate, and not merely thrown it in as a make-weight to “thorn;”—and this is the great reason why epithets are, nine times out of ten, mistakes in song and ballad poetry, he never would have thought of “departed” before he thought of “joys.” A very little consideration of the actual processes of thought in such a case, will show the truth of our observation, and the instinctive wisdom of the older song-writers, in putting the epithet as often as possible after the noun, instead of before it, even at the expense of grammar. They are bad things at all times in song-poetry, these epithets; and, accordingly, we find that the best German writers, like Uhland and Heine, get rid of them as much as possible, and succeed thereby, every word striking and ringing down with full force, no cushion of an epithet intruding between the reader's brain-anvil and the poet's hammer to break the blow. In Uhland's *Three Burschen*, if we recollect right, there are but two epithets, and those of the simplest descriptive kind—“Thy fair daughter” and a “black pall.” Were there more, we question whether the poet would

have succeeded, as he has done, in making our flesh creep as he leads us on from line to line and verse to verse. So Tennyson, the greatest of our living poets, eschews as much as possible, in his later writings, these same epithets, except in cases where they are themselves objective and pictorial—in short, the very things which he wants you to look at, as, for instance,—

“And into *silver* arrows break  
The *sailing* moon in creek and cove.”

This is fair enough ; but, indeed, after laying down our rule, we must confess that it is very difficult to keep always true to it, in a language which does not, like the Latin and German, allow us to put our adjectives very much where we choose. Nevertheless, whether we can avoid it or not, every time we place before the noun an epithet which, like “*departed* joys,” relates to our consciousness concerning the object, and not merely to the object itself ; or an epithet, which, like “*flowery* thorn,” gives us, before we get to the object itself, those accidents of the object which we only discern by a second look, by analysis and reflection ; (for the thorn, if in the flower, would *look* to us, at the first glance, not “*flowery*,” but “*white*,” “*snowy*,” or what you will which expresses colour, and not scientific fact)—every time, we repeat, this is done, the poet descends from the objective and dramatic domain of song, into the subjective and reflective one of elegy.

But the field in which Burns’s influence has been, as was to be expected, most important and most widely felt, is in the poems of working men. He first proved that it was possible to become a poet and a cultivated man, without deserting his class, either in station or in sympathies ; nay, that the healthiest and noblest elements of a lowly born poet’s mind might be, perhaps certainly must be, the very feelings and thoughts which he brought up with him from below, not those which he received from above, in the course of his artificial culture. From the example of Burns, therefore, many a working man, who would otherwise have “*died and given no sign*,” has taken courage, and spoken out the thought within him, in verse or prose, not always wisely and well, but in all cases, as it seems to us, in the belief that he had a sort of divine right to speak and be heard, since Burns had broken down the artificial ice-wall of centuries, and asserted, by act as well as song, that “*a man’s a man for a’ that*.” Almost every volume of working men’s poetry which we have read, seems to reëcho poor Nicoll’s spirited, though somewhat overstrained address to the Scottish genius :—

- “ This is the natal day of him,  
 Who, born in want and poverty,  
 Burst from his fetters, and arose,  
 The freest of the free.
- “ Arose to tell the watching earth  
 What lowly men could feel and do,  
 To show that mighty, heaven-like souls  
 In cottage hamlets grew.
- “ Burns! thou hast given us a name  
 To shield us from the taunts of scorn:  
 The plant that creeps amid the soil  
 A glorious flower has borne.
- “ Before the proudest of the earth  
 We stand with an uplifted brow  
 Like us, thou wast a toil-worn man;  
 And we are noble now! ”

The critic, looking calmly on, may indeed question whether this new fashion of verse-writing among working men has been always conducive to their own happiness. As for absolute success as poets, that was not to be expected of one in a hundred, so that we must not be disappointed if among the volumes of working men's poetry, of which we give a list at the head of our Article, only two should be found, on perusal, to contain any writing of a very high order, although these volumes form a very small portion of the verses which have been written, during the last forty years, by men engaged in the rudest and most monotonous toil. To every man so writing, the art, doubtless, is an ennobling one. The habit of expressing thought in verse not only indicates culture, but is a culture in itself of a very high order. It teaches the writer to think tersely and definitely; it evokes in him the humanizing sense of grace and melody, not merely by enticing him to study good models, but by the very act of composition. It gives him a vent for sorrows, doubts, and aspirations, which might otherwise fret and canker within, breeding, as they too often do in the utterly dumb English peasant, self-devouring meditation, dogged melancholy, and fierce fanaticism. And if the effect of verse-writing had stopped there, all had been well; but bad models have had their effect as well as good ones, on the half-tutored taste of the working men, and engendered in them but too often a fondness for frothy magniloquence and ferocious raving, neither morally nor æsthetically profitable to themselves or their readers. There are excuses for the fault; the young of all ranks naturally enough mistake noise for awfulness, and violence for strength; and there is generally but too much, in the biographies of these working poets, to explain, if not to excuse, a vein of bitterness, which they certainly did not learn from their master,

Burns. The two poets who have done them most harm, in teaching the evil trick of cursing and swearing, are Shelley and the Corn-Law Rhymer; and one can well imagine how seducing two such models must be, to men struggling to utter their own complaints. Of Shelley this is not the place to speak. But of the Corn-Law Rhymer we may say here, that howsoever he may have been indebted to Burns's example for the notion of writing at all, he has profited very little by Burns's own poems. Instead of the genial loving tone of the great Scotchman, we find in Elliott a tone of deliberate savageness, all the more ugly, because evidently intentional. He tries to curse; "he delights"—may we be forgiven if we misjudge the man—"in cursing;" he makes a science of it; he defiles, of malice prepense, the loveliest and sweetest thoughts and scenes (and he can be most sweet) by giving some sudden, sickening revulsion to his reader's feelings; and he does it generally with a power which makes it at once as painful to the calmer reader as alluring to those who are struggling with the same temptations as the poet. Now and then, his trick drags him down into sheer fustian and bombast; but not always. There is a terrible Dantean vividness of imagination about him, perhaps unequalled in England, in his generation. His poems are like his countenance, coarse and ungoverned, yet with an intensity of eye, a rugged massiveness of feature, which would be grand but for the absence of love and of humour—love's twin and inseparable brother. Therefore it is, that although single passages may be found in his writings, of which Milton himself need not have been ashamed, his efforts at dramatic poetry are utter failures, dark, monstrous, unrelieved by any really human vein of feeling or character. As in feature, so in mind, he has not even the delicate and graceful organization which made up in Milton for the want of tenderness, and so enabled him to write, if not a drama, yet still the sweetest of masques and idyls.

Rather belonging to the same school than to that of Burns, though never degrading itself by Elliott's ferocity, is that extraordinary poem, *The Purgatory of Suicides*, by Thomas Cooper. As he is still in the prime of life, and capable of doing more and better than he yet has done, we will not comment on it as freely as we have on Elliott, except to regret a similar want of softness and sweetness, and also of a clearness and logical connection of thought, in which Elliott seldom fails, except when cursing. The imagination is hardly as vivid as Elliott's, though the fancy and invention, the polish of the style, and the indications of profound thought on all subjects within the poet's reach, are superior in every way to those of the Corn-Law Rhymer; and when we



consider that the man who wrote it had to gather his huge store of classic and historic anecdote while earning his living, first as a shoemaker, and then as a Wesleyan country preacher, we can only praise and excuse, and hope that the day may come when talents of so high an order will find some healthier channel for their energies than that in which they now are flowing.

Our readers may wonder at not seeing the Ettrick Shepherd's poems among the list at the head of the Article. It seems to us, however, that we have done right in omitting them. Doubtless, he too was awakened into song by the example of Burns; but he seems to us to owe little to his great predecessor, beyond the general consciousness that there was a virgin field of poetry in Scotch scenery, manners, and legends—a debt which Walter Scott himself probably owed to the Ayrshire peasant just as much as Hogg did. Indeed, we perhaps are right in saying, that had Burns not lived, neither Wilson, Galt, Allan Cunningham, or the crowd of lesser writers who have found material for their fancy in Scotch peculiarities, would have written as they have. The first three names, Wilson's above all, must have been in any case distinguished; yet it is surely no derogation to some of the most exquisite rural sketches in *Christopher North's Recreations*, to claim them as the intellectual foster-children of *The Cottar's Saturday Night*. In this respect, certainly, the Ettrick Shepherd has a place in Burns's school, and, in our own opinion, one which has been very much overrated. But the deeper elements of Burns's mind, those which have especially endeared him to the working man, reappear very little, or not at all, in Hogg. He left his class too much below him; became too much of the mere æsthetic prodigy, and member of a literary clique; frittered away his great talents in brilliant talk and insincere Jacobite songs, and, in fine, worked no deliverance on the earth. It is sad to have to say this, but we had it forced upon us painfully enough a few days ago, when re-reading *Kilmeny*. There may be beautiful passages in it; but it is not coherent, not natural, not honest. It is throughout, an affectation of the Manichæan sentimental-sublime, which God never yet put into the heart of any brawny, long-headed, practical Borderer, and which he therefore probably put into his own head, or, as we call it, affected, for the time being; a method of poetry writing which comes forth out of nothing, and into nothing must return.

This is unfortunate, perhaps, for the world; for we question whether a man of talents in anywise to be compared with those of the Ettrick Shepherd has followed in the footsteps of Burns. Poor Tannahill, whose sad story is but too well known, perished

early, at the age of thirty-six, leaving behind him a good many pretty love-songs of no great intrinsic value, if the specimens of them given in Mr. Whitelaw's collection are to be accepted as the best. Like all Burns's successors, including even Walter Scott and Hogg, we have but to compare him with his original to see how altogether unrivalled on his own ground the Ayrshire farmer was. In one feature only Tannahill's poems, and those later than him, except where pedantically archaist, like many of Motherwell's, are an improvement on Burns; namely, in the more easy and complete interfusion of the two dialects, the Norse Scotch and the Romanesque English, which Allan Ramsay attempted in vain to unite; while Burns, though not succeeding by any means perfectly, welded them together into something of continuity and harmony—thus doing for the language of his own country very much what Chaucer did for that of England.—A happy union, in the opinion of those who, as we do, look on the vernacular Norse Scotch as no barbaric dialect, but as an independent tongue, possessing a copiousness, melody, terseness, and picturesqueness which makes it both in prose and verse, a far better vehicle than the popular English for many forms of thought.

Perhaps the young peasant who most expressly stands out as the pupil and successor of Burns, is Robert Nicoll. He is a lesser poet, doubtless, than his master, and a lesser man, if the size and number of his capabilities be looked at; but he is a greater man, in that, from the beginning to the end of his career, he seems to have kept that very wholeness of heart and head which poor Burns lost. Nicoll's story is, *mutatis mutandis*, that of the Bethunes, and many a noble young Scotsman more. Parents holding a farm between Perth and Dunkeld, they and theirs before them for generations inhabitants of the neighbourhood, "decent, honest, God-fearing people." The farm is lost by reverses, and manfully Robert Nicoll's father becomes a day labourer on the fields which he lately rented: and there begins, for the boy, from his earliest recollections, a life of steady sturdy drudgery. But they must have been grand old folk these parents, and in nowise addicted to wringing their hands over "the great might-have-been." Like true Scots Bible-lovers, they do believe in a God, and in a will of God, underlying, absolute, loving, and believe that the might-have-been ought not to have been simply because it has not been; and so they put their shoulders to the new collar patiently, cheerfully, hopefully, and teach the boys to do the same. The mother especially, as so many great men's mothers do, stands out large and heroic, from the time when, the farm being gone, she, "the ardent book-woman," finds her time too precious to be

spent in reading, and sets little Robert to read to her as she works—what a picture!—to the last sad day, when, wanting money to come up to Leeds to see her dying darling, she “shore for the siller,” rather than borrow it. And her son’s life is like her own—the most pure, joyous, valiant little epic. Robert does not even take to work as something beyond himself, uninteresting and painful, which, however, must be done courageously: he lives in it, enjoys it as his proper element, one which is no more a burden and an exertion to him than the rush of the strid is to the trout who plays and feeds in it day and night, unconscious of the amount of muscular strength which he puts forth in merely keeping his place in the stream. Whether carrying *Kenilworth* in his plaid to the woods, to read while herding, or selling currants and whisky as the Perth storekeeper’s apprentice, or keeping his little circulating library in Dundee, tormenting his pure heart with the thought of the twenty pounds which his mother has borrowed wherewith to start him, or editing the *Leeds Times*, or lying on his early death-bed, just as life seems to be opening clear and broad before him, he

“Bates not a jot of heart or hope,”

but steers right onward, singing over his work, without bluster or self-gratulation, but for very joy at having work to do. There is a keen practical insight about him, rarely combined, in these days, with his single-minded determination to do good in his generation. His eye is single, and his whole body full of light.

“It would indeed,” writes the grocer’s boy, encouraging his despondent and somewhat Werterean friend, “be hangman’s work to write articles one day to be forgotten to-morrow, if that were all; but you forget the comfort—the repayment. If one prejudice is overthrown, one error rendered untenable; if but one step in advance be the consequence of your articles and mine—the consequences of the labour of all true men—are we not deeply repaid?”

Or again, in a right noble letter to his noble mother:—

“That money of R.’s hangs like a mill-stone about my neck. If I had paid it, I would never borrow again from mortal man. But do not mistake me, mother; I am not one of those men who faint and falter in the great battle of life. God has given me too strong a heart for that. I look upon earth as a place where every man is set to struggle and to work, that he may be made humble and pure-hearted, and fit for that better land for which earth is a preparation—to which earth is the gate. . . . If men would but consider how little of *real* evil there is in all the ills of which they are so much afraid—poverty included—there would be more virtue and happiness, and less world and Mammon-worship on earth than is. I think, mother, that to me

has been given talent; and if so, that talent was given to make it useful to man."

And yet, there is a quiet self-respect about him withal:—

"In my short course through life," says he in confidence to a friend at one-and-twenty, "I have never feared an enemy, or failed a friend; and I live in the hope I never shall. For the rest, I have written my heart in my poems; and rude and unfinished, and hasty as they are, it can be read there."

"From seven years of age to this very hour, I have been dependent only on my own head and hands for every thing—for very bread. Long years ago—ay, even in childhood—adversity made me think, and feel, and suffer; and would pride allow me, I could tell the world many a deep tragedy enacted in the heart of a poor, forgotten, uncared-for boy. . . . But I thank God, that though I felt and suffered, the scathing blast neither blunted my perceptions of natural and moral beauty, nor, by withering the affections of my heart, made me a selfish man. Often when I look back I wonder how I bore the burden—how I did not end the evil day at once and for ever."

Such is the man, in his normal state; and as was to be expected, God's blessing rests on him. Whatever he sets his hand to, succeeds. Within a few weeks of his taking the editorship of the *Leeds Times*, its circulation begins to rise rapidly, as was to be expected with an honest man to guide it. For Nicoll's political creed, though perhaps neither very deep nor wide, lies clear and single before him, as every thing else which he does. He believes naturally enough in ultra-Radicalism according to the fashions of the Reform Bill era. That is the right thing; and for that he will work day and night, body and soul, and if needs be, die. There, in the editor's den at Leeds, he "begins to see the truth of what you told me about the world's unworthiness; but stop a little. I am not sad as yet. . . . If I am hindered from feeling the soul of poetry among woods and fields, I yet trust I am struggling for something worth prizing—something of which I am not ashamed, and need not be. If there be aught on earth worth aspiring to, it is the lot of him who is enabled to do something for his miserable and suffering fellow-men; and this you and I will try to do at least."

His friend is put to work a ministerial paper, with orders "not to be rash, but to elevate the population *gradually*;" and finding those orders to imply a considerable leaning towards the By-ends, Lukewarm, and Facing-both-ways school, kicks over the traces, wisely, in Nicoll's eyes, and, breaks loose.

"Keep up your spirits," says honest Nicoll. "You are higher at this moment in my estimation, in your own, and that of every honest

man, than you ever were before. Tait's advice was just such as I should have expected of him; honest as honesty itself. You must never again accept a paper but where you can tell the whole truth without fear or favour. . . . Tell E. (the broken-loose editor's lady-love) from me to estimate as she ought, the nobility and determination of the man who has dared to act as you have done. Prudent men will say that you are hasty: but you have done right, whatever may be the consequences."

This is the spirit of Robert Nicoll; the spirit which is the fruit of early purity and self-restraint, of living "on bread and cheese and water," that he may buy books; of walking out to the Inch of Perth at four o'clock on summer mornings, to write and read in peace before he returns to the currants and the whisky. The nervous simplicity of the man comes out in the very nervous simplicity of the prose he writes; and though there be nothing very new or elevated in it, or indeed in his poems themselves, we call on our readers to admire a phenomenon so rare, in the "upper classes" at least, in these days, and taking a lesson from the peasant's son, rejoice with us that "a man is born into the world."

For Nicoll, as few do, practises what he preaches. It seems to him, once on a time, right and necessary that Sir William Molesworth should be returned for Leeds; and Nicoll having so determined, "throws himself, body and soul, into the contest, with such ardour, that his wife afterwards said, and we can well believe it, that if Sir William had failed, Robert would have died on the instant!"—why not? Having once made up his mind that that was the just and right thing, the thing which was absolutely good for Leeds, and the human beings who lived in it, was it not a thing to die for, even if it had been but the election of a new beadle? The advanced sentry is set to guard some obscure worthless dike-end—obscure and worthless in itself, but to him a centre of infinite duty. True, the fate of the camp does not depend on its being taken; if the enemy round it, there are plenty behind to blow them out again. But that is no reason whatsoever why he, before any odds, should throw his musket over his shoulder, and retreat gracefully to the lines. He was set there to stand by that, whether dike-end or representation of Leeds; that is the right thing for him; and for that right he will fight, and if he be killed, die. So have all brave men felt, and so have all brave deeds been done, since man walked the earth. It is because that spirit, the spirit of faith, has died out among us, that so few brave deeds are done now, except on battle-fields, and in hovels whereof none but God and the angels know.

So the man prospers. Several years of honourable and self-restraining love bring him a wife, beautiful, loving, worshipping his talents; a help-meet for him, such as God will send at times to those whom he loves. Kind men meet and love and help him—"The Johnstones, Mr. Tait, William and Mary Howitt;" Sir William Molesworth, hearing of his last illness, sends him, unsolicited, fifty pounds, which, as we understand it, Nicoll accepts without foolish bluster about independence. Why not?—man should help man, and be helped by him. Would he not have done as much for Sir William? Nothing to us proves Nicoll's heart-wholeness more than the way in which he talks of his benefactors, in a tone of simple gratitude and affection, without fawning, and without vapouring. The man has too much self-respect to consider himself lowered by accepting a favour.

But he must go after all. The editor's den at Leeds is not the place for lungs bred on Perthshire breezes; and work rises before him, huger and heavier as he goes on, till he drops under the ever-increasing load. He will not believe it at first. In sweet childlike playful letters, he tells his mother that it is nothing. It has done him good—"opened the grave before his eyes, and taught him to think of death." "He trusts that he has not borne this, and suffered, and thought in vain." This too, he hopes, is to be a fresh lesson-page of experience for his work. Alas! a few months more of bitter suffering and of generous kindness, and love from all around him,—and it is over with him, at the age of twenty-three. Shall we regret him?—shall we not rather believe that God knew best, and considering the unhealthy moral atmosphere of the press, and the strange confused ways into which old ultra-Radicalism, finding itself too narrow for the new problems of the day, has stumbled and floundered in the last fifteen years, believed that he might have been a worse man had he been a longer-lived one, and thank heaven that "the righteous is taken away from the evil to come?"

As it is, he ends as he began. The first poem in his book is "The Ha' Bible;" and the last, written a few days before his death, is still the death-song of a man—without fear, without repining, without boasting, blessing and loving the earth which he leaves, yet with a clear joyful eye upwards and outwards and homewards. And so ends his little epic, as we called it. May Scotland see many such another!

The actual poetic value of his verses is not first-rate by any means. He is far inferior to Burns in range of subject, as he is in humour and pathos. Indeed, there is very little of these latter qualities in him anywhere—rather playfulness, flashes of child-

like fun, as in *The Provost*, and *Bonnie Bessie Lee*. But he has attained a mastery over English, a simplicity and quiet which Burns never did; and also, we need not say, a moral purity. His "poems, illustrative of the Scotch peasantry," are charming throughout—alive and bright with touches of real humanity, and sympathy with characters apparently antipodal to his own.

His more earnest poems are somewhat tainted with that cardinal fault of his school, of which he steered so clear in prose—fine words; yet he never, like the Corn-Law Rhymer, falls a cursing. He is evidently not a good hater even of "priests and kings, and aristocrats, and superstition;" or perhaps he worked all that froth safely over and off in debating club-speeches and leading articles, and left us, in these poems, the genuine Metheglin of his inner heart, sweet, clear, and strong; for there is no form of lovable or right thing which this man has come across, which he does not seem to have appreciated. Beside pure love and the beauties of nature, those on which every man of poetic power—and a great many of none, as a matter of course, have a word to say, he can feel for and with the drunken beggar, and the warriors of the ruined manor-house, and the monks of the abbey, and the old-mailed Normans with their "priest with cross and counted beads in the little Saxon chapel"—things which a radical editor might have been excused for passing by with a sneer.

His verses to his wife are a delicious little glimpse of Eden; and his *People's Anthem* rises into somewhat of true grandeur by virtue of simplicity:—

"Lord, from thy blessed throne,  
Sorrow look down upon!  
                                  God save the Poor!  
Teach them true liberty—  
Make them from tyrants free—  
Let their homes happy be!  
                                  God save the Poor!

"The arms of wicked men  
Do Thou with might restrain—  
                                  God save the Poor!  
Raise Thou their lowliness—  
Succour Thou their distress—  
Thou whom the meanest bless!  
                                  God save the Poor!

"Give them stanch honesty—  
Let their pride manly be—  
                                  God save the Poor!  
Help them to hold the right;  
Give them both truth and might,  
Lord of all LIFE and LIGHT!  
                                  God save the Poor!

And so we leave Robert Nicoll, with the parting remark, that if the "poems illustrative of the feelings of the intelligent and religious among the working-classes of Scotland" be fair samples of that which they profess to be, Scotland may thank God, that in spite of glen-clearings and temporary manufacturing rot-heaps, she is still whole at heart, and that the influence of her great peasant poet, though it may seem at first likely to be adverse to Christianity, has helped, as we have already hinted, to purify and not to taint; to destroy the fungus, but not to touch the heart of the grand old Covenant-kirk life-tree.

Still sweeter, and, alas! still sadder, is the story of the two Bethunes. If Nicoll's life, as we have said, be a solitary melody, and short though triumphant strain of work-music, theirs is a harmony and true concert of fellow-joys, fellow-sorrows, fellow-drudgery, fellow-authorship, mutual throughout, lovely in their joint-life, and in their deaths not far divided. Alexander survives his brother John only long enough to write his Memoirs, and then follows; and we have his story given us by Mr. M'Combie, in a simple unassuming little volume—not to be read without many thoughts, perhaps not rightly without tears. Mr. M'Combie has been wise enough not to attempt panegyric. He is all but prolix in details, filling up some half of his volume with letters of preternatural length, from Alexander to his publishers and critics, and from the said publishers and critics to Alexander, altogether of an unromantic and business-like cast, but entirely successful in doing that which a book should do—namely, in showing the world that here was a man of like passions with ourselves, who bore from boyhood to the grave hunger, cold, wet, rags, brutalizing and health-destroying toil, and all the storms of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and conquered them every one.

Alexander is set at fourteen to throw earth out of a ditch so deep, that it requires the full strength of a grown man, and loses flesh and health under the exertion; he is twice blown up in quarrying with his own blast, and left for dead, recovers slowly, maimed and scarred, with the loss of an eye. John, when not thirteen, is set to stone-breaking on the roads during intense cold, and has to keep himself from being frost-bitten and heart-broken by monkey gambols; takes to the weaving trade, and having helped his family by the most desperate economy to save £10 wherewith to buy looms, begins to work them, with his brother as an apprentice, and finds the whole outlay rendered useless the very same year by the failures of 1825–6. So the two return to day-labour at fourteen pence a day. John in a struggle to do task-work, honestly over-exerts himself, and ruins his digestion



for life. Next year he is set in November to clean out a water-course knee-deep in water, and then to take marl from a pit, and then to drain standing water off a swamp during an intense December frost, and finds himself laid down with a three months' cough, and all but sleepless illness, laying the foundation of the consumption which destroyed him. But they will not give in. Poetry they will write, and they write it to the best of their powers on scraps of paper, after the drudgery of the day, in a cabin pervious to every shower, teaching themselves the right spelling of the words from some *Christian Remembrancer* or other—apparently not our meek and unbiased contemporary of that name; and all this without neglecting their work a day or even an hour, when the weather permitted—the “only thing which tempted them to fret,” being—hear it readers and perpend!—“the being kept at home by rain and snow.” Then an additional malady (apparently some calculous one) comes on John, and stops by him for the six remaining years of his life. Yet between 1826 and 1832, John has saved £14 out of his miserable earnings, to be expended to the last farthing on his brother's recovery from the second quarry accident. Surely the devil is trying hard to spoil these men! But no. They are made perfect by sufferings. In the house with one long narrow room, and a small vacant space at the end of it, lighted by a single pane of glass, they write and write untiring, during the long summer evenings, poetry, *Tales of the Scottish Peasant Life*, which at last bring them in somewhat; and a work on practical economy, which is bepraised and corrected by kind critics in Edinburgh, and at last published—without a sale. Perhaps one cause of its failure might be found in those very corrections. There were too many violent political allusions in it, complains their good Mentor of Edinburgh, and persuades them, seemingly the most meek and teachable of heroes, to omit them; though Alexander, while submitting, pleads fairly enough for retaining them, in a passage which we will give, as a specimen of the sort of English possible to be acquired by a Scotch day-labourer, self-educated, all but the rudiments of reading and writing, and a few lectures on popular poetry from “a young student of Aberdeen,” now the Rev. Mr. Adamson, who must look back on the friendship which he bore these two young men, as one of the noblest pages in his life.

“Talk to the many of religion, and they will put on a long face, confess that it is a thing of the greatest importance to all—and go away and forget the whole. Talk to them of education: they will readily acknowledge that its ‘a braw thing to be weel learned,’ and begin a lamentation, which is only shorter than the lamentations of

Jeremiah, because they cannot make it as long, on the ignorance of the age in which they live ; but they neither stir hand nor foot in the matter. But speak to them of politics, and their excited countenances and kindling eye show in a moment how deeply they are interested. Politics are therefore an important feature, and an almost indispensable element in such a work as mine. Had it consisted solely of exhortations to industry and rules of economy, it would have been dismissed with an 'Ou ay, its braw for him to crack that way ; but if he were whaur we are, deed he wad just hae to do as we do.' But by mixing up the science with politics, and giving it an occasional political impetus, a different result may be reasonably expected. In these days no man can be considered a patriot or friend of the poor, who is not also a politician."

It is amusing, by the by, to see how the world changes its codes of respectability, and how, what is anathema one year, becomes trite in twenty more. The political sins in the work were, that "my brother had attacked the corn-laws with some severity ; and I have attempted to level a battery against that sort of servile homage which the poor pay to the rich !"

There is no use pursuing the story much further. They again save a little money, and need it ; for the estate on which they have lived from childhood changing hands, they are, with their aged father, expelled from the dear old dog-kennel, to find house-room where they can. Why not ?—"it was not in the bond." The house did not belong to them ; nothing of it, at least, which could be specified in any known lease. True, there may have been associations, but what associations can men be expected to cultivate on fourteen pence a day ? So they must forth, with their two aged parents, and build with their own hands a new house elsewhere, having saved some £30 from the sale of their writings. The house, as we understand, stands to this day—hereafter to become a sort of artisan's caaba and pilgrim's station, only second to Burns's grave. That, at least, it will become, whenever the meaning of the words "worth" and "worship" shall become rightly understood among us.

For what are these men, if they are not heroes and saints ? not of the Popish sort, abject and effeminate, but of the true, human, evangelic sort, masculine and grand—like the figures in Raffaele's Cartoons, compared with those of Fra Bartolomeo. Not from superstition, not from selfish prudence, but from devotion to their aged parents, and the righteous dread of dependence, they die voluntary celibates, although their writings show that they, too, could have loved as nobly as they did all other things. The extreme of endurance, self-restraint, of "conquest of the flesh," outward as well as inward, is the life-long lot of these men ; and they go through it. They have their share of in-

justice, tyranny, disappointment; one by one each bright boy's dream of success and renown is scourged out of their minds, and sternly and lovingly their Father in heaven teaches them the lesson of all lessons. By what hours of misery and blank despair that faith was purchased, we can only guess; the simple, strong men give us the result, but never dream of sitting down and analyzing the process for the world's amusement, or their own glorification. We question, indeed, whether they could have told us; whether the mere fact of a man's being able to dissect himself, in public or in private, is not proof-patent that he is no man, but only a shell of a man, with works inside, which can of course be exhibited and taken to pieces—a rather more difficult matter with flesh and blood. If we believe that God is educating, the when, the where, and the how, are not only unimportant, but, considering who is the teacher, unfathomable to us, and it is enough to be able to believe with John Bethune, that the Lord of all things is influencing us through all things; whether sacraments, or sabbaths, or sun-gleams, or showers—all things are ours, for all are his, and we are his, and he is ours;—and for the rest, to say with the same John Bethune:—

“ Oh, God of glory! thou hast treasured up  
 For me my little portion of distress;  
 But with each draught—in every bitter cup  
 Thy hand hath mixed, to make its soreness less,  
 Some cordial drop, for which thy name I bless,  
 And offer up my mite of thankfulness.  
 Thou hast chastised my frame with dire disease,  
 Long, obdurate, and painful; and thy hand  
 Hath wrung cold sweat-drops from my brow; for these  
 I thank thee too. Though pangs at thy command  
 Have compassed me about, still, with the blow,  
 Patience sustained my soul amid its woe.”

Of the actual literary merit of these men's writings there is less to be said. However extraordinary, considering the circumstances under which they were written, may be the polish and melody of John's verse, or the genuine spiritual health, deep death-and-devil-defying earnestness, and shrewd practical wisdom, which shines through all that either brother writes, they do not possess any of that fertile originality, which alone would have enabled them, as it did Burns, to compete with the literary savans, who, though for the most part of inferior genius, have the help of information and appliances, from which they were shut out. Judging them, as the true critic, like the true moralist, is bound to do, “according to what they had, not according to what they had not,” they are men who, with average advantages, might have been famous in their day. God thought it better for them to “hide them in his tabernacle from the strife of tongues,”

—and, seldom believed truism, he knows best. Alexander shall not, according to his early dreams, “earn nine hundred pounds by writing a book, like Burns,” even though his ideal method of spending be to buy all the boys in the parish “new shoes with iron tackets and heels,” and send them home with shillings for their mothers, and feed their fathers on wheat bread and milk, with tea and bannocks for Sabbath-days, and build a house for the poor old toil-stiffened man whom he once saw draining the hill-field, “with a yard full of gooseberries, and an apple-tree!” —not that, nor even, as the world judges, better than that, shall he be allowed to do. The poor, for whom he writes his *Practical Economy*, shall not even care to read it; and he shall go down to the grave a failure and a lost thing in the eyes of men: —but not in the eyes of grand God-fearing old Alison Christie, his mother, as he brings her, scrap by scrap, the proofs of their dead idol’s poems, which she has prayed to be spared just to see once in print, and, when the last half-sheet is read, loses her sight for ever; not in her eyes, nor in those of the God who saw him, in the cold winter mornings, wearing John’s clothes, to warm them for the dying man before he got up.

His grief at his brother’s death is inconsolable. He feels for the first time in his life, what a lot his is,—for he feels for the first time that—

“Parent and friend and brother gone,  
I stand upon the earth alone.”

Four years he lingers; friends begin to arise from one quarter and another, but he, not altogether wisely or well, refuses all pecuniary help. At last Mr. Hugh Miller recommends him to be editor of a projected “Non-Intrusion” paper in Dumfries, with a salary, to him boundless, of £100 a year. Too late! The iron has entered too deeply into his soul; in a few weeks more he is lying in his brother’s grave,—“Lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths not divided.”

“William Thom of Inverury” is a poet altogether of the same school. His *Rhymes and Recollections of a Handloom Weaver* are superior to those of either Nicoll or the Bethunes, the little love songs in the volume reminding us of Burns’s best manner, and the two languages in which he writes being better amalgamated, as it seems to us, than in any Scotch song writer. Moreover, there is a terseness, strength, and grace about some of these little songs, which would put to shame many a volume of vague and windy verse, which the press sees yearly sent forth by men, who, instead of working at the loom, have been pampered from their childhood with all the means and appliances of good taste and

classic cultivation. We have room only for one specimen of his verse, not the most highly finished, but of a beauty which can speak for itself.

“ DREAMINGS OF THE BEREAVED.

“ The morning breaks bonny o'er mountain and stream,  
An' troubles the hallowed breath of my dream.  
The gowd light of morning is sweet to the e'e,  
But ghost-gathering midnight, thou'rt dearer to me.  
The dull common world then sinks from my sight,  
And fairer creations arise to the night;  
When drowsy oppression has sleep-sealed my e'e,  
Then bright are the visions awakened to me!

“ Oh, come, spirit-mother! discourse of the hours  
My young bosom beat all its beating to yours,  
When heart-woven wishes in soft counsel fell  
On ears—how unheedful, proved sorrow might tell!  
That deathless affection nae sorrow could break;  
When all else forsook me, ye would na forsake;  
Then come, oh my mother! come often to me,  
An' soon an' forever I'll come unto thee!

“ An' then, shrouded loveliness! soul-winning Jean,  
How cold was thy hand on my bosom yestreen!  
'Twas kind—for the love that your e'e kindled there  
Will burn, aye an' burn, till that breast beat nae mair—  
Our bairnies sleep round me, oh bless ye their sleep!  
Your ain dark eyed Willie will wauken an' weep!  
But blythe through his weepin', he'll tell me how you,  
His heaven-hamed mammie, was daunting his brow.

“ Though dark be our dwellin', our happin' tho' bare,  
An' night closes round us in cauldness and care,  
Affection will warm us—and bright are the beams  
That halo our hame in yon dear land o' dreams:  
Then weel may I welcome the night's deathly reign,  
Wi' souls of the dearest I mingle me then;  
The gowd light of morning is lightless to me,  
But, oh! for the night with its ghost revelrie!”

But, even more interesting than the poems themselves, is the autobiographical account prefixed, with its vivid sketches of factory life in Aberdeen, of the old regime of 1770, when “four days did the weaver's work,—Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, were of course jubilee. Lawn frills gorged (?) freely from under the wrists of his fine blue, gilt-buttoned coat. He dusted his head with white flour on Sunday, smirked and wore a cane; walked in clean slippers on Monday; Tuesday heard him talk war bravado, quote Volney, and get drunk: weaving commenced gradually on Wednesday. Then were little children pirn-fillers, and such were taught to steal warily past the gate-keeper, concealing the bottle. These wee smugglers had a drop for their services, over and above their chances of profiting by the elegant and

edifying discussions uttered in their hearing. Infidelity was then getting fashionable." But by the time Thom enters on his seventeen years' weaving, in 1814, the nemesis has come. "Wages are six shillings a week where they had been forty; but the weaver of forty shillings, with money instead of wit, had bequeathed his vices to the weaver of six shillings, with wit instead of money." The introduction of machinery works evil rather than good, on account of the reckless way in which it is used, and the reckless material which it uses. "Vacancies in the factory daily made, were daily filled by male and female workers; often queer enough people, and from all parts,—*none too coarse for using*. The pickpocket, trained to the loom six months in Bridewell, came forth a journeyman weaver, and his precious experiences were infused into the common moral puddle, and in due time did their work." No wonder that "the distinctive character of all sunk away. Man became less manly—woman unlovely and rude." No wonder that the factory, like too many more, though a thriving concern to its owners, becomes "a prime nursery of vice and sorrow." "Virtue perished utterly within its walls, and was dreamed of no more; or, if remembered at all, only in a deep and woful sense of self-debasement—*a struggling to forget, where it was hopeless to obtain*." But to us, almost the most interesting passage in his book, and certainly the one which bears most directly on the general purpose of this article, is one in which he speaks of the effects of song on himself and his fellow factory-workers.

"Moore was doing all he could for love-sick boys and girls, yet they had never enough! Nearer and dearer to hearts like ours was the Ettrick Shepherd, then in his full tide of song and story; but nearer and dearer still than he, or any living songster, was our ill-fated fellow-craftsman, Tannahill. Poor weaver chiel! what we owe to you!—your *Braes of Balquidder*, and *Yon Burnside*, and *Gloomy Winter*, and the *Minstrel's* wailing ditty, and the noble *Gleneiffer*. Oh! how they did ring above the rattle of a thousand shuttles! Let me again proclaim the debt which we owe to those song-spirits, as they walked in melody from loom to loom, ministering to the low-hearted; and when the breast was filled with every thing but hope and happiness, let only break out the healthy and vigorous chorus, *A man's a man for a' that*, and the fagged weaver brightens up. . . . Who dare measure the restraining influences of these very songs? To us they were all instead of Sermons. Had one of us been bold enough to enter a church, he must have been ejected for the sake of decency. His forlorn and curiously patched habiliments would have contested the point of attraction with the ordinary eloquence of that period. Church bells rang not for us. Poets were indeed our priests: *but for those, the last relic of moral existence would have passed away*. Song was the dew-drop which gathered during the long dark night of despondency, and was

sure to glitter in the very first blink of the sun. You might have seen *Auld Robin Gray* wet the eyes that could be tearless amid cold and hunger, and weariness and pain. Surely, surely, *then there was to that heart one passage left.*"

Making all allowance for natural and pardonable high-colouring, we recommend this most weighty and significant passage to the attention of all readers, and draw an *argumentum a fortiori*, from the high estimation in which Thom holds those very songs of Tannahill's, of which we just now spoke somewhat depreciatingly, for the extreme importance which we attach to popular poetry, as an agent of incalculable power in moulding the minds of nations.

The popular poetry of Germany has held that great nation together, united and heart-whole for centuries, in spite of every disadvantage of internal division, and the bad influence of foreign taste; and the greatest of their poets have not thought it beneath them to add their contributions, and their very best, to the common treasure, meant not only for the luxurious and learned, but for the workman and the child at school. In Great Britain, on the contrary, the people have been left to form their own tastes, and choose their own modes of utterance, with great results, both for good and evil; and there has sprung up before the new impulse which Burns gave to popular poetry, a considerable literature—considerable not only from its truth and real artistic merit, but far more so from its being addressed principally to the working-classes. Even more important is this people's literature question in our eyes, than the more palpable factors of the education question, about which we now hear such ado. It does seem to us, that to take every possible precaution about the spiritual truth which children are taught in school, and then leave to chance the more impressive and abiding teaching which popular literature, songs especially, give them out of doors, is as great a *maiserie* as that of the Tractarians who insisted on getting into the pulpit in their surplices, as a sign that the clergy only had the right of preaching to the people, while they forgot that, by means of a free press, (of the license of which they too were not slack to avail themselves,) every penny-a-liner was preaching to the people daily, and would do so, maugre their surplices, to the end of time. The man who makes the people's songs is a true popular preacher. Whatsoever, true or false, he sends forth, will not be carried home, as a sermon often is, merely in heads, to be forgotten before the week is out: it will ring in the ears, and cling round the imagination, and follow the pupil to the workshop, and the tavern, and the fireside, even to the deathbed, such power is in the magic of rhyme. The emigrant, deep in Australian forests,

may take down Chalmers's sermons on Sabbath evenings from the scanty shelf; but the songs of Burns have been haunting his lips, and cheering his heart, and moulding him unconsciously to himself, in clearing and in pasture all the weary week. True, if he be what a Scotchman should be, more than one old Hebrew psalm has brought its message to him during these week-days; but there are feelings of his nature on which those psalms, not from defect, but from their very purpose, do not touch; how is he to express them, but in the songs which echo them? These will keep alive, and intensify in him, and in the children who learn them from his lips, all which is like themselves. Is it, we ask again, to be left to chance what sort of songs these shall be?

As for poetry written for the working-classes by the upper, such attempts at it as we yet have seen, may be considered *nil*. The upper must learn to know more of the lower, and to make the lower know more of them—a frankness of which we honestly believe they will never have to repent. Moreover, they must read Burns a little more, and Cavaliers and Jacobites a little less. As it is, their efforts have been as yet exactly in that direction which would most safely secure the blessings of undisturbed obscurity. Whether “secular” or “spiritual,” they have thought proper to adopt a certain Tommy-good-child tone, which, whether to Glasgow artisans or Dorsetshire labourers, or indeed for any human being who is “grinding among the iron facts of life,” is, to say the least, nauseous; and the only use of their poematricula has been to demonstrate practically, the existence of a great and fearful gulf between those who have, and those who have not, in thought as well as in purse, which must be, in the former article at least, bridged over as soon as possible, if we are to remain one people much longer. The attempts at verse for children are somewhat more successful—a certain little *Moral Songs*, especially, said to emanate from the Tractarian School, yet full of a health, spirit, and wild sweetness, which makes its authoress, in our eyes, “wiser than her teachers.” But this is our way. We are too apt to be afraid of the men, and take to the children as our *pis aller*, covering our despair of dealing with the majority, the adult population, in a pompous display of machinery for influencing that very small fraction, the children. “Oh, but the destinies of the empire depend on the rising generation!” Who has told us so?—how do we know that they do not depend on the risen generation? Who are likely to do more work during our lifetime, for good and evil,—those who are now between fifteen and five-and-forty, or those who are between five and fifteen? Yet for those former, the many, and the working, and



the powerful, all we seem to be inclined to do is to parody Scripture, and say, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still."

Not that we ask any one to sit down, and, out of mere benevolence, to write songs for the people. Wooden, out of a wooden birthplace, would such go forth, to feed fires, not spirits. But if any man shall read these pages, to whom God has given a truly poetic temperament, a gallant heart, a melodious ear, a quick and sympathetic eye for all forms of human joy, and sorrow, and humour, and grandeur,—an insight which can discern the outlines of the butterfly when clothed in the roughest and most rugged chrysalis-hide; if the teachers of his heart and purposes, and not merely of his taste and sentiments, have been the great songs of his own and of every land and age; if he can see in the divine poetry of David and Solomon, of Isaiah and Jeremiah, and, above all, in the parables of Him who spake as never man spake, the models and elemental laws of a people's poetry, alike according to the will of God and the heart of man; if he can welcome gallantly and hopefully the future, and yet know that it must be, unless it would be a monster and a machine, the loving and obedient child of the past; if he can speak of the subjects which alone will interest the many, on love, marriage, the sorrows of the poor, their hopes, political and social, their wrongs, as well as their sins and duties; and that with a fervour and passion akin to the spirit of Burns and Elliott, yet with more calm, more purity, more wisdom, and therefore with more hope, as one who stands upon a vantage-ground of education and culture, sympathizing none the less with those who struggle behind him in the valley of the shadow of death, yet seeing from the mountain-peaks the coming dawn, invisible as yet to them. Then let that man think it no fall, but rather a noble rise, to shun the barren glacier ranges of pure art, for the fertile gardens of practical and popular song, and write for the many, and with the many, in words such as they can understand, remembering that that which is simplest is always deepest, that the many contain in themselves the few, and that when he speaks to the wanderer and the drudge, he speaks to the elemental and primeval man, and in him speaks to all who have risen out of him. Let him try, undiscouraged by inevitable failures; and if at last he succeeds in giving vent to one song which will cheer hardworn hearts at the loom and the forge, or wake one pauper's heart with the hope that his children are destined not to die as he died, or recall, amid Canadian forests or Australian sheep-walks, one thrill of love for the old country, and her liberties, and her laws, and her religion, to the settler's heart;—

let that man know that he has earned a higher place among the spirits of the wise and good, by doing, in spite of the unpleasantness of self-denial, the duty which lay nearest him, than if he had outrivalled Goethe on his own classic ground, and made all the cultivated and the comfortable of the earth desert, for the exquisite creations of his fancy, Faust, and Tasso, and Iphigenie.

## HOURS WITH THE MYSTICS.

[*Fraser's Magazine.*]

FEW readers of this magazine probably know any thing about "Mystics;" know even what the term means; but as it is plainly connected with the adjective "mystical," they probably suppose it to denote some sort of vague, dreamy, sentimental, and therefore useless and undesirable, personage. Nor can we blame them if they do so; for mysticism is a form of thought and feeling now all but extinct in England. There are probably not ten thorough mystics among all our millions; the mystic philosophers are very little read by our scholars, and read not for but in spite of their mysticism; and our popular theology has so completely rid itself of any mystic elements, that our divines look with utter disfavour upon it, use the word always as a term of opprobrium, and interpret the mystic expressions in our liturgy—which mostly occur in the Collects—according to the philosophy of Locke, really ignorant, it would seem, that they were written by Platonist mystics.

We do not blame them, either, save in as far as teachers of men are blameworthy for being ignorant of any form of thought which has ever had a living hold upon good and earnest men, and may therefore take hold of them again. But the English are not a mystic people, any more than the old Romans were; their habit of mind, their destiny in the world, are like those of the Romans, altogether practical; and who can be surprised if they do not think about what they are not called upon to think about?

Nevertheless, it is quite a mistake to suppose that mysticism is by its own nature unpractical. The greatest and most prosperous races of antiquity—the Egyptians, Babylonians, Hindoos, Greeks—had the mystic element as strong and living in them as the Germans have now; and certainly we cannot call them

unpractical peoples. They fell and came to ruin—as the Germans seem but too likely to do—when their mysticism became unpractical: but their thought remained, to be translated into practice by sounder-hearted races than themselves. Rome learnt from Greece, and did, in some confused imperfect way, that which Greece only dreamed; just as future nations may act hereafter, nobly and usefully, on the truths which Germans discover, only to put in a book and smoke over. For they are terribly practical people, these mystics, quiet students and devotees as they may seem. They go, or seem to go, down to the roots of things, in a way; and lay foundations on which—be they sound or unsound—those who come after them cannot choose but build, as we are building now. For our forefathers were mystics for generations; they were mystics in the forests of Germany and in the dales of Norway; they were mystics in the convents and the universities of the middle ages; they were mystics, all the deepest and noblest minds of them, during the Elizabethan era.

Even now the few mystic writers of this island are exercising more influence on thought than any other men, for good or for evil. Coleridge and Alexander Knox have changed the minds, and with them the acts, of thousands; and when they are accused of having originated, unknowingly, the whole "Tractarian" movement, those who have watched English thought carefully, can only answer, that on the confession of the elder Tractarians themselves, the allegation is true: but that they originated a dozen other "movements" beside in the most opposite directions, and that free-thinking Emersonians will be as ready as Romish perverts and good plain English churchmen to confess that the critical point of their life was determined by the writings of the fakeer of Highgate. At this very time, too, the only real mystic of any genius who is writing and teaching is exercising more practical influence, infusing more vigorous life into the minds of thousands of men and women, than all the other teachers of England put together; and has set rolling a ball which may in the next half century gather into an avalanche, perhaps utterly different in form, material, and direction, from all which he expects.

So much for mystics being unpractical. If we look faithfully into the meaning of their name, we shall see why, for good or for evil, they cannot be unpractical; why they, let them be the most self-absorbed of recluses, are the very men who sow the seeds of great schools, great national and political movements, even great religions.

A mystic—according to the Greek etymology—should signify one who is initiated into mysteries: one whose eyes are opened

to see things which other people cannot see. And the true mystic, in all ages and countries, has believed that this was the case with him. He believes that there is an invisible world as well as a visible one—so do most men; but the mystic believes also that this same invisible world is not merely a supernumerary one world more, over and above the earth on which he lives, and the stars over his head, but that it is the cause of them and the ground of them; that it was the cause of them at first, and is the cause of them now, even to the budding of every flower, and the falling of every pebble to the ground; and therefore, that having been before this visible world, it will be after it, and endure just as real, living, and eternal, though matter were annihilated to-morrow.

“But, on this showing, every Christian, nay, every religious an, is a mystic; for he believes in an invisible world?” Their answer is found in the plain fact, that good Christians here in England do not think so themselves; that they dislike and dread mysticism, would not understand it if it were preached to them; are more puzzled by those utterances of St. John, which mystics have always claimed as justifying their theories, than by any part of their bibles. There is a positive and conscious difference between popular metaphysics and mysticism; and it seems to lie in this: the invisible world in which Englishmen in general believe, is one which happens to be invisible now, but will not be so hereafter. When they speak of the other world, they mean a place which their bodily eyes will see some day, and could see now if they were allowed; when they speak of spirits, they mean ghosts who could, and perhaps do, make themselves visible to men's bodily eyes. We are not inquiring here whether they be right or wrong; we are only specifying a common form of human thought.

The mystic, on the other hand, believes that the invisible world is so by its very nature, and must be so for ever. He lives therein now, he holds, and will live in it through eternity: but he will see it never with any bodily eyes, not even with the eyes of any future “glorified” body. It is *ipso facto* not to be seen, only to be believed in; never for him will “faith be changed for sight,” as the popular theologians say that it will; for this invisible world is only to be “spiritually discerned.”

This is the mystic idea, pure and simple; of course there are various grades of it, as there are of the popular one, for no man holds his own creed and nothing more; and it is good for him, in this piecemeal and shortsighted world, that he should not. Were he over-true to his own idea, he would become a fanatic, perhaps a madman. And so the modern evangelical of the Venn and

Newton school, to whom mysticism is a pet neology and nehush-tan, when he speaks of "spiritual experiences," uses the adjective in its purely mystic sense; while Bernard of Cluny, in his once famous hymn, *Hic breve vivitur*, mingles the two conceptions of the unseen world in inextricable confusion. Between these two extreme poles, in fact, we have every variety of thought, and it is good for us that we should have them; for no one man or school of men can grasp the whole truth, and every intermediate modification supplies some link in the great cycle of facts which its neighbours have overlooked.

In the minds who have held this belief, that the unseen world is the only real and eternal one, there has generally existed a belief, more or less confused, that the visible world is in some mysterious way a pattern or symbol of the invisible one; that its physical laws are the analogues of the spiritual laws of the eternal world: a belief of which Mr. Vaughan seems to think lightly; though if it be untrue we can hardly see how that metaphoric illustration in which he indulges so freely, and which he often uses in a masterly and graceful way, can be anything but useless trifling. For what is a metaphor or a simile but a mere paralogism—having nothing to do with the matter in hand, and not to be allowed for a moment to influence the reader's judgment, unless there be some real and objective analogy—homology we should call it—between the physical phenomenon from which the symbol is taken, and the spiritual truth which it is meant to illustrate? What divineness, what logical weight, in our Lord's parables, unless he was by them trying to show his hearers that the laws which they saw at work in the lilies of the field, in the most common occupations of men, were but lower manifestations of the laws by which are governed the inmost workings of the human spirit? What triflers, on any other ground, were Socrates and Plato. What triflers, too, Shakspeare and Spenser. Indeed, we should say that it is the belief, conscious or unconscious, of the eternal correlation of the physical and spiritual worlds which alone constitutes the essence of a poet.

Of course this idea led, and would necessarily lead, to follies and fancies enough, as long as the phenomena of nature were not carefully studied, and her laws scientifically investigated; and all the dreams of Paracelsus or Van Helmont, Cardan or Crollius, Baptista Porta or Behmen, are but the natural and pardonable errors of minds which, while they felt deeply the sanctity and mystery of nature, had no Baconian philosophy to tell them what nature actually was, and what she actually said. But their idea lives still, and will live as long as the belief in a one God lives. The physical and spiritual worlds cannot be

separated by an impassable gulf. They must, in some way or other, reflect each other, even in their minutest phenomena, for so only can they both reflect that absolute primæval Unity in whom they both live and move and have their being. Mr. Vaughan's object, however, has not been to work out in his book such problems as these. Had he done so, he would have made his readers understand better what mysticism is ; he would have avoided several hasty epithets, by the use of which he has, we think, deceived himself into the notion that he has settled a matter by calling it a hard name ; he would have explained, perhaps, to himself and to us, many strange and seemingly contradictory facts in the annals of mysticism. But he would also not have written so readable a book. On the whole he has taken the right course, though one wishes that he had carried it out more methodically.

A few friends, literate and comfortable men, and right-hearted Christians withal, meet together to talk over these same mystics, and to read papers and extracts which will give a general notion of the subject from the earliest historic times. The gentlemen talk about and about a little too much ; they are a little too fond of illustrations of the popular pulpit style ; they are often apt to say each his say, with very little care of what the previous speaker has uttered ; in fact, these conversations are, as conversations, not good, but as centres of thought they are excellent. There is not a page nor a paragraph in which there is not something well worth recollecting, and often reflections very wise and weighty indeed, which show that, whether or not Mr. Vaughan has thoroughly grasped the subject of mysticism, he has grasped and made part of his own mind and heart many things far more practically important than mysticism, or any other form of thought ; and no one ought to rise up from the perusal of his book, without finding himself, if not a better, at least a more thoughtful man, and perhaps a humbler one also, as he learns how many more struggles and doubts, discoveries, sorrows and joys, the human race has passed through than are contained in his own private experience.

The true value of the book is, that though not exhaustive of the subject, it is suggestive. It affords the best, indeed the only general, sketch of the subject which we have in England, and gives therein boundless food for future thought and reading ; and the country parson, or the thoughtful professional man who has no time to follow out the question for himself, much less to hunt out and examine original documents, may learn from these pages a thousand curious and interesting hints about men of like passions with himself, and about old times, the history of which—

as of all times—was not the history of their kings and queens, but of the creeds and deeds of the “masses” who worked, and failed, and sorrowed, and rejoiced again, unknown to fame. While whatsoever their own conclusions may be on the subject-matter of the book, they will hardly fail to admire the extraordinary variety and fulness of Mr. Vaughan’s reading, and wonder when they hear—unless we are wrongly informed—that he is quite a young man,

How one small head could compass all he knew.

He begins with the mysticism of the Hindoo Yogis. And to this, as we shall hereafter show, he hardly does justice; but we wish now to point out in detail the extended range of subjects, of each of which the book gives some general notion. From the Hindoos he passes to Philo and the neo-Platonists; from them to the pseudo-Dionysius, and the mysticism of the early Eastern Church. He then traces, shrewdly enough, the influence of the pseudo-Areopagite and the Easterns on the bolder and more practical minds of the Western Latins, and gives a sketch of Bernard and his Abbey of Clairvaux, which brings pleasantly enough before us the ways and works of a long-dead world, which was all but inconceivable to us till Mr. Carlyle disinterred it in his picture of Abbot Sampson, the hero of *Past and Present*.

We are next introduced to the mystic schoolmen—Hugo, and Richard of St. Victor; and then to a far more interesting class of men, and one with which Mr. Vaughan has more sympathy than with any of his characters, perhaps because he knows more about them. His chapters on the German mysticism of the fourteenth century; his imaginary, yet fruitful chronicle of Adolf of Arnstein, with its glimpses of Meister Eckart, Suso, the “Nameless Wild,” Ruysbroek, and Tauler himself, are admirable, if merely as historic studies, and should be, and we doubt not will be, read by many as practical commentaries on the *Theologia Germanica*, and on the selection from Tauler’s *Sermons*, now in course of publication. Had all the book been written as these chapters are, we should not have had a word of complaint to make, save when we find the author passing over without a word of comment, utterances which, right or wrong, contain the very key-note and central idea of the men whom he is holding up to admiration, and as we think, of mysticism itself. There is, for instance, a paragraph attributed to Ruysbroek, in p. 275, vol. i., which, whether true or false—and we believe it to be essentially true—is so inexpressibly important, both in the subject which it treats, and in the way in which it treats it, that



twenty pages of comment on it would not have been misdevoted. Yet it is passed by without a word.

Going forward to the age of the Reformation, the book then gives us a spirited glimpse of John Bokelson and the Munster Anabaptists, of Carlstadt and the Zurichian prophets, and then dwells at some length on the attempt of that day, to combine physical and spiritual science in occult philosophy. We have enough to make us wish to hear more of Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, and Behmen, with their alchemy, "true magic," doctrines of sympathies,\* signatures of things, cabbala, and Gamahea, and the rest of that (now fallen) inverted pyramid of pseudo-science. His estimate of Behmen and his writings, we may observe in passing, is both sound and charitable, and speaks as much for Mr. Vaughan's heart as for his head. Then we have a little about the Rosicrucians and the *Comte de Gabalis*, and the theory of the Rabbis, from whom the Rosicrucians borrowed so much, all told in the same lively manner, all utterly new to ninety-nine readers out of a hundred, all indicating, we are bound to say, a much more extensive reading than appears on the page itself.

From these he passes to the mysticism of the counter-Reformation, especially to the two great Spanish mystics, St. Theresa and St. John of the Cross. Here again he is new and interesting; but we must regret that he has not been as merciful to Theresa as he has to poor little John.

He then devotes some eighty pages—and very well employed they are—in detailing the strange and sad story of Madame Guyon, and the "Quietest" movement at Louis Quatorze's court. Much of this he has taken, with all due acknowledgment, from Upham; but he has told the story most pleasantly, in his own way, and these pages will give a better notion of Fénélon, and of the "Eagle" (for eagle, read vulture) "of Meaux," old Bossuet, than they are likely to find elsewhere in the same compass.

Following chronological order as nearly as he can, he next passes to George Fox and the early Quakers, introducing a curious—and in our own case quite novel—little episode concerning *The History of Hai Ebn Yokhdan*, a mediæval Arabian romance, which old Barclay seems to have got hold of and pressed into the service of his sect, taking it for literal truth.

The twelfth book is devoted to Swedenborg, and a very valu-

\* Why has Mr. Vaughan omitted to give us a few racy lines on Sir Matthew Hale's *Divine Contemplations of the Magnet*, Sir Kenelm Digby's *Weapon-Salve*, and Valentine Greatrake's *Magnetic Cures*? He should have told the world a little, too, about the strange phenomenon of the Jesuit Kircher, in whom Popery attempted to recover the very ground which Behmen and the Protestant nature-mystics were conquering from them.

able little sketch it is, and one which goes far to clear up the moral character, and the reputation for sanity, also, of that much calumniated philosopher, whom the world knows only as a dreaming false prophet, forgetting that even if he was that, he was also a sound and severe scientific labourer, to whom our modern physical science is most deeply indebted.

This is a short sketch of the contents of a book which is a really valuable addition to English literature, and which is as interesting as it is instructive. But Mr. Vaughan must forgive us if we tell him frankly that he has not exhausted the subject; that he has hardly defined mysticism at all—at least, has defined it by its outward results, and that without classifying them; and that he has not grasped the central idea of the subject. There were more things in these same mystics than are dreamt of in his philosophy; and he has missed seeing them, because he has put himself rather in the attitude of a judge than of an inquirer. He has not had respect and trust enough for the men and women of whom he writes, and is too much inclined to laugh at them, and treat them *de haut en bas*. He has trusted too much to his own great power of logical analysis, and his equally great power of illustration, and is therefore apt to mistake the being able to put a man's thoughts into words for him, for the being really able to understand him. To understand any man, we must have sympathy for him, even affection. No intellectual acuteness, no amount even of mere pity for his errors, will enable us to see the man from within, and put our own souls into the place of his soul. To do that, one must feel and confess within one's self the seeds of the very same errors which one reproves in him; one must have passed more or less through his temptations, doubts, hungers of heart and brain; and one cannot help questioning, as one reads Mr. Vaughan's book, whether he has really done this in the case of those of whom he writes. He should have remembered, too, how little any young man can have experienced of the terrible sorrows which branded into the hearts of these old devotees the truths to which they clung more than to life, while they too often warped their hearts into morbidity, and caused alike their folly and their wisdom. Gently indeed should we speak even of the dreams of some self-imagined "Bride of Christ," when we picture to ourselves the bitter agonies which must have been endured ere a human soul could develop so fantastically-diseased a growth. "She was only a hysterical nun." Well, and what more tragical object, to those who will look patiently and lovingly at human nature, than a hysterical nun? She may have been driven into a convent by some disappointment in love. And has not disappointed affection been

confessed, in all climes and ages, to enshroud its victim ever after, as it were, in a sanctuary of reverent pity? If sorrow "broke her brains," as well as broke her heart, shall we do aught but love her the more for her capacity of love? Or she may have entered the convent, as thousands did, in girlish simplicity, to escape from a world which she had not tried, before she had discovered that the world could give her something which the convent could not. What more tragical than her discovery in herself of a capacity for love which could never be satisfied within that prison?—and worse, when that capacity began to vindicate itself in strange forms of disease, seemingly to her supernatural, often agonizing, often degrading, and at the same time (strange contradiction) mixed itself up with her noblest thoughts, to ennoble them still more, and inspire her with a love for all that is fair and lofty, for self-devotion and self-sacrifice, such as she had never felt before? Shall we blame her—shall we even smile at her, if, after the dreadful question, "Is this the possession of a demon?" had alternated with "Is this the inspiration of a god?" she settled down, as the only escape from madness and suicide, into the latter thought, and believed that she found in the ideal and perfect manhood of One whom she was told to revere and love as a God, and who had sacrificed his own life for her, a substitute for that merely human affection from which she was for ever debarred? Why blame her for not remembering that which was wanting, or making straight that which was crooked? Let God judge her, not we; and the fit critics of her conduct are not the easy gentlemanlike scholars, like Mr. Vaughan's Athertons and Gowers, discussing the "aberrations of fanaticism" over wine and walnuts; or the gay girl, Kate; hardly even the happy mother, Mrs. Atherton: but those whose hairs are gray with sorrow; who have been softened at once and hardened in the fire of God; who have cried out of the bottomless deep like David, while lover and friend were hid away from them, and they lay amid the corpses of their dead hopes, dead health, dead joy, as on a ghastly battle-field, "stript among the dead, like those who are wounded, and cut away from God's hands;" who have struggled drowning in the horrible mire of doubt, and have felt all God's billows and waves sweep over them, till they were weary of crying, and their sight failed for waiting so long upon God; and all the faith and prayer which was left was, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." Be it understood, however, for fear of any mistake, that we hold Mr. Vaughan to be simply and altogether right in his main idea. His one test for all these people, and all which they said or did,

is—Were they made practically better men and women thereby? He sees clearly that the “spiritual” is none other than the “moral”—that which has to do with right and wrong; and he has a righteous contempt for every thing and any thing, however graceful and reverent, and artistic and devout, and celestial and super-celestial, except in as far as he finds it making men and women do better work in every-day life. Therefore he is altogether right at heart; and any criticisms of ours on his book are but *amantium iræ*.

And therefore we will protest against such a sketch as this, even of one of the least honourable of the middle-age saints:—

ATHERTON. Angela de Foligni, who made herself miserable—I must say something the converse of flourished—about the beginning of the fourteenth century, was a fine model pupil of this sort, a genuine daughter of St. Francis. Her mother, her husband, her children dead, she is alone and sorrowful. She betakes herself to violent devotion—falls ill—suffers incessant anguish from a complication of disorders—has rapturous consolations and terrific temptations—is dashed in a moment from a seat of glory above the empyrean . . .

Very amusing, is it not? To have one's mother, husband, children die—the most commonplace sort of thing—what (over one's wine and walnuts) one describes as being “alone and sorrowful.” Men who having tasted the blessings conveyed in those few words, have also found the horror conveyed in them, have no epithets for the state of mind in which such a fate would leave them. They simply pray that if that hour came, they might just have faith enough left not to curse God and die. Amusing, too, her falling ill, and suffering under a complication of disorders, especially if those disorders were the fruit of combined grief and widowhood. Amusing, also, her betaking herself to violent devotion. In the first place, if devotion be a good thing, could she have too much of it? If it be the way to make people good (as is commonly held by all Christian sects,) could she become too good? The more important question which springs out of the fact, we will ask presently. “She has rapturous consolations and terrific temptations.” Do you mean that the consolations came first, and that the temptations were a revulsion from “spiritual” exaltation into “spiritual” collapse and melancholy, or that the temptations came first, and the consolations came after to save her from madness and despair? Either may be the case; perhaps both were: but somewhat more of care should have been taken in expressing so important a spiritual sequence as either case exhibits.

It is twelve years and more since we studied the history of

the "B. Angela de Foligni," and many another kindred saint; and we cannot recollect what were the terrific temptations, what was the floor of hell which the poor thing saw yawning beneath her feet. But we must ask Mr. Vaughan, has he ever read Boccaccio, or any of the Italian novelists up to the seventeenth century? And if so, can he not understand how Angela de Foligni, the lovely Italian widow of the fourteenth century, had her terrific temptations, to which if she had yielded, she might have fallen to the lowest pit of hell, let that word mean what it may; and temptations all the more terrific because she saw every widow round her considering them no temptations at all, but yielding to them, going out to invite them in the most business-like, nay, duty-like, way? What if she had "rapturous consolations?" What if she did pour out to One who was worthy not of less but of more affection than she offered in her passionate southern heart, in language which in our colder northerns would be mere hypocrisy, yet which she had been taught to believe lawful by that interpretation of the Canticles which (be it always remembered) is common to Evangelicals and to Romanists? What if even, in reward for her righteous belief, that what she saw all widows round her doing, was abominable and to be avoided at all risks, she were permitted to enjoy a passionate affection, which after all was not misplaced? There are mysteries in religion, as in all things, where it is better not to intrude behind the veil. Wisdom is justified of all her children, and folly may be justified of some of her children also. Let Mr. Vaughan consider Boccaccio, and reconsider his harshness to poor Angela; let him reconsider, too, his harshness to poor St. Brigitta,—in our eyes a beautiful and noble figure. A widow she, too—and what worlds of sorrow are there in that word, especially when applied to the pure deep-hearted Northern woman, as she was,—she leaves her Scandinavian pine-forests to worship and to give wherever she can, till she arrives at Rome, the centre of the universe, the seat of Christ's vicegerent, the city of God, the gate of Paradise. Thousands of weary miles she travels, through danger and sorrow—and when she finds it, behold, it is a lie and a sham; not the gate of Paradise, but the gate of Sodom and of hell. Was not that enough to madden her, if mad she became? What matter after that her "angel dictated discourses on the Blessed Virgin," "bombastic invocations to the Saviour's eyes, ears, hair?"—they were at least the best objects of worship which the age gave her. In one thing she was right, and kept her first love. "What was not quite so bad, she gives to the world a series of revelations, in which the vices of popes and prelates are lashed unsparingly, and threatened with speedy judgment."

Not quite so bad. To us the whole phenomenon wears an utterly different aspect. At the risk of her life, at the risk of being burned alive—did any one ever consider what that means?—the noble Norsewoman, like an Alruna maid of old, hurls out her divine hereditary hatred of sin and filth and lies. At last she falls back on Christ himself as the only home for a homeless soul in such an evil time. And she is not burnt alive. The hand of One mightier than she is over her, and she is safe under the shadow of his wings, till her weary work is done and she goes home, her righteousness accepted for his sake: her folly, hysterics, dreams—call them by what base name we will—forgiven and forgotten for the sake of her many sorrows, and her faithfulness to the end.

Mr. Vaughan must reconsider these sketches; but he need not reconsider his admirable reflections on them, every word of which is true:—

“What a condemning comment on the pretended tender mercies of the Church are those narratives which Rome delights to parade of the sufferings, mental and bodily, which her devotees were instructed to inflict upon themselves! I am reminded of the thirsting mule, which has, in some countries, to strike with its hoof among the spines of the cactus, and drink, with lamed foot and bleeding lips, the few drops of milk which ooze from the broken thorns. Affectionate suffering natures came to Rome for comfort; but her scanty kindness is only to be drawn with anguish from the cruel sharpness of asceticism. The worldly, the audacious, escape easily; but these pliant, excitable temperaments, so anxiously in earnest, may be made useful. The more dangerous, frightful, or unnatural their performances, the more profit for their keepers. Men and women are trained by torturing processes to deny their nature, and then they are exhibited to bring grist to the mill—like birds and beasts forced to postures and services against the laws of their being—like those who must perform perilous feats on ropes or with lions, nightly hazarding their lives to fill the pockets of a manager. The self-devotion of which Rome boasts so much is a self-devotion she has always thus made the most of for herself. Calculating men, who have thought only of the interest of the priesthood, have known well how best to stimulate and to display the spasmodic movements of a brainsick disinterestedness. I have not the shadow of a doubt that, once and again, some priest might have been seen, with cold, gray eye, endeavouring to do a stroke of diplomacy by means of the enthusiastic Catharine, making the fancied ambassadress of heaven in reality the tool of a schemer. Such unquestionable virtues as these visionaries may some of them have possessed, cannot be fairly set down to the credit of the Church, which has used them all for mercenary or ambitious purposes, and infected them everywhere with a morbid character. Some of these mystics, floating down the great ecclesiastical current of the Middle Age, appear to me like the trees carried away by the inundation of some mighty tropical river.

They drift along the stream, passive, lifeless, broken; yet they are covered with gay verdure, the aquatic plants hang and twine about the sodden timber and the draggled leaves, the trunk is a sailing garden of flowers. But the adornment is not that of nature—it is the decoration of another and a strange element; the roots are in the air; the boughs, which should be full of birds, are in the flood, covered by its alien products, swimming side by side with the alligator. So has this priestcraft swept its victims from their natural place and independent growth, to clothe them, in their helplessness, with a false spiritual adornment, neither scriptural nor human, but ecclesiastical—the native product of that overwhelming superstition which has subverted and enslaved their nature. The Church of Rome takes care that while simple souls think they are cultivating Christian graces, they shall be forging their own chains; that their attempts to honour God shall always dishonour, because they disenfranchise themselves. To be humble, to be obedient, to be charitable, under such direction, is to be contentedly ignorant, pitably abject, and notoriously swindled.”

Mr. Vaughan cannot be too severe upon the Romish priesthood. But it is one thing to dismiss with summary contempt men who, as they do, keep the keys of knowledge, and neither enter in themselves nor suffer others to enter, and quite another thing to apply the same summary jurisdiction to men who, under whatsoever confusions, are feeling earnestly and honestly after truth. And therefore we regret exceedingly the mock trial which he has introduced into his Introduction. We regret it for his own sake; for it will drive away from the book—indeed, it has driven—thoughtful and reverent people who, having a strong though vague inclination toward the mystics, might be very profitably taught by the after pages to separate the evil from the good in the Bernards and Guyons whom they admire, they scarce know why; and will shock, too, scholars to whom Hindoo and Persian thoughts on these subjects are matters not of ridicule, but of solemn and earnest investigation. We do hope to see these pages vanish from a future edition, or if they be retained, put at the end and not at the beginning of the book. As it is, they are a needless stumbling-block upon the threshold.

Besides, the question is not so easily settled. Putting aside the flippancy of the passage, it involves something very like a *petitio principii* to ask off hand “Does the man mean a living union of heart to Christ, a spiritual fellowship or converse with the Father, when he talks of the union of the believer with God—participation in the Divine nature?” For first, what we want to know is, the meaning of the words—what means “living?” what “union?” what “heart?” They are terms common to the mystic and to the popular religionist, only differently interpreted; and in the meanings attributed to them lies nothing less than the

whole world-old dispute between Nominalist and Realist; not yet to be settled in two lines by two gentlemen over their wine, much less ignored as a thing settled beyond all dispute already. If by "living union of heart with"—Mr. Vaughan means "identity of morals with"—let him say so: but let him bear in mind that all the great Evangelicals have meant much more than this by those words; that on the whole, instead of considering—as he seems to do, and we do—the moral and the spiritual as identical, they have put them in antithesis to each other, and looked down upon "mere morality" just because it did not seem to them to involve that supernatural, transcendental, "mystic" element which they considered that they found in Scripture. From Luther to Owen and Baxter, from them to Wesley, Cecil, and Venn, Newton, Bridges, the great Evangelical authorities would (not very clearly or consistently, for they were but poor metaphysicians, but honestly and earnestly) accept some modified form of the mystic's theory, even to the "discerning in particular thoughts, frames, impulses, and inward witnessings, immediate communications from heaven." Surely Mr. Vaughan must be aware that the majority of "vital Christians" on this ground are among his mystic offenders; and that those who deny such possibilities are but too liable to be stigmatized as "Pelagians" and "Rationalists." His friend Atherton is bound to show cause why those names are not to be applied to him, as he is bound to show what he means by "living union with Christ," and why he complains of the mystic for desiring "participation in the Divine nature." If he does so, he only desires what the New Testament formally, and word for word, promises him: whatsoever be the meaning of the term, he is not to be blamed for using it. Mr. Vaughan cannot have forgotten the many expressions, both of St. Paul and St. John, which do at first sight go far to justify the mystic, though they are but seldom heard, and more seldom boldly commented on, in modern pulpits,—of Christ being formed in men, dwelling in men; of God dwelling in man and man in God; of Christ being the life of men, of men living, and moving, and having their being in God; and many another passage. If these be mere metaphors, let the fact be stated, with due reasons for it. But there is no sin or shame in interpreting them in that literal and realist sense in which they seem at first sight to have been written. The first duty of a scholar who sets before himself to investigate the phenomena of "mysticism," so called, should be to answer these questions: Can there be a direct communication, above and beyond sense or consciousness, between the human spirit and God the Spirit? And if so, what are its conditions, where its limits, to transcend which is to fall into "mysticism?"



And it is just this which Mr. Vaughan fails in doing. In his sketch, for instance, of the mysticism of India, he gives us a very clear and (save in two points) sound summary of that "round of notions, occurring to minds of similar make under similar circumstances," which is "common to mystics in ancient India and in modern Christendom."

"Summarily, I would say, this Hindoo mysticism—

(1.) Lays claim to disinterested love as opposed to a mercenary religion ;

(2.) Reacts against the ceremonial prescription and pedantic literalism of the Vedas ;

(3.) Identifies, in its pantheism, subject and object, worshipper and worshipped ;

(4.) Aims at ultimate absorption in the Infinite ;

(5.) Inculcates, as the way to this dissolution, absolute passivity, withdrawal into the inmost self, cessation of all the powers,—giving recipes for procuring this beatific torpor or trance ;

(6.) Believes that eternity may thus be realized in time ;

(7.) Has its mythical miraculous pretensions, *i. e.*, its theurgic department ;

(8.) And, finally, advises the learner in this kind of religion to submit himself implicitly to a spiritual guide,—his Guru."

Against the two latter articles we except. The theurgic department of mysticism—unfortunately but too common—seems to us always to have been the despairing return to that ceremonialism which it had begun by shaking off, when it was disappointed in reaching its high aim by its proper method. The use of the Guru, or Father Confessor, (which Mr. Vaughan confesses to be inconsistent with mysticism,) is to be explained in the same way ; he is a last refuge after disappointment.

But as for the first six counts. Is the Hindoo mystic a worse or a better man for holding them? Are they on the whole right or wrong? Is not disinterested love nobler than a mercenary religion? Is it not right to protest against ceremonial prescriptions, and to say, whether with David or with Aaron, "Thinkest thou that He will eat bull's flesh, and drink the blood of goats. Sacrifice and burnt-offering thou wouldst not. . . . I come to do thy will, O God!" What is, even, if he will look calmly into it, the "pantheistic identification of subject and object, worshipper and worshipped," but the clumsy yet honest effort of the human mind to say to itself, "Doing God's will is the real end and aim of man?" The Yogi looks round upon his fellow men, and sees that all their misery and shame come from self-will ; he looks within, and finds that all which makes him miserable, angry, lustful, greedy after this and that, comes from the same

self-will. And he asks himself, How shall I escape from this torment of self?—how shall I tame my wayward will, till it shall become one with the harmonious, beautiful, and absolute Will which made all things? At least, I will try to do it, whatever it shall cost me. I will give up all for which men live—wife and child, the sights, scents, sounds of this fair earth, all things, whatever they be, which men call enjoyment, I will make this life one long torture, if need be, but this rebel will of mine I will conquer. I ask for no reward. That may come in some future life. But what care I. I am now miserable by reason of the lusts which war in my members; the peace which I shall gain in being freed from them will be its own reward. After all I give up little. All these things round me—the primæval forest, and the sacred stream of Ganga, the mighty Himalaya, mount of God, ay, the illimitable vault of heaven above me, sun and stars—what are they but “such stuff as dreams are made of?” Brahm thought, and they became something and somewhere. He may think again, and they will become nothing and nowhere. Are these eternal, greater than I, worth troubling my mind about? Nothing is eternal, but the Thought which made them, and will unmake them. They are only venerable in my eyes, because each of them is a thought of Brahm’s. And I, too, have thought; I alone of all the kinds of living things. Am I not, then, akin to God? what better for me than to sit down and think, as Brahm thinks, and so enjoy my eternal heritage, leaving for those who cannot think, the passions and pleasures which they share in common with the beasts of the field? So I shall become more and more like Brahm; will his will, think his thoughts, till I lose utterly this house-fiend of self, and become one with God?

Is this a man to be despised? Is he a sickly dreamer, or a too valiant hero? and if any one be shocked at this last utterance, let him consider carefully the words which he may hear on Sunday; “Then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us.” That belief is surely not a false one. Shall we abhor the Yogi because he has seen, sitting alone there amid idolatry and licentiousness, despotism and priestcraft, that the ideal goal of man is what we confess it to be in the communion service? Shall we not rather wonder and rejoice over the magnificent utterances in that Bagvat-Gita which Mr. Vaughan takes—as we do—for the text-book of Hindoo mysticism, which proceed from the mouth of Crishna, the teacher human, and yet God himself.

“There is nothing greater than I; all things hang on me, as precious

gems upon a string. . . . I am life in all things, and zeal in the zealous. I am the eternal seed of nature : I am the understanding of the wise, the glory of the proud, the strength of the strong, free from lust and anger. . . . Those who trust in me know Brahm, the supreme and incorruptible. . . . In this body I am the teacher of worship. He who thinks of me will find me. He who finds me returns not again to mortal birth. . . . I am the sacrifice, I am the worship, I am the incense, I am the fire, I am the victim, I am the father and mother of the world ; I am the road of the good, the comforter, the creator, the witness, the asylum, and the friend. They who serve other gods with a firm belief, involuntarily worship me. I am the same to all mankind. They who serve me in adoration are in me. If one whose ways are ever so evil serve me alone, he becometh of a virtuous spirit and obtaineth eternal happiness. Even women, and the tribes of Visga and Soodra, shall go the supreme journey, if they take sanctuary with me ; how much more my holy servants the Brahmins and the Ragarshees ! Consider this world as a finite and joyless place, and serve me."

There may be confused words scattered up and down here ; there are still more confused words—not immoral ones—round them, which we have omitted ; but we ask, once and for all, is this true, or is it not ? Is there a being who answers to this description, or is there not ? And if there be, was it not a light price to pay for the discovery of him "to sit upon the sacred grass called koos, with his mind fixed on one object alone ; keeping his head, neck, and body steady, without motion ; his eyes fixed upon the point of his nose, looking at no other place around"—or any other simple, even childish, practical means of getting rid of the disturbing bustle and noise of the outward, time-world, that he might see the eternal world which underlies it ? What if the discovery be imperfect, the figure in my features erroneous ? Is not the wonder to us, the honour to him, that the figure should be there at all ? Inexplicable to us on any ground, save that one common to the Bagvat-Gita, to the gospel. "He who seeks me shall find me." What if he knew but in part, and saw through a glass darkly ? Was there not One greater than he who, in the full light of inspiration, could but say the very same thing of himself, and look forward to a future life in which he would "know even as he was known ?"

It is well worth observing, too, that so far from the moral of this Bagvat-Gita issuing in mere contemplative Quietism, its purpose is essentially practical. It arises out of Arjoun's doubt whether he shall join in the battle which he sees raging below him ; it results in his being commanded to join in it, and fight like a man. We cannot see, as Mr. Vaughan does, an "unholy indifference" in the moral. Arjoun shrinks from fighting because friends and relatives are engaged on both sides, and he dreads

hell if he kills one of them. The answer to his doubt is, after all, the only one which makes war permissible to a Christian, who looks on all men as his brothers :—

“You are a Ksahtree, a soldier; your duty is to fight. Do your duty, and leave the consequences of it to Him who commanded the duty. You cannot kill these men’s souls any more than they can yours. You can only kill their mortal bodies; the fate of their souls and yours depends on their moral state. Kill their bodies, then, if it be your duty, instead of tormenting yourself with scruples, which are not really scruples of conscience, only selfish fears of harm to yourself, and leave their souls to the care of Him who made them, and knows them, and cares more for them than you do.”

This seems to be the plain outcome of the teaching. What is it, *mutatis mutandis*, but the sermon, “cold-blooded” or not, which every righteous soldier in the Crimea has had to preach to himself, day by day, for the last two years?

Yet the fact is undeniable that Hindoo mysticism has failed of practical result—that it has died down into brutal fakeerism. We look in vain, however, in Mr. Vaughan’s chapter for an explanation of this fact, save his assertion, which we deny, that Hindoo mysticism was an essence and at its root wrong and rotten. Mr. Maurice (*Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy*, p. 46) seems to point to a more charitable solution. “The Hindoo” (he says) “whatsoever vast discovery he may have made at an early period of a mysterious Teacher near him, working on his spirit, who is at the same time Lord over nature, began the search from himself—he had no other point from whence to begin—and therefore it ended in himself. The purification of his individual soul became practically his highest conceivable end; to carry out that he must separate from society. Yet the more he tries to escape self the more he finds self; for what are his thoughts about Bram, his thoughts about Krishna, save his own thoughts? Is Brahm a projection of his own soul? To sink in him, does it mean to be nothing? Am I, after all, my own law? And hence the downward career into stupid indifferentism, even into Antinomian profligacy.”

The Hebrew, on the other hand, begins from the belief of an objective external God, but one who cares for more than his individual soul; as one who is the ever-present guide, and teacher, and ruler of his whole nation; who regards that nation as a whole, a one person, and that not merely one present generation, but all, past or future, as a one “Israel;” law-givers, prophets, priests, warriors. All classes are his ministers. He is essentially a political deity, who cares infinitely for the polity of a

nation, and therefore bestows one upon them—"a law of Jehovah." Gradually, under this teaching, the Hebrew rises to the very idea of an inward teacher, which the Yogi had, and to a far purer and clearer form of that idea; but he is not tempted by it to selfish individualism, or contemplative isolation, as long as he is true to the old Mosaic belief, that this being is the Political Deity, "the King of kings." The Pharisee becomes a selfish individualist just because he has forgotten this; the Essene, a selfish "mystic" for the same reason; Philo and the Jewish mystics of Alexandria lose in like manner all notion that Jehovah is the lawgiver, and ruler, and archetype of family and of national life. The early Christians retain the idea; they bring out the meaning of the old Jewish polity in its highest form; for that very reason they are able to bring out the meaning of the "mystic" idea in its highest form also, without injury to their work as members of families, as citizens, as practical men of the world.

And here let us say boldly to Mr. Vaughan and to our readers—As long as "the salvation of a man's own soul" is set forth in all pulpits as the first and last end and aim of mortal existence; as long as Christianity is dwelt on merely as influencing individuals each apart—as "brands plucked, one here and another there, from the general burning,"—so long will mysticism, in its highest form, be the refuge of the strongest spirits, and its more base and diseased forms the refuge of the weak and sentimental spirits. They will say, each in his own way—"You confess that there can be a direct relation, communion, inspiration, from God to my soul, as I sit alone in my chamber. You do not think that there is such between God and what you call the world; between Him and nations as wholes,—families, churches, schools of thought, as wholes; that He does not take a special interest, or exercise a special influence, over the ways and works of men—over science, commerce, civilization, colonization, all which affects the earthly destinies of the race. All these you call secular; to admit his influence over them for their own sake (though of course He overrules them for the sake of his elect) savours of Pantheism. Is it so? Then we will give up the world. We will cling to the one fact which you confess to be certain about us, that we can take refuge in God, each in the loneliness of his chamber, from all the vain turmoil of a race which is hastening heedless into endless misery. You may call us mystics, or what you will. We will possess our souls in patience, and turn away our eyes from vanity. We will commune with our own hearts in solitude, and be still. We will not even mingle in your religious world, the world which you have invented for yourselves,

after denying that God's human world is sacred ; for it seems to us as full of intrigue, ambition, party-spirit, falsehood, bitterness, and ignorance, as the political world, or the fashionable world, or the scientific world ; and we will have none of it. Leave us alone with God."

This has been the true reason of mystical isolation in every age and country. So thought Macarius and the Christian fakeers of the Thebaid. So thought the mediæval monks and nuns. So thought the German Quietists when they revolted from the fierce degradation of decaying Lutheranism. So are hundreds thinking now ; so may thousands think ere long. If the individualizing phase of Christianity which is now dominant shall long retain its ascendancy, and the creed of Dr. Cumming and Mr. Spurgeon become that of the British people, our purest and noblest spirits will act here, with regard to religion, as the purest and noblest in America have acted with regard to politics. They will withdraw each into the sanctuary of his own heart, and leave the battle-field to rival demagogues. They will do wrong, it may be. Isolation involves laziness, pride, cowardice ; but if sober England, during the next half-century, should be astonished by an outburst of mysticism, as grand in some respects, as fantastic in others, as that of the thirteenth or the seventeenth centuries, the blame, if blame there be, will lie with those leaders of the public conscience who, after having debased alike the Church of England and the dissenting sects with a selfish individualism which was as foreign to the old Cromwellite Ironside as to the High Church divine, have tried to debar their disciples from that peaceful and graceful mysticism which is the only excusable or tolerable form of a religion beginning and ending in self.

Let it be always borne in mind, that Quakerism was not a protest against, or a revulsion from, the Church of England, but from Calvinism. The steeple-houses, against which George Fox testified, were not served by Henry Mores, Cudworths, or Norrises : not even by dogmatist High-Churchmen, but by Calvinist ministers, who had ejected them. George Fox developed his own scheme, such as it was, because the popular Protestantism of his day failed to meet the deepest wants of his heart ; because, as he used to say, it gave him "a dead Christ," and he required a "living Christ." Doctrines about who Christ is, he held, are not Christ himself. Doctrines about what he has done for man, are not He himself. Fox held, that if Christ be a living person, He must act (when he acted) directly on the most inward and central personality of him, George Fox ; and his desire was satisfied by the discovery of the indwelling Logos, or rather by its rediscovery, after it had fallen into oblivion for centuries.

Whether he were right or wrong, he is a fresh instance of a man's arriving, alone and unassisted, at the same idea at which mystics of all ages and countries have arrived; a fresh corroboration of our belief, that there must be some reality corresponding to a notion which has manifested itself so variously, and among so many thousands of every creed, and has yet arrived, by whatsoever different paths, at one and the same result.

That he was more or less right—that there is nothing in the essence of mysticism contrary to practical morality, Mr. Vaughan himself fully confesses. In his fair and liberal chapters on Fox and the Early Quakers, he does full justice to their intense practical benevolence; to the important fact that Fox only lived to do good, of any and every kind, as often as a sorrow to be soothed, or an evil to be remedied, crossed his path. We only wish that he had also brought in the curious and affecting account of Fox's interview with Cromwell, in which he tells us (and we will take Fox's word against any man) that the Protector gave him to understand, almost with tears, that there was that in Fox's faith which he was seeking in vain from the "ministers" around him.

All we ask of Mr. Vaughan is, not to be afraid of his own evident liking for Fox; of his own evident liking for Tauler and his school; not to put aside the question which their doctrines involve, with such half-utterances as—

"The Quakers are wrong, I think, in separating particular movements and monitions as Divine. But, at the same time, the 'witness of the Spirit,' as regards our state before God, is something more, I believe, than the mere attestation to the written word."

As for the former of these two sentences, he may be quite right, for aught we know. But it must be said, on the other hand, that not merely Quakers, but decent men of every creed and age, have—we may dare to say, in proportion to their devoutness—believed in such monitions; and that it is hard to see how any man could have arrived at the belief that a living person was working on him, and not a mere unpersonal principle, law, or afflatus—(spirit of the universe, or other metaphor for hiding materialism)—unless by believing rightly or wrongly, in such monitions. For our only inductive conception of a living person demands that that person shall make himself felt by separate acts.

But against the second sentence we must protest. The question in hand is not whether this "witness of the Spirit" is "something more" than anything else. But whether it exists at all,

and what it is. Why was the book written, save to help toward the solution of this very matter? The question all through has been—Can an immediate influence be exercised by the Spirit of God on the spirit of man? Mr. Vaughan assents, and says (we cannot see why) that there is no mysticism in such a belief. Be that as it may, what that influence is, and how exercised, is all through the *de quo agitur* of mysticism. Mr. Vaughan, however, seems here for awhile to be talking realism through an admirable page, well worth perusal (pp. 264–5). Yet his grasp is not sure. We soon find him saying what More and Fox would alike deny, that “The story of Christ’s life and death is our soul’s food.” No; Christ himself is,—would the English Church and the mystic alike answer. And here again, the whole matter in dispute is (unconsciously to Mr. Vaughan) opened up in one word. And if this sentence does not bear directly on that problem, on what does it bear? It was therefore with extreme disappointment that on reading this, and saying to ourselves, “Now we shall hear at last what Mr. Vaughan himself thinks on the matter,” we found that he literally turned the subject off, as if not worth investigation, by making the next speaker answer, *à propos* of nothing, that “the traditional asceticism of the Friends is their fatal defect as a body.”

Why, too, has Mr. Vaughan devoted a few lines only to the great English Platonists, More, Norris, Smith of Jesus, Gale, and Cudworth? He says, indeed, that they are scarcely mystics, except in as far as Platonism is always in a measure mystical. In our sense of the word, they were all of them mystics, and of a very lofty type; but surely Henry More is a mystic in Mr. Vaughan’s sense also. If the author of *Conjectura Cabbalistica* be not a mystical writer (he himself uses the term without shame), who is?

We hope to see much in this book condensed, much modified, much worked out, instead of being left fragmentary and embryotic; but whether our hope be fulfilled or not, a useful and honourable future is before the man who could write such a book as this is, in spite of all defects.



## TENNYSON.

[*Fraser's Magazine.*]

CRITICS cannot in general be too punctilious in their respect for an *incognito*. If an author intended us to know his name, he would put it on his title-page. If he does not choose to do that, we have no more right to pry into his secret than we have to discuss his family affairs or open his letters. But every rule has its exceptional cases; and the book which stands first upon our list is surely such. All the world, somehow or other, knows the author. His name has been mentioned unhesitatingly by several reviews already, whether from private information, or from the certainty which every well-read person must feel, that there is but one man in England possessed at once of poetic talent and artistic experience sufficient for so noble a creation. We hope, therefore, that we shall not be considered impertinent if we ignore an *incognito* which all England has ignored before us, and attribute *In Memoriam* to the pen of the author of *The Princess*.

Such a course will probably be the more useful one to our readers; for this last work of our only living great poet seems to us at once the culmination of all his efforts and the key to many difficulties in his former writings. Heaven forbid that we should say that it completes the circle of his powers. On the contrary, it gives us hope of vaster effort in new fields of thought and forms of art. But it brings the development of his Muse and of his Creed to a positive and definite point. It enables us to claim one who has been hitherto regarded as belonging to a merely speculative and peirastic school as the willing and deliberate champion of vital Christianity, and of an orthodoxy the more sincere because it has worked upward through the abyss of doubt; the more mighty for good because it justifies and consecrates the æsthetics and the philosophy of the present age. We are sure, moreover, that the author, whatever right reasons he may have had for concealing his own name, would have no quarrel against

us for alluding to it, were he aware of the absolute idolatry with which every utterance of his is regarded by the cultivated young men of our day, especially at the universities, and of the infinite service of which this *In Memoriam* may be to them, if they are taught by it that their superiors are not ashamed of Faith, and that they will rise instead of falling, fulfil instead of denying the cravings of their hearts and intellects, if they will pass upwards with their teacher from the vague though noble expectations of *Locksley Hall*, to the assured and everlasting facts of the poem to *In Memoriam*,—in our eyes, the noblest Christian poem which England has produced for two centuries.

To explain our meaning, it will be necessary, perhaps, to go back to Mr. Tennyson's earlier writings, of which he is said to be somewhat ashamed now,—a fastidiousness with which we will not quarrel; for it should be the rule of the poet as well as of the apostle, "forgetting those things which are behind, to press on to those things which are before," and "to count not himself to have apprehended, but" — no, we will not finish the quotation: let the readers of *In Memoriam* finish it for themselves, and see how after all the poet, if he would reach perfection, must be found by Him who found St. Paul of old. In the mean time, as the poet must necessarily be in advance of his age, Mr. Tennyson's earlier poems, rather than these latter ones, coincide with the tastes and speculations of the young men of this day. And in proportion, we believe, as they thoroughly appreciate the distinctive peculiarities of those poems, will they be able to follow the author of them on his upward path.

Some of our readers, we would fain hope, remember as an era in their lives the first day on which they read those earlier poems; how, fifteen years ago, *Mariana in the Moated Grange*, *The Dying Swan*, *The Lady of Shalott*, came to them as revelations. They seemed to themselves to have found at last a poet who promised not only to combine the cunning melody of Moore, the rich fulness of Keats, and the simplicity of Wordsworth, but one who was introducing a method of observing Nature different from that of all the three, and yet succeeding in everything which they had attempted, often in vain. Both Keats and Moore had an eye for the beauty which lay in trivial and daily objects. But in both of them there was a want of deep religious reverence, which kept Moore playing gracefully upon the surface of phenomena without ever daring to dive into their laws or inner meaning; and made poor Keats fancy that he was rather to render Nature poetical by bespangling her with florid ornament, than simply to confess that she was already, by the grace of God, far beyond the need of his paint and gilding. Even Wordsworth himself

had not full faith in the great dicta which he laid down in his famous Introductory Essay. Deep as was his conviction that Nature bore upon her simplest forms the finger-mark of God, he did not always dare simply to describe her as she was, and leave her to reveal her own mystery. We do not say this in depreciation of one who stands now far above human praise or blame, to receive the meed of a life of love to God and man. The wonder is, not that Wordsworth rose no higher, but that, considering the level on which his taste was formed, he had power to rise to the height above his age which he did attain. He did a mighty work. He has left the marks of his teaching upon every poet who has written verses worth reading for the last twenty years. The idea by which he conquered was, as Coleridge well sets forth, the very one which, in its practical results on his own poetry, procured him loud and deserved ridicule. This, which will be the root idea of the whole poetry of this generation, was the dignity of Nature in *all* her manifestations, and not merely in those which may happen to suit the fastidiousness or Manicheism of any particular age. He may have been at times fanatical on his idea, and have misused it, till it became self-contradictory, because he could not see the correlative truths which should have limited it. But it is by fanatics, by men of one great thought, that great works are done; and it is good for the time that a man arose in it of fearless honesty enough to write *Peter Bells* and *Idiot Boys*, to shake all the old methods of nature-painting to their roots, and set every man seriously to ask himself what he meant, or whether he meant any thing real, reverent, or honest, when he talked about "poetic diction," or "the beauties of Nature. And after all, like all fanatics, Wordsworth was better than his own creed. As Coleridge thoroughly shows in the second volume of the *Biographia Litteraria*, and as may be seen nowhere more strikingly than in his grand posthumous work, his noblest poems and noblest stanzas are those in which his true poetic genius, unconsciously to himself, sets at nought his own pseudo-naturalist dogmas.

Now, Mr. Tennyson, while fully adopting Wordsworth's principle from the very first, seemed by instinctive taste to have escaped the snares which had proved too subtle both for Keats and Wordsworth. Doubtless there are slight *niaiseries*, after the manner of both those poets, in the first editions of his earlier poems. He seems, like most other great artists, to have first tried imitations of various styles which already existed, before he learnt the art of incorporating them into his own, and learning from all his predecessors, without losing his own individual peculiarities. But there are descriptive passages in them also which

neither Keats nor Wordsworth could have written, combining the honest sensuous observation which is common to them both, with a self-restrained simplicity which Keats did not live long enough to attain, and a stately and accurate melody, and earnest songfulness (to coin a word) which Wordsworth seldom attained, and from his inaccurate and uncertain ear, still seldomer preserved without the occurrence of a jar or a rattle, a false quantity, a false rapture, or a bathos. And above all, or rather beneath all—for we suspect that this has been throughout the very secret of Mr. Tennyson's power—there was a hushed and a reverent awe, a sense of the mystery, the infinitude, the awfulness, as well as of the mere beauty of wayside things, which invested these poems as wholes with a peculiar richness, depth, and majesty of *tone*, beside which both Keats's and Wordsworth's methods of handling pastoral subjects looked like the colouring of Julio Romano or Watteau, by the side of Correggio or Titian.

This deep, simple faith in the divineness of Nature as she appears, which, in our eyes, is Mr. Tennyson's *differentia*, is really the natural accompaniment of a quality at first sight its very opposite, and for which he is often blamed by a prosaic world; namely, his subjective and transcendental mysticism. It is the mystic, after all, who will describe Nature most simply, because he sees most in her; because he is most ready to believe that she will reveal to others the same message which she has revealed to him. Men like Böehmen, Novalis, and Fourier, who can soar into the inner cloud-world of man's spirit, even though they lose their way there, dazzled by excess of wonder,—men who, like Wordsworth, can give utterance to such subtle anthropologic wisdom as the *Ode to the Imitations of Immortality*, will for that very reason most humbly and patiently "consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." And even so it is just because Mr. Tennyson is, far more than Wordsworth, mystical, and what an ignorant and money-getting generation, idolatrous of mere sensuous activity, calls "dreamy," that he has become the greatest naturalistic poet which England has seen for several centuries: the same faculty which enabled him to draw such subtle subjective pictures of womanhood as *Adeline*, *Isabel*, and *Eleanor*, enabled him to see, and therefore simply to describe, in one of the most distinctive and successful of his earlier poems, how

The creeping mosses and clambering weeds,  
 And the willow branches hoar and dank,  
 And the wavy swell of the sighing reeds,  
 And the wave-worn horns of the echoing bank,  
 And the silvery marish-flowers that throng  
 The desolate creeks and pools among,  
 Were flooded over with eddying song.

No doubt there are in the earlier poems exceptions to this style,—attempts to adorn Nature, and dazzle with a barbaric splendour akin to that of Keats,—as, for instance, in the *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*. But how cold and gaudy, in spite of individual beauties, is that poem by the side of either of the *Marianas*, and especially of that one in which the scenery is drawn, simply and faithfully, from those counties which the world considers the quintessence of the prosaic—the English fens.

Upon the middle of the night  
 Waking she heard the night-fowl crow;  
 The cock sung out an hour ere light:  
 From the dark fen the oxen's low  
 Came to her: without hope of change,  
 In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,  
 Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed morn  
 About the lonely moated grange.

\* \* \* \* \*

About a stone-cast from the wall  
 A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,  
 And o'er it many, round and small,  
 The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.  
 Hard by a poplar shook alway,  
 All silver-green with gnarled bark,  
 For leagues no other tree did dark  
 The level waste, the rounding gray.

\* \* \* \* \*

Throughout all these exquisite lines occurs but one instance of what the vulgar call “poetic diction.” All is simple description, in short and Saxon words, and yet who can deny the effect to be perfect,—superior to almost any similar passage in Wordsworth? And why? Because the passage quoted, and indeed the whole poem, is perfect in what artists call *tone*,—tone in the metre and in the sound of the words, as well as in the images and the feelings expressed. The weariness, the dreariness, the dark mysterious waste, exist alike within and without, in the slow monotonous pace of the metre and the words, as well as in the boundless fen, and the heart of her who, “without hope of change, in sleep did seem to walk forlorn.” The same faith in Nature, the same instinctive correctness in melody, springing from that correct insight into Nature, ran through the poems inspired by mediæval legends. The very spirit of the old ballad writers, with their combinations of mysticism and objectivity, their freedom from any self-conscious attempt at reflective epithets or figures, runs through them all. We are never jarred in them, as we are in all the attempts at ballad-writing and ballad-restoring before Mr. Tennyson's time, by discordant touches of the reflective in thought, the picturesque in Nature, or the theatric in action. To illustrate our meaning, readers may remember the ballad of *Fair Emmeline*.

line, in Bishop Percy's *Reliques*. The bishop confesses, if we mistake not, to have patched the end of the ballad. He need not have informed us of that fact, while such lines as these following met our eyes,—

The Baron turned aside,  
And wiped away the rising tears,  
He proudly strove to hide (!!!)

Conceive an old ballad writer dealing in such a complicated conceit! As another, and even a worse instance, did any of our readers ever remark the difference between the old and new versions of the grand ballad of *Glasgerion*? In the original, we hear how the elfin harper could

Harp fish out of the water,  
And water out of a stone,  
And milk out of a maiden's breast  
That bairn had never none.

For which some benighted "restorer" substitutes,—

Oh, there was magic in his touch,  
And sorcery in his string!

No doubt there was. But while the new *poetaster* informs you of the abstract notion, the ancient *poet* gives you the concrete fact; as Mr. Tennyson has done with wonderful art in his exquisite *St. Agnes*, where the saint's subjective mysticism appears only as embodied in objective pictures,—

*Break up the heavens, oh, Lord! and far*  
*Through all yon starlight keen*  
*Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,*  
*In raiment white and clean.*

Sir Walter Scott's ballads fail just on the same point. Even Campbell cannot avoid an occasional false note of sentiment. In Mr. Tennyson alone, as we think, the spirit of the middle age is perfectly reflected. Its delight, not in the "sublime and picturesque," but in the green leaves and spring flowers for their own sake,—the spirit of Chaucer and of the *Robin Hood Garland*,—the naturalism which revels as much in the hedgerow and garden as in alps, and cataracts, and Italian skies, and the other strong stimulants to the faculty of admiration which the palled taste of an unhealthy age, from Keats and Byron down to Browning, has rushed abroad to seek. It is enough for Mr. Tennyson's truly English spirit to see how

On either side the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye,  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;  
And through the field the road runs by  
To many-tower'd Camelot.

Or how,

In the stormy east-wind straining,  
The pale yellow woods were waning,  
The broad stream in his banks complaining,  
Heavily the low sky raining  
Over tower'd Camelot.

Give him but such scenery as that, which he can see in every parish in England, and he will find it a fit scene for an ideal myth, subtler than a casuist's questionings, deep as the deepest heart of woman.

But in this earlier volume we have only the *disjecta membra poetæ*. The poet has not yet arrived at the art of combining his new speculations on man with his new mode of viewing Nature. His objective pieces are too exclusively objective, his subjective too exclusively subjective; and where he deals with natural imagery in these latter, he is too apt, as in *Eleanore*, to fall back upon the old and received method of poetic diction, though he never indulges in a commonplace or a stock epithet. But in the interval between 1830 and 1842 the needful interfusion of the two elements took place. And in *Locksley Hall* and the *Two Voices* we find the new doubts and questions of the time embodied naturally and organically, in his own method of simple, natural expression. For instance, from the *Search for Truth*, in the *Two Voices*,—

Cry, faint not, climb: the summits lope  
Beyond the furthest flights of hope,  
Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope.

Sometimes a little corner shines,  
As over rainy mist inclines  
A gleaming crag with belts of pines.

"I will go forward," sayest thou;  
"I shall not fail to find her now.  
Look up, the fold is on her brow."

Or, again, in *Locksley Hall*, the poem which, as we think deservedly, has had most influence on the minds of the young men of our day,—

Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,  
And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,  
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;  
And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,  
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men;  
Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:  
That which they have done but earnest of the things which they shall do:

and all the grand prophetic passage following, which is said, we know not how truly, to have won for the poet the respect of that great statesman whose loss all good men this day deplore.

In saying that *Locksley Hall* has deservedly had so great an influence over the minds of the young, we shall, we are afraid, have offended some who are accustomed to consider that poem as Werterian and unhealthy. But, in reality, the spirit of the poem is simply anti-Werterian. It is a man rising out of sickness into health,—not conquered by Werterism, but conquering his selfish sorrow, and the moral and intellectual paralysis which it produces, by faith and hope,—faith in the progress of science and civilization, hope in the final triumph of good. Doubtless, that is not the highest deliverance,—not a permanent deliverance at all. Faith in God and hope in Christ alone can deliver a man once and for all, from Werterism or any other moral disease; that truth was reserved for *In Memoriam*: but as far as *Locksley Hall* goes, it is a step forward—a whole moral æon beyond Byron and Shelley; and a step, too, in the right direction, just because it is a step forward,—because the path of deliverance is, as *Locksley Hall* sets forth, not backwards towards a fancied paradise of childhood—not backward to grope after an unconsciousness which is now impossible, an implicit faith which would be unworthy of the man, but forward on the road on which God has been leading him, carrying upward with him the aspirations of childhood, and the bitter experience of youth, to help the organized and trustful labour of manhood. There are, in fact, only two deliverances from Werterism possible in the nineteenth century; one is into Popery, and the other is—

Forward, forward, let us range;  
Let the peoples spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change;  
Through the shadow of the world we sweep into the younger day:  
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

But such a combination of powers as Mr. Tennyson's naturally develop themselves into a high idyllic faculty; for it is the very essence of the idyl to set forth the poetry which lies in the simpler manifestations of Man and Nature; yet not explicitly, by a reflective moralizing on them, as almost all our idyllists—Cowper, Gray, Crabbe, and Wordsworth—have been in the habit of doing, but implicitly, by investing them all with a rich and delightful tone of colouring, perfect grace of manner, perfect melody of rhythm, which, like a gorgeous summer atmosphere, shall glorify without altering the most trivial and homely sights. And it is this very power, as exhibited in the *Lord of Burleigh*, *Audley Court*, and the *Gardener's Daughter*, which has made Mr. Tennyson not merely the only English rival of Thocritus and Bion, but, in our opinion, as much their superior as modern England is superior to ancient Greece.

Yet in *The Princess*, perhaps, Mr. Tennyson rises higher still.



The idyllic manner alternates with the satiric, the pathetic, even the sublime, by such imperceptible gradations, and continual delicate variations of key, that the harmonious medley of his style becomes the fit outward expression of the bizarre and yet harmonious fairy-land, in which his fancy ranges. In this work, too, Mr. Tennyson shows himself more than ever the poet of the day. In it more than ever the old is interpenetrated with the new—the domestic and scientific with the ideal and sentimental. He dares, in every page, to make use of modern words and notions, from which the mingled clumsiness and archaism of his compeers shrinks, as unpoetical. Though, as we just said, his stage is an ideal fairy-land, yet he has reached the ideal by the only true method,—by bringing the Middle age forward to the Present one, and not by ignoring the Present to fall back on a cold and galvanized Mediævalism; and thus he makes his *Medley* a mirror of the nineteenth century, possessed of its own new art and science, its own new temptations and aspirations, and yet grounded on, and continually striving to reproduce, the forms and experiences of all past time. The idea, too, of *The Princess* is an essentially modern one. In every age women have been tempted, by the possession of superior beauty, intellect, or strength of will, to deny their own womanhood, and attempt to stand alone as men, whether on the ground of political intrigue, ascetic saintship, or philosophic pride. Cleopatra and St. Hedwiga, Madame de Staël and the Princess, are merely different manifestations of the same self-willed and proud longing of woman to unsex herself, and realize, single and self-sustained, some distorted and partial notion of her own as to what the “angelic life” should be. Cleopatra acted out the pagan idea of an angel; St. Hedwiga, the mediæval one; Madame de Staël hers, with the peculiar notions of her time as to what “*spirituel*” might mean; and in *The Princess* Mr. Tennyson has embodied the ideal of that nobler, wider, purer, yet equally fallacious, because equally unnatural analogue, which we may meet too often up and down England now. He shows us the woman, when she takes her stand on the false masculine ground of intellect, working out her own moral punishment, by destroying in herself the tender heart of flesh: not even her vast purposes of philanthropy can preserve her, for they are built up, not on the womanhood which God has given her, but on her own self-will; they change, they fall, they become inconsistent, even as she does herself, till at last, she loses all feminine sensibility; scornfully and stupidly she rejects and misunderstands the heart of man; and then falling from pride to sternness, from sternness to sheer inhumanity, she punishes sisterly love as a crime, robs the mother of her child, and becomes all but a venge-

ful fury, with all the peculiar faults of woman, and none of the peculiar excellences of man.

The poem being, as its title imports, a medley of jest and earnest, allows a metrical license, of which we are often tempted to wish that its author had not availed himself; yet the most unmetrical and apparently careless passages flow with a grace, a lightness, a colloquial ease and frolic, which perhaps only heighten the effect of the serious parts, and serve as a foil to set off the unrivalled finish and melody of these latter. In these come out all Mr. Tennyson's instinctive choice of tone, his mastery of language, which always fits the right word to the right thing, and that word always the simplest one, and the perfect ear for melody which makes it superfluous to set to music poetry which, read by the veriest schoolboy, makes music of itself. The poem, we are glad to say, is so well-known that it seems unnecessary to quote from it; yet there are here and there gems of sound and expression of which, however well our readers may know them, we cannot forbear reminding them again. For instance, the end of the *Idyl* in book vii., beginning "Come down, O maid," (the whole of which is perhaps one of the most perfect fruits of the poet's genius):—

Myriads of rivulets hurrying through the lawn,  
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,  
And murmuring of innumerable bees.

Who, after three such lines, will talk of English as a harsh and clumsy language, and seek in the effeminate and monotonous Italian for expressive melody of sound? Who cannot *hear* in them the rapid rippling of the water, the stately calmness of the wood-dove's note, and in the repetition of short syllables and soft liquids in the last line, the

Murmuring of innumerable bees?

Or again, what extraordinary combination of richness with simplicity in such a passage as this:—

Breathe upon my brows;  
In that fine air I tremble, all the past  
Melts mist-like into this bright hour, and this  
I scarce believe, and all the rich to come  
Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland reels  
Athwart the smoke of burning leaves.

How Mr. Tennyson can have attained the prodigal fulness of thought and imagery which distinguishes this poem, and especially the last canto, without his style ever becoming overloaded, seldom even confused, is perhaps one of the greatest

marvels of the whole production. The songs themselves, which have been inserted between the cantos in the last edition of the book, seem, perfect as they are, wasted and smothered among the surrounding fertility; till we discover that they stand there, not merely for the sake of their intrinsic beauty, but serve to call back the reader's mind, at every pause in the tale of the princess's folly, to that very healthy ideal of womanhood which she has spurned.

At the end of the first cantos, fresh from the description of the female college, with its professoresses, and hostleresses, and other Utopian monsters, we turn the page; and—

As through the land at eve we went,  
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,  
We fell out, my wife and I,  
And kiss'd again with tears:

And blessings on the falling-out  
That all the more endears,  
When we fall out with those we love,  
And kiss again with tears!

For when we came where lies the child  
We lost in other years,  
There above the little grave,  
We kiss'd again with tears.

Between the next two cantos intervenes a cradle song, so exquisite that we must ask leave to quote it also:—

Sweet and low, sweet and low,  
Wind of the western sea,  
Low, low, breathe and blow,  
Wind of the western sea!  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dropping moon, and blow,  
Blow him again to me;  
While my little one, while my pretty one sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west  
Under the silver moon:  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

At the next interval is the wonderful bugle-song, the idea of which is that of twin-labour and twin-fame, in a pair of lovers.

*Our* echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow forever and forever.

In the next, the memory of wife and child inspirits the soldier

in the field ; in the next, the sight of the fallen hero's child open the sluices of his widow's tears ; and in the last, and perhaps the most beautiful of all, the poet has succeeded, in the new edition, in superadding a new form of emotion to a canto in which he seemed to have exhausted every resource of pathos which his subject allowed ; and prepares us for the triumph of that art by which he makes us, after all, love the heroine whom he at first taught us to hate and despise, till we see that her naughtiness is after all one that must be kissed and not whipped out of her, and look on smiling while she repents, with Prince Harry of old, "not in sackcloth and ashes, but in new silk and old sack :"—

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;  
The cloud may stoop from Heaven and take the shape,  
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;  
But, O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?  
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?  
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:  
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!  
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;  
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd:  
I strove against the stream and all in vain:  
Let the great river take me to the main:  
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;  
Ask me no more.

We now come to the first of the volumes whose names stand at the head of our article—*In Memoriam* ; a collection of poems on a vast variety of subjects, but all united as their name implies, to the memory of a departed friend. We know not whether to envy more—the poet the object of his admiration, or that object the monument which has been consecrated to his nobleness. For in this latest and highest volume, written at various intervals during a long series of years, all the poet's peculiar excellences, with all that he has acquired from others, seem to have been fused down into a perfect unity, and brought to bear on his subject with that care and finish which only a labour of love can inspire. We only now know the whole man, all his art, all his insight, all his faculty of discerning the *più nell' uno*, and the *uno nell' più*. As he says himself:—

My love has talked with rocks and trees,  
He finds on misty mountain-ground.  
His own vast shadow glory-crowned;  
He sees himself in all he sees.

Everything reminds him of the dead. Every joy or sorrow of man, every aspect of nature, from

The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,  
The cattle huddled on the lea,

to

The thousand waves of wheat  
That ripple round the lonely grange.

In every place where in old days they had met and conversed ; in every dark wrestling of the spirit with the doubts and fears of manhood, throughout the whole outward universe of nature, and the whole inward universe of spirit, the soul of his dead friend broods—at first a memory shrouded in blank despair, then a living presence, a ministering spirit, answering doubts, calming fears, stirring up noble aspirations, utter humility, leading the poet upward step by step to faith, and peace, and hope. Not that there runs throughout the book a conscious or organic method. The poems seem often merely to be united by the identity of their metre, so exquisitely chosen, that while the major rhyme in the second and third lines of each stanza gives the solidity and self-restraint required by such deep themes, the mournful minor rhyme of each first and fourth line always leads the ear to expect something beyond, and enables the poet's thoughts to wander sadly on, from stanza to stanza and poem to poem, in an endless chain of

Linked sweetness long drawn out.

There are records of risings and fallings again, of alternate cloud and sunshine, throughout the book ; earnest and passionate, yet never bitter ; humble, yet never abject ; with a depth and vehemence of affection "passing the love of woman," yet without a taint of sentimentality ; self-restrained and dignified, without ever narrowing into artificial coldness ; altogether rivalling the sonnets of Shakspeare.—Why should we not say boldly, surpassing—for the sake of the superior faith into which it rises, for the sake of the proem at the opening of the volume—in our eyes, the noblest English Christian poem which several centuries have seen ?

But we must quote, and let the poet tell his own tale ; though the very poems which we should most wish to transcribe are just those about which we feel a delicacy, perhaps morbid, in dissecting critically before the public eye. They are fit only to be read solemnly in our purest and most thoughtful moods, in the solitude of our chamber, or by the side of those we love, with thanks to the great heart who has taken courage to bestow on us the record of his own love, doubt, and triumph.

We shall make no comments on our extracts. It were an injustice to the poet to think they needed any.

## V.

I sometimes hold it half a sin  
 To put in words the grief I feel;  
 For words, like nature, half reveal  
 And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,  
 A use in measur'd language lies;  
 The sad mechanic exercise  
 Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er  
 Like coarsest clothes against the cold;  
 But that large grief which these enfold  
 Is given in outline and no more.

## XIX.

The Danube to the Severn gave  
 The darken'd heart that beat no more;  
 They laid him by the pleasant shore,  
 And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a-day the Severn fills;  
 The salt sea-water passes by,  
 And hushes half the babbling Wye,  
 And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along;  
 And hush'd my deepest grief of all,  
 When fill'd with tears that cannot fall,  
 I brim with sorrow drowning song.

The tide flows down, the wave again  
 Is vocal in its wooded walls:  
 My deeper anguish also falls,  
 And I can speak a little then.

## LVIII.

He past; a soul of nobler tone:  
 My spirit loved and loves him yet,  
 Like some poor girl whose heart is set  
 On one whose rank exceeds her own.

He mixing with his proper sphere,  
 She finds the baseness of her lot;  
 Half jealous of she knows not what,  
 And envying all that meet him there.

The little village looks forlorn;  
 She sighs amid her narrow days,  
 Moving about the household ways,  
 In that dark house where she was born.

The foolish neighbours come and go,  
 And tease her till the day draws by;  
 At night she weeps, "How vain am I!  
 How should he love a thing so low?"

## LXVIII.

I cannot see the features right,  
 When on the gloom I strive to paint  
 The face I know; the hues are faint,  
 And mix with hollow masks of night;

Cloud-towers by ghostly masons wrought,  
 A gulf that ever shuts and gapes,  
 A hand that points, and palled shapes  
 In shadowy thoroughfares of thought;

And crowds that stream from narrow doors,  
 And shoals of pucker'd faces drive;  
 Dark bulks that tumble half alive,  
 And lazy lengths on boundless shores;

Till all at once beyond the will  
 I hear a wizard music roll,  
 And through a lattice on the soul  
 Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

## LXXXIV.

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,  
 That rollest from the gorgeous gloom  
 Of evening over brake and bloom  
 And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below  
 Through all the dewy-tassell'd wood,  
 And shadowing down the horned flood  
 In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh  
 The full new life that feeds the breath  
 Throughout my frame, till doubt and death,  
 Ill-brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas  
 On leagues of odour streaming far,  
 To where in yonder Orient star  
 A hundred spirits whisper "Peace."

## LXXXVI.

Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,  
 Rings Eden through the budded quicks,  
 O tell me where the senses mix,  
 O tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate: fierce extremes employ  
 Thy spirits in the dusking leaf,  
 And in the midmost heart of grief  
 Thy passion clasps a secret joy:

And I—my harp would prelude woe—  
 I cannot all command the strings;  
 The glory of the sum of things  
 Will flash along the chords and go.

## XCI.

I shall not see thee. Dare I say  
 No spirit ever broke the band  
 That stays him from the native land,  
 Where first he walk'd when claspt in clay?

No visual shade of some one lost,  
 But he, the Spirit himself, may come  
 Where all the nerve of sense is numb;  
 Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost.

O, therefore from thy sightless range  
 With God in un conjectured bliss,  
 O, from the distance of the abyss  
 Of tenfold-complicated change,

Descend, and touch, and enter; hear  
 The wish too strong for words to name;  
 That in this blindness of the frame  
 My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

## XCIX.

Unwatch'd the garden bough shall sway,  
 The tender blossom flutter down,  
 Unloved that beech will gather brown,  
 This maple burn itself away;

Unloved, the sun-flower, shining fair,  
 Ray round with flames her disk of seed,  
 And many a rose-carnation feed  
 With summer spice the humming air;

Unloved, by many a sandy bar,  
 The brook shall babble down the plain,  
 At noon or when the lesser wain  
 Is twisting round the polar star;

Uncared for, gird the windy grove,  
 And flood the haunts of hern and crake;  
 Or into silver arrows break  
 The sailing moon in creek and cove;

Till from the garden and the wild  
 A fresh association blow,  
 And year by year the landscape grow  
 Familiar to the stranger's child;

As year by year the labourer tills  
 His wonted glebe, or lops the glades;  
 And year by year our memory fades  
 From all the circle of the hills.

## CIV.

Ring out wild bells, to the wild sky,  
 The flying cloud, the frosty light;  
 The year is dying in the night;  
 Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
 Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
 The year is going, let him go;  
 Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
 For those that here we see no more  
 Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
 Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
 And ancient forms of party strife;  
 Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
 With sweeter manners, purer laws.



Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
 The faithless coldness of the times;  
 Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
 But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
 The civic slander and the spite;  
 Ring in the love of truth and right,  
 Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease,  
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
 Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
 Ring out the darkness of the land,  
 Ring in the Christ that is to be.

## CXVI.

Contemplate all this work of time,  
 The giant labouring in his youth;  
 Nor dream of human love and truth,  
 As dying Nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead,  
 Are breathers of an ampler day  
 For ever nobler ends. They say,  
 The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,  
 And grew to seeming-random forms,  
 The seeming prey of cyclic storms,  
 Till at the last arose the man;

Who throve and branch'd from clime to clime,  
 The herald of a higher race,  
 And of himself in higher place,  
 If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more;  
 Or, crown'd with attributes of woe,  
 Like glories, move his course, and show  
 That life is not an idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,  
 And heated hot with burning fears,  
 And dipp'd in baths of hissing tears,  
 And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly  
 The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;  
 Move upward, working out the beast,  
 And let the ape and tiger die.

## CXXVII.

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,  
 So far, so near in woe and weal;  
 O, loved the most when I must feel  
 There is a lower and a higher;

Known, and unknown, human, divine!  
 Sweet human hand and lips and eye,  
 Dear heavenly friend that canst not die,  
 Mine, mine, forever, ever mine!

Strange friend, past, present, and to be,  
 Loved deeper, darklier understood;  
 Behold I dream a dream of good,  
 And mingle all the world with thee.

## CXXIX.

O living will that shalt endure  
 When all that seems shall suffer shock,  
 Rise in the spiritual rock,  
 Flow through our deeds and make them pure,

That we may lift from out the dust  
 A voice as unto him that hears,  
 A cry above the conquer'd years  
 To one that with us works, and trust

With faith that comes of self-control,  
 The truths that never can be proved  
 Until we close with all we loved,  
 And all we flow from, soul in soul.

From the poem, or from the exquisite epithalamium at the end of the volume, we shall not quote; they are too long to be inserted at length, and too perfect wholes for us to mar them by any curtailment.

It has been often asked why Mr. Tennyson's great and varied powers had never been concentrated on one immortal work. The epic, the lyric, the idyllic faculties, perhaps the dramatic also, seemed to be all there, and yet all sundered, scattered about in small fragmentary poems. *In Memoriam*, as we think, explains the paradox. Mr. Tennyson could not write an epos or a drama while he was living one. It was true, as people said, that his secluded habits had shut him out from that knowledge of human character necessary for the popular dramatist; but he had been talking all the while with angels. Within the unseen world which underlies and explains this mere time-shadow, which men call Reality and Fact, he had been going down into the depths, and ascending into the heights, led, like Dante of old, by the guiding of a mighty spirit. And in this volume, the record of seventeen years, we have the result of those spiritual experiences in a form calculated, as we believe, to be a priceless benefit to many an earnest seeker in this generation, and perhaps to stir up some who are priding themselves on a cold dilettantism and barren epicurism, into something like a living faith and hope. Blessed and delightful it is to find, that even in these new ages the creeds which so many fancy to be at their last gasp, are still the final and highest succour, not merely of the peasant and the outcast,

but of the subtle artist and the daring speculator ! Blessed it is to find the most cunning poet of our day able to combine the complicated rhythm and melody of modern times with the old truths which gave heart to martyrs at the stake, to see in the science and the history of the nineteenth century new and living fulfilments of the words which we learnt at our mothers' knee ! Blessed, thrice blessed, to find that hero-worship is not yet passed away ; that the heart of man still beats young and fresh ; that the old tales of David and Jonathan, Damon and Pythias, Socrates and Alcibiades, Shakspeare and his nameless friend, of "love passing the love of woman," ennobled by its own humility, deeper than death, and mightier than the grave, can still blossom out if it be but in one heart here and there to show men still how sooner or later "he that loveth knoweth God, for God is Love !"

THE POETRY OF SACRED AND LEGENDARY  
ART.[*Fraser's Magazine.*]

MUCH attention has been excited this year (1849) by the alleged fulfilment of a prophecy that the Papal power was to receive its death-blow—in temporal matters, at least—during the past year 1848. For ourselves, we have no more faith in Mr. Fleming, the obsolete author, who has so suddenly revived in the public esteem, than we have in other interpreters of prophecy. Their shallow and bigoted views of past history are enough to damp our faith in their discernment of the future. It does seem that people ought to understand what has been, before they predict what will be. History is “the track of God’s footsteps through time;” it is in his dealings with our forefathers that we may expect to find the laws by which he will deal with us. Not that Mr. Fleming’s conjecture must be false; among a thousand guesses there ought surely to be one right one. And it is almost impossible for earnest men to bend their whole minds, however clumsily, to one branch of study without arriving at some truth or other. The interpreters of prophecy, therefore, like all other interpreters, have our best wishes, though not our sanguine hopes. But, in the mean time, there are surely signs of the approaching ruin of Popery, more certain than any speculations on the mystic numbers of the Revelation. We should point to recent books,—not to books which merely expose Rome,—that has been done long ago, *usque ad nauseam*,—but to books which do her justice,—to Mr. Maitland’s *Dark Ages*; Lord Lindsay’s *Christian Art*; Mr. Macaulay’s new *History of England*; and last, but not least, to the very charming book of Mrs. Jameson, whose title heads this review. In them and in a host of similar works in Germany, which Dr. Wiseman’s party hail as signs of coming triumph, we

fancy we see the death-warrant of Romanism; because they prove that Rome has nearly done her work,—that the Protestants are learning the lesson for the sake of which Providence has so long borne with that monstrous system. When Popery has no more truth to teach us, (and it certainly has not much,) but not till then, will it vanish away into its native night.

We entreat Protestant readers not to be alarmed at us. We have not the slightest tendency toward the stimulants of Popery, either in their Roman unmixed state, or in their Oxford form, diluted with much cold water and no sugar. We are, with all humility, more Protestant than Protestantism itself; our fastidious nostril, more sensitive of Jesuits than even those of the author of *Hawkstone*, has led us at moments to fancy that we scent indulgences in Conduit Street Chapel, and discern inquisitors in Exeter Hall itself. Seriously, none believe more firmly than ourselves that the cause of Protestantism is the cause of liberty, of civilization, of truth; the cause of man and God. And because we think Mrs. Jameson's book especially Protestant, both in manner and intention, and likely to do service to the good cause, we are setting to work herein to praise and recommend it. For the time, we think, for calling Popery ill names is past; though to abstain is certainly sometimes a sore restraint for English spirits, as Mrs. Jameson herself, we suspect, has found; but Romanism has been exposed, and refuted triumphantly, every month for centuries, and yet the Romish nations are not converted; and too many English families of late have found, by sad experience, that such arguments as are in vogue are powerless to dissuade the young from rushing headlong into the very superstitions which they have been taught from their childhood to deride. The truth is, Protestantism may well cry, "Save me from my friends!" We have attacked Rome too often on shallow grounds, and finding our arguments weak, have found it necessary to overstate them. We have got angry, and caught up the first weapon which came to hand, and have only cut our own fingers. We have very nearly burnt the Church of England over our heads, in our hurry to make a bonfire of the Pope. We have been too proud to make ourselves acquainted with the very tenets which we exposed, and have made a merit of reading no Popish books but such as we were sure would give us a handle for attack, and not even them without the precaution of getting into a safe passion beforehand. We have dealt in exaggerations, in special pleadings, in vile and reckless imputations of motive, in suppressions of all palliating facts. We have outraged the common feelings of humanity by remaining blind to the virtues of noble and holy men because they were Papists, as if a

good deed was not good in Italy as well as England. We have talked as if God had doomed to hopeless vileness in this world, and reprobation in the next, millions of Christian people, simply because they were born of Romish and not of Protestant fathers. And we have our reward; we have fared like the old woman who would not tell the children what a well was for fear they should fall into one. We see educated and pious Englishmen joining the Romish communion simply from ignorance of Rome, and have no talisman wherewith to disenchant them. Our medicines produce no effect on them, and all we can do is, like quacks, to increase the dose. Of course if ten boxes of Morison's pills have killed a man, it only proves that—he ought to have taken twelve of them. We are jesting, but, as an Ulster Orangeman would say, "it is in good Protestant earnest."

To return. In the mean time some of the deepest cravings of the human heart have been left utterly unsatisfied. And be it remembered, that such universal cravings are more than fancies; they are indications of deep spiritual wants, which, unless we supply them with the good food which God has made for them, will supply themselves with poison,—indications of spiritual faculties, which it is as wicked to stunt or distort by miseducation as it is to maim our own limbs or stupefy our understanding. Our humanity is an awful and divine gift; our business is to educate it throughout—God alone must judge which part of it shall preponderate over the rest. But in the last generation—and, alas! in this also—little or no proper care has been taken of the love for all which is romantic, marvellous, heroic, which exists in every ingenuous child. Schoolboys, indeed, might, if they chose, in play-hours, gloat over the *Seven Champions of Christendom*, or Lemprière's gods and goddesses; girls might, perhaps, be allowed to devour by stealth a few fairy tales, or the *Arabian Nights*; but it was only by connivance that their longings were satisfied from the scraps of Moslemism, Paganism,—anywhere but from Christianity. Protestantism had nothing to do with the *imagination*,—in fact, it was a question whether reasonable people had any; whether the devil was not the original maker of that troublesome faculty in man, woman, and child. Poetry itself was, with most parents, a dram, to be given, like Dalby's Carminative, as a *pis aller*, when children could not possibly be kept quiet by Miss Edgeworth or Mrs. Mangnall. Then, as the children grew up, and began to know something of history and art, two still higher cravings began to seize on many of them, if they were at all of deep and earnest character: a desire to associate with religion their new love for the beautiful, and a reverence for antiquity; a wish to find some bond of union between

themselves and the fifteen centuries of Christianity which elapsed before the Reformation. They applied to Protestant teachers and Protestant books, and received too often the answer that "the Gospel had nothing to do with art,—art was either Pagan or Popish;" and as for "the centuries before the Reformation, they and all in them belonged utterly to darkness and the pit." As for "the heroes of early Christianity, they were madmen or humbugs; their legends devilish and filthy puerilities." They went to the artists and literary men, and received the same answer. "The mediæval writers were fools. Classical art was the only art; all painters before the age of Raphael superstitious bunglers. To be sure, as Fuseli said, Christianity had helped art a little;" but then it was the Christianity of "Julio and Leone,"—in short of the worst age of Popery.

These falsehoods have worked out their own punishment. The young are examining for themselves, and finding that we have deceived them, a revulsion in their feelings has taken place, similar to that which took place in Germany some half-century ago. They are reading the histories of the middle ages, and if we call them barbarous—they will grant it, and then quote instances of individual heroism and piety, which they defy us or any honest man not to admire. They are reading the old legends, and when we call them superstitious—they grant it, and then produce passages in which the highest doctrines of Christianity are embodied in the most pathetic and noble stories. They are looking for themselves at the ante-Raphaelic artists, and when we tell them that Fra Angelico's pictures are weak, affected, ill-drawn, ill-coloured,—they grant it, and then ask us if we can deny the sweetness, the purity, the rapt devotion, the saintly virtue, which shines forth from his faces. They ask us how beautiful and holy words or figures can be inspired by an evil spirit. They ask us why they are to deny the excellence of tales and pictures which make men more pure and humble, more earnest and noble. They tell us truly that all beauty is God's stamp, and that all beauty ought to be consecrated to his service. And then they ask us, "If Protestantism denies that she can consecrate the beautiful, how can you wonder if we love the Romanism which can? You say that Popery created these glorious schools of art: how can you wonder if, like Overbeck, "we take the faith for the sake of the art which it inspired?"

To all which, be it true or false, (and it is both,) are we to answer merely by shutting our eyes and ears tight, and yelling "No Popery!" or are we to say boldly to them, "We confess ourselves in fault; we sympathize with your longings; we confess that Protestantism has not satisfied them; but we assert that

the only cause is, that Protestantism has not been true to herself; that Art, like every other product of the free human spirit, is her domain, and not Popery's; that these legends, these pictures, are beautiful just in as far as they contain in them the germs of those eternal truths about man, nature, and God, which the Reformation delivered from bondage; that you can admire them, and yet remain thorough Protestants; and more, that unless you do remain Protestants, you will never enter into their full beauty and significance, because you will lose sight of those very facts and ideas from which they derive all their healthy power over you?"

These thoughts are not our own; they are uttered all over England, thank God! just now, by many voices and in many forms: if they had been boldly spoken during the last fifteen years, many a noble spirit, we believe, might have remained in the Church of its fathers which has now taken refuge in Romanism from the fruits of miseducation. One great reason why Romanism has been suffered to drag on its existence is, we humbly think, that it might force us at last to say this. We have been long learning the lesson; till we have learned it thoroughly Romanism will exist, and we shall never be safe from its allurements.

These thoughts may help to explain our opening sentences, as well as the extreme pleasure with which we hail the appearance of Mrs. Jameson's work.

The authoress has been struck, during her examination of the works of Christian artists, with the extreme ignorance which prevails in England on the subjects which they portray.

We have had (she says, in an introduction, every word of which we recommend as replete with the truest Christian philosophy),—

"Inquiries into the principles of taste, treatises on the sublime and beautiful, anecdotes of painting, and we abound in antiquarian essays on disputed pictures and mutilated statues; but up to a late period any inquiry into the true spirit and significance of works of art, as connected with the history of religion and civilization, would have appeared ridiculous, or, perhaps, dangerous. We should have had another cry of 'No Popery!' and Acts of Parliament prohibiting the importation of saints and Madonnas."—P. xxi.

And what should we have gained by it, but more ignorance of the excuses for Popery, and, therefore, of its real dangers? If Protestantism be the truth, knowledge of whatsoever kind can only further it. We have found it so in the case of classical literature. Why should we strain at a gnat and swallow a camel? Our boys have not taken to worshipping Jupiter and Juno by



reading about them. We never feared that they would. We knew that we should not make them pagans by teaching them justly to admire the poetry, the philosophy, the personal virtues of pagans. And, in fact, the few who since the revival of letters have deserted Christianity for what they called philosophic heathenism, have in almost every case sympathized, not with the excellences, but with the worst vices of the Greek and Roman. They have been men like Leo X. or the Medici, who, ready to be profligates under any religion, found in heathenism only an excuse for their darling sins. The same will be the fruits of a real understanding of the mediæval religion. It will only endanger those who carried already the danger in themselves, and would have fallen into some other snare if this had been away. Why should we fancy that Protestantism, like the Romanism which it opposes, is a plant that will not bear the light, and can only be protected at the expense of the knowledge of facts? Why will we forget the great spiritual law which Mrs. Jameson and others in these days are fully recognizing, that "we cannot safely combat the errors of any man or system without first giving them full credit for whatever excellences they may retain?" Such a course is the true fruit of that free spirit of Protestantism which ought to delight in recognizing good to whatever party it may belong; which asserts that every good gift and perfect gift comes directly from above, and not through the channel of particular formularies or priesthoods; which, because it loves faith and virtue for their own sakes, and not as mere parts of a "Catholic system," can recognize them and delight in them wherever it finds them.

"Upon these creations of ancient art (as Mrs. Jameson says) we cannot look as *those* did for whom they were created; we cannot annihilate the centuries which lie between us and them; we cannot, in simplicity of heart, forget the artist in the image he has placed before us, nor supply what may be deficient in his work through a reverentially excited fancy. We are critical, not credulous. We no longer accept this polytheistic form of Christianity; and there is little danger, I suppose, of our falling again into the strange excesses of superstition to which it led. But if I have not much sympathy with modern imitations of mediæval art, still less can I sympathize with that narrow puritanical jealousy which holds the monuments of a real and earnest faith in contempt: all that God has permitted to exist once in the past should be considered as the possession of the present; sacred for example or warning, and held as the foundation on which to build up what is better and purer."—*Introd.* p. xx.

Mrs. Jameson here speaks in the name of a large and rapidly increasing class. The craving for religious art, of which we spoke above, is spreading far and wide; even in dissenting

chapels we see occasional attempts at architectural splendour, which would have been considered twenty years ago heretic or idolatrous. And yet with all this there is, as Mrs. Jameson says, a curious ignorance with regard to the subject of mediæval art, even though it has now become a reigning fashion among us.

“We have learned, perhaps, after running through half the galleries and churches in Europe, to distinguish a few of the attributes and characteristic figures which meet us at every turn, yet without any clear idea of their meaning, derivation, or relative propriety. The palm of victory, we know, designates the martyr, triumphant in death. We so far emulate the critical sagacity of the gardener in Zeluco, that we have learned to distinguish St. Laurence by his gridiron, and St. Catherine by her wheel. We are not at a loss to recognize the Magdalene’s ‘loose hair and lifted eye,’ even when without her skull and her vase of ointment. We learn to know St. Francis by his brown habit, and shaven crown, and wasted, ardent features; but how do we distinguish him from St. Anthony, or St. Dominick? As for St. George and the dragon—from the St. George of the Louvre—Raphael’s—who sits his horse with the elegant tranquillity of one assured of celestial aid, down to him ‘who swings on a sign-post at mine hostess’s door,’—he is our familiar acquaintance. But who is that lovely being in the first blush of youth, who, bearing aloft the symbolic cross, stands with one foot on the vanquished dragon? ‘That is a copy after Raphael.’ And who is that majestic creature holding her palm branch, while the unicorn crouches at her feet? ‘That is *the* famous Moretto at Vienna.’ Are we satisfied? Not in the least! but we try to look wiser, and pass on.

“In the old times, the painters of these legendary scenes and subjects could always reckon securely on certain associations and certain sympathies in the minds of the spectators. We have outgrown these associations, we repudiate these sympathies. We have taken these works from their consecrated localities, in which they once held each their dedicated place, and we have hung them in our drawing-rooms and our dressing-rooms, over our pianos and our sideboards, and now what do they say to us? That Magdelene, weeping amid her hair, who once spoke comfort to the soul of the fallen sinner,—that Sebastian, arrow-pierced, whose upward, ardent glance, spoke of courage and hope to the tyrant-ridden serf,—that poor tortured slave, to whose aid St. Mark comes sweeping down from above,—can they speak to *us* of nothing save flowing lines, and correct drawing, and gorgeous colour? Must we be told that one is a Titian, the other a Guido, the third a Tintoret, before we dare to melt in compassion or admiration? or the moment we refer to their ancient religious signification and influence, must it be with disdain or with pity? This, as it appears to me, is to take not a rational, but rather a most irrational, as well as a most irreverent, view of the question: it is to confine the pleasure and improvement to be derived from works of art within very narrow bounds; it is to seal up a fountain of the richest poetry, and to shut out a thousand ennobling and inspiring thoughts. Happily there is a growing appreciation of these larger principles of criticism as applied to the

study of art. People look at the pictures which hang around their walls, and have an awakening suspicion that there is more in them than meets the eye,—more than mere connoisseurship can interpret; and that they have another, a deeper significance than has been dreamed of by picture dealers and picture collectors, or even picture critics.”—*Introd.* p. xxiii.

On these grounds Mrs. Jameson treats of the Poetry of Sacred and Legendary Art. Her first volume contains a general sketch of the legends connected with angels, with the scriptural personages, and the primitive fathers. Her second, the histories of most of “those sainted personages who lived, or are supposed to have lived, in the first ages of Christianity, and whose real history, founded on fact or tradition, has been so disfigured by poetical embroidery that they have in some sort the air of ideal beings.” Each story is followed by a series of short, but brilliant, criticisms on those pictures in which the story has been embodied by painters of various schools and periods, and illustrated by numerous spirited etchings and woodcuts, which add greatly to the value and intelligibility of the work. A future volume is promised which shall contain the “legends of the monastic orders, and the history of the Franciscans and the Dominicans, considered merely in their connection with the revival and the development of the fine arts in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries;”—a work which, if it equal the one before us, will doubtless be hailed by those conversant with that wonderful phase of human history as a valuable addition to our psychologic and æsthetic literature.

We ought to petition, also, for a volume which should contain the life of the Saviour, and the legends of the Virgin Mary; though this latter subject, we are afraid, will be too difficult for even Mrs. Jameson’s tact and delicacy to make tolerable to English readers, so thoroughly has the Virgin Mary, as especial patroness of purity, been intermixed, as a matter of course, in her legends, with every form of prudish and prurient foulmindedness.

The authoress has wisely abstained from all controversial matters. In her preface she begs that it may be clearly understood, “that she has taken throughout the æsthetic and not the religious view of these productions of art; which, in as far as they are informed with a true and earnest feeling, and steeped in that beauty which emanates from Genius inspired by Faith, may cease to be religion, but cannot cease to be poetry; and as poetry only,” she says, “I have considered them.” In a word, Mrs. Jameson has done for them what schoolmasters and schoolboys, bishops and Royal Academicians, have been doing for centuries, by Greek plays and Greek statues, without having incurred, as we said

above, the slightest suspicion of wanting to worship heathen gods and goddesses.

Not that she views these stories with the cold, unbelieving eye of a Goethe, merely as studies of "artistic effect;" she often transgresses her rule of impartiality, and just where we should wish her to do so. Her geniality cannot avoid an occasional burst of feeling, such as concludes her notice of the stories about the Magdalene and the other "beatified penitents."

"Poets have sung, and moralists and sages have taught, that for the frail woman there was nothing left but to die; or if more remained for her to suffer, there was at least nothing left for her to be or do,—no choice between sackcloth and ashes and the livery of sin. The beatified penitents of the early Christian Church spoke another lesson,—spoke divinely of hope for the fallen, hope without self-abasement or defiance. We, in these days, acknowledge no such saints; we have even done our best to dethrone Mary Magdalene; but we have martyrs,—'by the pang without the palm,'—and *one*, at least, among these who has not died without lifting up a voice of eloquent and solemn warning; who has borne her palm on earth, and whose starry crown may be seen on high even now amid the constellations of Genius."—Vol. ii. p. 386.

To whom the authoress may allude in this touching passage our simplicity cannot guess in the least. We may, therefore, without the suspicion of partiality, say to the noble spirit of purity, compassion, and true liberality which breathes throughout this whole chapter, "Go on and conquer."

Nor again can Mrs. Jameson's English honesty avoid an occasional slip of delicate sarcasm; for instance, in the story of St. Filomena, a bran-new saint, whose discovery at Rome in 1802 produced there an excitement which we should suspect was very much wanted, and which we recommend to all our readers as an instance of the state into which the virtues of honesty and common sense seem to have fallen in the Eternal City—of humbugs.

No doubt there are many such cases of imposture among the list of saints and martyrs: yet, granting all which have been exposed, and more, there still remains a list of authentic stories, sadder and stranger than any romance of man's invention, to read which without deep sympathy and admiration our hearts must be callous or bigoted indeed. As Mrs. Jameson herself well says (vol. ii. p. 137):—

"When in the daily service of our Church we repeat these words of the sublime hymn ('The noble army of martyrs praise Thee!'), I wonder sometimes whether it be with a full appreciation of their meaning? whether we do really reflect on all that this noble army of martyrs has conquered for us? Did they indeed glorify God through their courage, and seal their faith in their Redeemer with their blood? And if

it be so, how is it that we Christians have learned to look coldly upon the effigies of those who sowed the seed of the harvest which we have reaped?—*Sanguis martyrū semen Christianorū!* We may admit that the reverence paid to them in former days was unreasonable and excessive; that credulity and ignorance have in many instances falsified the actions imputed to them; that enthusiasm has magnified their numbers beyond all belief; that when the communion with martyrs was associated with the presence of their material remains, the passion for relics led to a thousand abuses, and the belief in their intercession to a thousand superstitions. But why, in uprooting the false, uproot also the beautiful and the true?"

Thoroughly and practically convinced as we are of the truth of these words, it gave us some pain when, in the work of a very worthy person, *The Church in the Catacombs*, by Dr. Maitland (not the author of *The Dark Ages*), we found, as far as we could perceive, a wish "to advance the Protestant cause" by throwing general doubt on the old martyrologies and their monuments in the Roman catacombs. If we shall have judged hastily, we shall be ready to apologize. None, as we have said before, more firmly believe that the Protestant cause is the good cause; none are more reverentially inclined toward all honest critical investigations, more anxious to see all truth, the Bible itself, sifted and tested in every possible method; but we must protest against what certainly seemed too contemptuous a rejection of a mass of historic evidence hitherto undoubted, except by the school of Voltaire, and of the hasty denial of the meaning of Christian and martyrologic symbols, as well known to antiquaries as Stonehenge or Magna Charta.

At the same time, Dr. Maitland's book seems the work of a righteous and earnest man, and it is not its object, but its method, of which we complain. The whole question of martyrology, a far more important one than historians generally fancy, requires a thorough investigation, critical and historical; it has to be done, and especially just now. The Germans, the civil engineers of the intellectual world, ought to do it for us, and no doubt will. But those who undertake it must bring to the work, not only impartiality, but enthusiasm; it is the spirit only, after all, which can quicken the eye, which can free the understanding from the idols of laziness, prejudice, and hasty induction. To talk philosophically of such matters a man must love them; he must set to work with a Christian sympathy, and a manly admiration for those old spiritual heroes to whose virtue and endurance Europe owes it that she is not now a den of heathen savages. He must be ready to assume every thing about them to be true which is neither absurd, immoral, nor unsupported by the same amount of evidence which he would require for any other historic fact. And,

just because this very tone of mind—enthusiastic but not idolatrous, discriminating but not captious—runs through Mrs. Jameson's work, we hail it with especial pleasure, as a fresh move in a truly philosophic and Christian direction. Indeed, for that branch of the subject which she has taken in hand, not the history, but the poetry of legends and of the art which they awakened, she derives a peculiar fitness, not merely from her own literary talents and acquaintance with continental art, but also from the very fact of her being an English wife and mother. Women ought, perhaps, always to make the best critics—at once more quicksighted, more tasteful, more sympathetic than ourselves, whose proper business is creation. Perhaps in Utopia they will take the reviewer's business entirely off our hands, as they are said to be doing already, by the by, in one leading periodical. But of all critics an English matron ought to be the best—open as she should be, by her womanhood, to all tender and admiring sympathies, accustomed by her Protestant education to unsullied purity of thought, and inheriting from her race, not only freedom of mind and reverence for antiquity, but the far higher birthright of English honesty.

And such a genial and honest spirit, we think, runs through this book.

Another difficult task, perhaps the most difficult of all, the authoress has well performed. We mean the handling of stories whose facts she partly or wholly disbelieves, while she admires and loves their spirit and moral; or doctrines, to pronounce on whose truth or falsehood is beyond her subject. This difficulty Mr. Newman, in the *Lives of the English Saints*, edited and partly written by him, turned with wonderful astuteness to the advantage of Romanism; but others, more honest, have not been so victorious. Witness the painfully uncertain impression left by some parts of Mr. Milman's *History of Christianity*, and, if the *Quarterly Review* will excuse us, by the latter, in one or two of those masterly articles on Romish heroes which appeared in that periodical; an uncertainty which we have the fullest reason to believe was most foreign to the reviewer's mind and conscience. Even Mr. Macaulay's brilliant history here and there falls into the same snare. No one but those who have tried it can be aware of the extreme difficulty of preventing the dramatic historian from degenerating into an apologist or heating into a sneerer; or understand the ease with which an earnest author, in a case like the present, becomes frantically reckless, under the certainty that, say what he will, he will be called a Jesuit by the Protestants, an Infidel by the Papists, a Pantheist by the Ultra High-Church, and a Rogue by all three.

Now, as we intend to say nothing of the authoress but what she will like, we certainly shall not say that she is greater than Milman or Macaulay; but we must say, that female tact and deep devotional feeling cut the Gordian knot which has puzzled more cunning heads. Not that Mrs. Jameson is faultless; we want something yet, in the telling of a Christian fairy-tale, and know not what we want; but never were legends narrated with more discernment and simplicity than these.

As an instance, take the legend of St. Dorothea, (vol. ii. p. 184,) which is especially one of those stories of "sainted personages who," as Mrs. Jameson says, "lived, or are supposed to have lived, in the first ages of Christianity; and whose real history, founded on fact or tradition, has been so disguised by poetical embroidery, that they have in some sort the air of ideal beings;" and which may, therefore, be taken as a complete test of the authoress's tact and honesty:—

"In the province of Cappadocia and in the city of Cæsarea, dwelt a noble virgin, whose name was Dorothea. In the whole city there was none to be compared to her in beauty and grace of person. She was a Christian, and served God day and night with prayers, with fasting, and with alms.

"The governor of the city, by name Sapritius (or Fabricius,) was a very terrible persecutor of the Christians, and hearing of the maiden, and of her great beauty, he ordered her to be brought before him. She came, with her mantle folded on her bosom, and her eyes meekly cast down. The governor asked, 'Who art thou?' and she replied, 'I am Dorothea, a virgin, and a servant of Jesus Christ.' He said, 'Thou must serve our gods, or die.' She answered mildly, 'Be it so; the sooner shall I stand in the presence of Him whom I most desire to behold.' Then the governor asked her, 'Whom meanest thou?' She replied, 'I mean the Son of God, Christ, mine espoused! his dwelling is paradise; by his side are joys eternal; and in his garden grow celestial fruits and roses that never fade.' Then Sapritius, overcome by her eloquence and beauty, ordered her to be carried back to her dungeon. And he sent to her two sisters, whose names were Calista and Christeta, who had once been Christians, but who, from terror of the torments with which they were threatened, had renounced their faith in Christ. To these women the governor promised large rewards if they would induce Dorothea to follow their evil example; and they, nothing doubting of success, boldly undertook the task. The result, however, was far different; for Dorothea, full of courage and constancy, reproved them as one having authority, and drew such a picture of the joys they had forfeited through their falsehood and cowardice, that they fell at her feet, saying, 'O blessed Dorothea, pray for us, that, through thy intercession, our sin may be forgiven and our penitence accepted!' And she did so. And when they had left the dungeon they proclaimed aloud that they were servants of Christ.

“Then the governor, furious, commanded that they should be burned, and that Dorothea should witness their torments. And she stood by, bravely encouraging them, and saying, ‘O my sisters, fear not! suffer to the end! for these transient pangs shall be followed by the joys of eternal life!’ Thus they died: and Dorothea herself was condemned to be tortured cruelly, and then beheaded. The first part of her sentence she endured with invincible fortitude. She was then led forth to death; and, as she went, a young man, a lawyer of the city, named Theophilus, who had been present when she was first brought before the governor, called to her mockingly, ‘Ha! fair maiden, goest thou to join thy bridegroom? Send me, I pray thee, of the fruits and flowers of that same garden of which thou hast spoken: I would fain taste of them!’ And Dorothea, looking on him, inclined her head with a gentle smile, and said, ‘Thy request, O Theophilus, is granted.’ Whereat he laughed aloud with his companions; but she went on cheerfully to death.

“When she came to the place of execution, she knelt down and prayed; and suddenly appeared at her side a beautiful boy, with hair bright as sunbeams—

‘A smooth-faced, glorious thing,  
With thousand blessings dancing in his eyes.’

In his hand he held a basket containing three apples, and three fresh-gathered and fragrant roses. She said to him, ‘Carry these to Theophilus, say that Dorothea hath sent them, and that I go before him to the garden whence they came, and await him there.’ With these words she bent her neck, and received the death-stroke.

“Meantime the angel (for it was an angel) went to seek Theophilus, and found him still laughing in merry mood over the idea of the promised gift. The angel placed before him the basket of celestial fruit and flowers, saying, ‘Dorothea sends thee this,’ and vanished. What words can express the wonder of Theophilus? Struck by the prodigy operated in his favour, his heart melted within him; he tasted of the celestial fruit, and a new life was his; he proclaimed himself a servant of Christ, and, following the example of Dorothea, suffered with like constancy in the cause of truth, and obtained the crown of martyrdom.”

We have chosen this legend just because it is in itself as superstitious and fantastic as any in the book. We happen to hold the dream of “The Spiritual Marriage,” as there set forth, in especial abhorrence, and we have no doubt Mrs. Jameson does so also. We are well aware of the pernicious effect which this doctrine has exercised on matrimonial purity among the southern nations; that by making chastity synonymous with celibacy, it degraded married faithfulness into a restriction which there were penalties for breaking, but no rewards for keeping. We see clearly enough the cowardice, the short-sightedness, of fancying that man can ensure the safety of his soul by fleeing from the world;—in plain English, deserting the post to which God has called him, like the monks and nuns of old. We believe that



the numbers of the early martyrs have been exaggerated. We believe they were like ourselves, imperfect and inconsistent human beings; that, on the showing of the legends and fathers themselves, their testimony for the truth was too often impaired by superstition, fanaticism, or passion. But granting all this, we must still say, in the words of one who cannot be suspected of Romanizing, the great Dr. Arnold:—

“Divide the sum total of reported martyrs by twenty; by fifty, if you will; after all, you have a number of persons of all ages and sexes suffering cruel torments and deaths for conscience sake, and for Christ’s; and by their sufferings, manifestly with God’s blessing, ensuring the triumph of Christ’s Gospel. Neither do I think that we consider the excellence of this martyr spirit half enough.”

Indeed we do not. Let all the abatements mentioned above, and more, be granted; yet even then, when we remember that the world from which Jerome or Anthony fled was worse than that denounced by Juvenal and Persius,—that the nuptials which, as legends say, were often offered the virgin martyrs as alternatives for death, were such as employed the foul pens of Petronius and Martial,—that the tyrants whom they spurned were such as live in the pages of Suetonius,—that the gods whom they were commanded to worship, the rites in which they were to join, where those over which Ovid and Apuleius had gloated, which Lucian had held up to the contempt of heathendom itself—that the tortures which they preferred to apostasy and to foul crimes were, by the confessions of the heathens themselves, too horrible for pen to tell,—it does raise a flush of indignation to hear some sleek bigot-skeptic, bred up in the safety and luxury of modern England among Habeas Corpus Acts and endowed churches, trying from his warm fire-side to sneer away the awful responsibilities and the heroic fortitude of valiant men and tender girls, to whose piety and courage he owes the very enlightenment, the very civilization, of which he boasts.

It is an error, doubtless, and a fearful one, to worship even such as them. But the error, when it arose, was at worst the caricature of a blessed truth. Even for the sinful, surely it was better to admire holiness than to worship their own sin. Shame on those who, calling themselves Christians, repine that a Cecilia or a Magdalen replaced an Isis and a Venus, who can fancy that they are serving Protestantism by tracing malevolent likenesses between even the idolatry of a saint and the idolatry of a devil! True, there was idolatry in both, as gross in one as the other. And what wonder? What wonder if, amid a world of courtezans, the nun was worshipped? At least God allowed it; and will men be wiser than God? “The times of that ignorance He winked at.” The lie that was in it He did not interfere to punish.

He did more; he let it work out, as all lies will, their own punishment. We may see that in the miserable century which preceded the glorious Reformation; we may see it in the present state of Spain and Italy. The crust of lies, we say, punished itself; to the germ of truth within it we partly owe that we are Christian men this day.

But granting, or rather boldly asserting all this, and smiling as much as we choose at the tale of St. Dorothea's celestial basket, is it not absolutely, and in spite of all, an exquisite story? Is it likely to make people better or worse? We might believe the whole of it, and yet we need not, therefore, turn idolaters and worship sweet Dorothea for a goddess. But if, as we trust in God is the case, we are too wise to believe it all—if even we see no reason (and there is not much) for believing one single word of it—yet still we ask, is it not an exquisite story? Is there not heroism in it greater than of all the Ajaxes and Achilles who ever blustered on this earth? Is there not power greater than of kings—God's strength made perfect in woman's weakness? Tender forgiveness, the Saviour's own likeness; glimpses, brilliant and true at the core, however distorted and miscolored, of that spiritual world where the wicked cease from troubling, where the meek alone shall inherit the earth, where, as Protestants too believe, all that is spotless and beautiful in nature as well as in man shall bloom for ever perfect?

It is especially in her descriptions of paintings that Mrs. Jameson's great talents are displayed. Nowhere do we recollect criticisms more genial, brilliant, picturesque, than those which are scattered through these pages. Often they have deeper merits, and descend to those fundamental laws of beauty and of religion by which all Christian art must ultimately be tested. Mrs. Jameson has certainly a powerful inductive faculty; she comprehends at once the idea\* and central law of a work of art, and sketches it in a few vivid and masterly touches; and really, to use a hack quotation honestly for once, "in thoughts which

\* We are sorry to see, however, that Mrs. Jameson has been so far untrue to her own faculty as to join in the common mistake of naming Raphael's well-known cartoon at Hampton Court, "Elymas the Sorcerer struck Blind." On the supposition that this is its subject, its method of arrangement is quite unworthy of the rest, as the action would be split into the opposite corners of the picture, and the post of honour in the centre occupied by a figure of secondary importance; besides, the picture would lose its significance as one of this great series on "Religious Conviction and Conversion." But, strange to say, Raphael has all the while especially guarded against this very error, by labelling the picture with a description of its subject. Directly under the central figure is written, "Sergius Paulus, Proconsul, embraces the Christian faith at the preaching of Paul." Taking which simple hint, and looking at the face of the proconsul, (himself a miracle of psychology,) as the centre to which all is to be referred, the whole composition, down to the minutest details, arranges itself at once in that marvellous unity, which is Raphael's especial glory.

breathe, and words which burn." As an instance, we must be allowed to quote at length this charming passage on angel paintings, so valuable does it seem not only as information, but as a specimen of what criticism should be:—

"On the revival of art, we find the Byzantine idea of angels everywhere prevailing. The angels in Cimabue's famous 'Virgin and Child enthroned,' are grand creatures, rather stern; but this arose, I think, from his inability to express beauty. The colossal angels at Assisi, solemn sceptred kingly forms, all alike in action and attitude, appeared to me magnificent.

"In the angels of Giotto we see the commencement of a softer grace and a purer taste, farther developed by some of his scholars. Benozzo Gozzoli and Orcagna have left in the Campo Santo examples of the most graceful and fanciful treatment. Of Benozzo's angels in the Riccardi palace I have spoken at length. His master, Angelico, (worthy the name!) never reached the same power of expressing the rapturous rejoicing of celestial beings, but his conception of the angelic nature remains unapproached, unapproachable; it is only his, for it was the gentle, passionless, refined nature of the recluse which stamped itself there. Angelico's angels are unearthly, not so much in form as in sentiment; and superhuman, not in power but in purity. In other hands, any imitation of his soft ethereal grace would become feeble and insipid. With their long robes falling round their feet, and drooping many-coloured wings, they seem not to fly or to walk, but to float along 'smooth sliding without step.' Blessed, blessed creatures! love us, only love us; for we dare not task your soft, serene beatitude, by asking you to *help* us!

"There is more sympathy with humanity in Francia's angels: they look as if they could weep, as well as love and sing.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Correggio's angels are grand and lovely, but they are like children enlarged and sublimated, not like spirits taking the form of children; where they smile it is truly, as Annibal Caracci expresses it,—*con una naturalezza et semplicità che innamora e sforza a ridere con loro*; but the smile in many of Correggio's angel heads has something sublime and spiritual, as well as *simple* and *natural*.

"And Titian's angels impress me in a similar manner—I mean those in the Glorious Assumption at Venice—with their childish forms and features, but an expression caught from beholding the face of 'our Father that is in heaven:' it is glorified infancy. I remember standing before this picture, contemplating those lovely spirits one after another, until a thrill came over me like that which I felt when Mendelssohn played the organ,—I became music while I listened. The face of one of those angels is to the face of a child just what that of the Virgin in the same picture is compared with the fairest of the daughters of earth: it is not here superiority of beauty, but mind, and music, and love kneaded, as it were, into form and colour.

"But Raphael, excelling in all things, is here excellent above all: his angels combine, in a higher degree than any other, the various faculties and attributes in which the fancy loves to clothe these pure,

immortal, beatified creatures. The angels of Giotto, of Benozzo, of Fiesole, are, if not female, feminine; those of Filippo Lippi, and of Andrea, masculine: but you cannot say of those of Raphael that they are masculine or feminine. The idea of sex is wholly lost in the blending of power, intelligence, and grace. In his earlier pictures, grace is the predominant characteristic, as in the dancing and singing angels in his Coronation of the Virgin. In his later pictures the sentiment in his ministering angels is more spiritual, more dignified. As a perfect example of grand and poetical feeling, I may cite the angels as 'Regents of the Planets,' in the Capella Chigiana. The cupola represents in a circle the creation of the solar system, according to the theological and astronomical (or rather *astrological*) notions which then prevailed—a hundred years before 'the starry Galileo and his woes.' In the centre is the Creator; around, in eight compartments, we have, first the angel of the celestial sphere, who seems to be listening to the divine mandate,—'Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven;' then follow, in their order, the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. The name of each planet is expressed by its mythological representative; the Sun by Apollo, the Moon by Diana: and over each presides a grand colossal winged spirit, seated or reclining on a portion of the zodiac as on a throne. I have selected two angels to give an idea of this peculiar and poetical treatment. The union of the theological and the mythological attributes is in the classical taste of the time, and quite Miltonic. In Raphael's child-angels, the expression of power and intelligence, as well as innocence, is quite wonderful; for instance, look at the two angel-boys in the Dresden Madonna di San Sisto, and the angels, or celestial genii, who bear along the Almighty when he appears to Noah. No one has expressed like Raphael the action of flight, except perhaps Rembrandt. The angel who descends to crown Santa Felicità cleaves the air with the action of a swallow; and the angel in Rembrandt's Tobit soars like a lark with upward motion, spurning the earth.

"Michael Angelo rarely gave wings to his angels; I scarcely recollect an instance, except the angel in the Annunciation: and his exaggerated human forms, his colossal creatures, in which the idea of power is conveyed through attitude and muscular action, are, to my taste, worse than unpleasing. My admiration for this wonderful man is so profound that I can afford to say this. His angels are superhuman, but hardly angelic: and while in Raphael's angels we do not feel the want of wings, we feel while looking at those of Michael Angelo that not even the 'sail-broad vans' with which Satan laboured through the surging abyss of chaos could suffice to lift those Titanic forms from earth, and sustain them in mid-air. The group of angels over the Last Judgment, flinging their mighty limbs about, and those that surround the descending figure of Christ in the conversion of St. Paul, may be referred to here as characteristic examples. The angels, blowing their trumpets, puff and strain like so many troopers. Surely this is not angelic: there may be *power*, great, imaginative, and artistic power, exhibited in the conception of form, but in the beings themselves there is more of effort than of power: serenity, tranquillity, beatitude, ethereal purity, spiritual grace, are out of the question."

In this passage we may remark an excellence in Mrs. Jameson's mode of thought which has become lately somewhat rare. We mean a freedom from that bigoted and fantastic habit of mind which leads nowadays the worshippers of high art to exalt the early schools to the disadvantage of all others, and to talk as if Christian painting had expired with Perugino. We were much struck with our authoress's power of finding spiritual truth and beauty in Titian's "Assumption," one of the very pictures in which the "high art" party are wont to see nothing but "coarseness" and "earthliness" of conception. She, having, we suppose, a more acute as well as a more healthy eye for the beautiful and the spiritual, and, therefore, able to perceive its slightest traces wherever they exist, sees in those "earthly" faces of the great masters, "an expression caught from beholding the face of our Father that is in heaven." The face of one of those "angels," she continues, "is to the face of a child just what that of the Virgin in the same picture is compared with the fairest of the daughters of earth: it is not here superiority of beauty, but mind, and music, and love kneaded, as it were, into form and colour."

Mrs. Jameson acknowledges her great obligations to M. Rio; and all students of art must be thankful to him for the taste, learning, and earnest religious feeling which he had expended on the history of the earlier schools of painting. An honest man, doubtless, he is; but it does not follow, alas! in this piecemeal world, that he should write an honest book. And his bigotry stands in painful contrast to the genial and comprehensive spirit by which Mrs. Jameson seems able to appreciate the specific beauties of all schools and masters. M. Rio's theory (and he is the spokesman of a large party) is, unless we much misjudge him, this,—that the ante-Raffaellie is the only Christian art; and that all the excellences of these early painters came from their Romanism; all their faults from his two great bugbears,—Byzantinism and Paganism. In his eyes, the Byzantine idea of art was Manichean; in which we fully coincide, but add, that the idea of the early Italian painters was almost equally so; and that almost all in them that was not Manichean they owe not to their Romanism or their Asceticism, but to their healthy layman's common sense, and to the influence of that very classical art which they are said to have been pious enough to despise. Bigoted and ascetic Romanists have been, in all ages, in a hurry to call people Manicheans, all the more fiercely because their own consciences must have hinted to them that they were somewhat Manichean themselves. When a man suspects his own honesty, he is, of course, inclined to prove himself blameless by shouting the loudest against the dishonesty of others. Now M.

Rio sees clearly and philosophically enough what is the root of Manicheanism,—the denial that that which is natural, beautiful, human, belongs to God. He imputes it justly to those Byzantine artists who fancied it carnal to attribute beauty to the Saviour or to the Virgin Mary, and tried to prove their own spirituality by representing their sacred personages in the extreme of ugliness and emaciation, though some of the specimens of their painting which Mrs. Jameson gives proves that this abhorrence of beauty was not so universal as M. Rio would have us believe. We agree with him that this absurdity was learned from them by earlier and semi-barbarous Italian artists, that these latter rapidly escaped from it, and began rightly to embody their conceptions in beautiful forms; and yet we must urge against them, too, the charge of Manicheanism, and of a spiritual eclecticism also, far deeper and more pernicious than the mere outward eclecticism of manner which has drawn down hard names on the school of the Caracci.

For an eclectic, if it mean any thing, means this,—one who, in any branch of art or science, refuses to acknowledge Bacon's great law, "That Nature is only conquered by obeying her;" who will not take a full and reverent view of the whole mass of facts with which he has to deal, and from them deducing the fundamental laws of his subject, obey them whithersoever they may lead; but who picks and *chooses out* of them just so many as may be pleasant to his private taste, and then constructs a partial system which differs from the essential ideas of Nature, in proportion to the number of facts which he has determined to discard. And such a course was pursued in art by the ascetic painters between the time of Giotte and Raffaelle. Their idea of beauty was a partial and a Manichean one; in their adoration for a fictitious "angelic nature," made up from all which is negative in humanity, they were prone to despise all by which man is brought in contact with this earth,—the beauties of sex, of strength, of activity, of grandeur of form; all that is, in which Greek art excels: their ideal of beauty was altogether effeminate. They prudishly despised the anatomic study of the human figure, of landscape and chiaroscuro. Spiritual expression with them was everything; but it was only the expression of the passive spiritual faculties, of innocencé, devotion, meekness, resignation; all good, but not the whole of humanity. Not that they could be quite consistent in their theory. They were forced to paint their very angels as human beings; and a standard of human beauty they had to find somewhere; and they found one, strange to say, exactly like that of the old Pagan statues, and only differing in that ascetic and emasculate tone, which was peculiar

to themselves. Here is a dilemma which the worshippers of high art have slurred over. Where did Angelico da Fiesole get the idea of beauty which dictated his exquisite angels? We shall not, I suppose, agree with those who attribute it to direct inspiration, and speak of it as the reward of the prayer and fasting by which the good monk used to prepare himself for painting. Must we then confess that he borrowed his beauties from the faces of the prettiest nuns with whom he was acquainted? That would be sad naturalism; and sad eclecticism, too, considering that he must have seen among his Italian sisters, a great many beauties of a very different type from that which he has chosen to copy; though, we suppose, of God's making equally with that of his favourite. Or did he, in spite of himself, steal a side-glance now and then at some of the unrivalled antique statues of his country, and copy on the sly any feature or proportion in them which was emasculate enough to be worked into his pictures? That, too, is likely enough; nay, it is certain. We are perfectly astonished how any draughtsman, at least how such a critic as M. Rio, can look at the early Italian painters without tracing everywhere in them the classic touch, the peculiar tendency to mathematic curves in the outlines, which is the distinctive peculiarity of Greek art. Is not Giotto, the father of Italian art, full of it in every line? Is not Perugino? Is not the angel of Lorenzo Credi in Mrs. Jameson's woodcut? Is not Francia, except just where he is stiff, and soft, and clumsy? Is not Fra Angelico himself? Is it not just the absence of this Greek tendency to mathematical forms in the German painters before Albert Durer, which makes the specific difference, evident to every boy, between the drawing of the Teutonic and Italian schools?

But, if so, what becomes of the theory which calls Pagan art by all manner of hard names? which dates the downfall of Christian art from the moment when painters first lent an eye to its pernicious seductions? How can those escape the charge of eclecticism, who, without going to the root-idea of Greek art, filched from its outside just as much as suited their purpose? And how, lastly, can M. Rio's school of critics escape the charge of Manichean contempt for God's world and man, not as ascetics have fancied him, but as God has made him, when they think it a sufficient condemnation of a picture to call it *naturalistic*; when they talk and act about art as if the domain of the beautiful were the devil's kingdom, from which some few species of form and elements were to be stolen by Christian painters, and twisted from their original evil destination into the service of religion?

On the other hand, we owe much to those early ascetic painters; their works are a possession for ever. No future school of religious art will be able to rise to eminence without taking full cognizance of them, and learning from them their secret. They taught artists, and priests, and laymen, too, that beauty is only worthy of admiration when it is the outward sacrament of the beauty of the soul within; they helped to deliver men from that idolatry to merely animal strength and loveliness into which they were in danger of falling in ferocious ages, and among the relics of Roman luxury; they asserted the superiority of the spirit over the flesh; according to their light, they were faithful preachers of the great Christian truth, that devoted faith, and not fierce self-will, is man's glory. Well did their pictures tell to brutal peasant, and to still more brutal warrior, that God's might was best shown forth, not in the elephantine pride of a Hercules, or the Titanic struggles of a Laocoon, but in the weakness of martyred women, and of warriors who were content meekly to endure shame and death, for the sake of Him who conquered by sufferings, and bore all human weaknesses; who "was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and, like a sheep dumb before the shearers, opened not his mouth."

We must conclude with a few words on one point on which we differ somewhat from Mrs. Jameson—the allegoric origin of certain legendary stories. She calls the story of the fiend, under the form of a dragon, devouring St. Margaret, and then bursting at the sign of the cross while the saint escaped unhurt, "another form of the familiar allegory—the power of Sin overcome by the power of the Cross."

And again, vol. ii. p. 4:—

"The legend of St. George came to us from the East; where, under various forms, as Apollo and the Python, as Bellerophon and the Chimæra, as Perseus and the Sea-monster, we see perpetually recurring the mythic allegory by which was figured the conquest achieved by beneficent Power over the tyranny of wickedness, and which reappears in Christian art in the legends of St. Michael and half a hundred other saints."

To us these stories seem to have had by no means an allegoric, but rather a strictly historic foundation; and our reasons for this opinion may possibly interest some readers.

Allegory, strictly so called, is the offspring of an advanced, and not of a semi-barbarous state of society. Its home is in the East—not the East of barbarous Pontine countries peopled by men of our own race, where the legend of St. George is allowed to have sprung up, but of the civilized, metaphysical, dark-haired



races of Egypt, Syria, and Hindostan. The "objectivity" of the Gothic mind has never had any sympathy with it. The Teutonic races, like the earlier Greeks, before they were tinctured with Eastern thought, had always wanted historic facts, dates, names, and places. They even found it necessary to import their saints; to locate Mary Magdalene at Marseilles, Joseph of Arimathea at Glastonbury, the three Magi at Cologne, before they could thoroughly love or understand them. Englishmen especially cannot write allegories. John Bunyan alone succeeded tolerably, but only because his characters and language were such as he had encountered daily at every fireside and in every meeting-house. But Spenser wandered perpetually away, or rather, rose up from his plan into mere dramatic narrative. His work and other English allegories, are hardly allegoric at all, but rather symbolic; spiritual laws in them are not expressed by arbitrary ciphers, but embodied in imaginary examples, sufficiently startling or simple to form a plain key to other and deeper instances of the same law. They are analogous to those symbolic devotional pictures, in which the Madonna and saints of all ages are grouped together with the painter's own contemporaries—no allegories at all, but a plain embodiment of a fact in which the artist believed; not only "the communion of all saints," but also their habit of assisting, often in visible form, the Christians of his own time.

These distinctions may seem over-subtle, but our meaning will surely be plain to any one who will compare *The Faëry Queen*, or *The Legend of St. George*, with the Gnostic or Hindoo reveries, and the fantastic and truly Eastern interpretation of Scripture, which the European monks borrowed from Egypt. Our opinion is, that in the old legends the moral did not create the story, but the story the moral; and that the story had generally a nucleus of fact within all its distortions and exaggerations. This holds good of the Odinic and Grecian myths; all are now more or less inclined to believe that the deities of Zeus's or Odin's dynasties were real conquerors or civilizers of flesh and blood, like the Manco Capac of the Peruvians, and that it was around records of their real victories over barbarous aborigines, and over the brute powers of nature, that extravagant myths grew up, till more civilized generations began to say,—"These tales must have some meaning—they must be either allegories or nonsense;" and then fancied, that in the remaining thread of fact they found a clue to the mystic sense of the whole.

Such, we suspect, has been the history of St. George and the Dragon, as well as of Apollo and the Python. It is very hard to have to give up the dear old dragon who haunted our nursery

dreams, especially when there is no reason for it. We have no patience with antiquaries who tell us that the dragons who guarded princesses were merely "the winding walls or moats of their castles." What use, then, pray, was there in the famous nether garment with which Regnar Lodbrog (shaggy-trousers) choked the dragon who guarded his lady love? And Regnar was a real piece of flesh and blood, as King Ælla and our Saxon forefathers found to their cost: his awful death-dirge, and the effect which it produced, are well known to historians. We cannot give up Regnar's trousers, for we suspect the key to the whole dragon-question is in the pocket of them.

Seriously, Why should not these dragons have been simply what the Greek word dragon means—what the earliest romances, the Norse myths, and the superstitions of the peasantry in many parts of England to this day, assert them to have been—"mighty worms," huge snakes? All will agree that the Python, the representative in the old world of the "Boa Constrictor" of the new, was common in the Homeric age, if not later, both in Greece and in Italy. It existed on the opposite coast of Africa (where it is now extinct) in the time of Regulus; we believe, from the traditions of all nations, that it existed to a far later date in more remote and barbarous parts of Europe. There is every reason to suppose that it still lingered in England after the invasion of the Cymri—say not earlier than B. C. 600—for it was among them an object of worship; and we question whether they would have been likely to have adored a foreign animal, and, as at Abury, built enormous temples in imitation of its windings, and called them by its name.

The only answer to these traditions has as yet been, that no reptile of that bulk is known in cold climates. Yet the Python still lingers in the Hungarian marshes. Only two years ago a huge snake, as large as the Pythons of Hindostan, spread havoc among the flocks and terror among the peasantry. Had it been Ariosto's "Orc," an *à priori* argument from science would have had weight. A marsupiate sea-monster is horribly unorthodox; and the dragon, too, has doubtless been made a monster of, but most unjustly; his legs have been patched on by crocodile-slaying crusaders, while his wings—where did they come from? From the traditions of "flying serpents," which have so strangely haunted the deserts of Upper Egypt from the time of the old Hebrew prophets, and which may not, after all, be such lies as folk fancy. Oh how scientific prigs shook with laughter at the notion of a flying dragon! till one day geology revealed to them, in the Pterodactylus, that a real flying dragon, on the model of Carlo Crivelli's in Mrs. Jameson's book, with wings before and

legs behind, only more monstrous than that, and than all the dreams of Seba and Aldrovandus, (though some of theirs, to be sure, have seven heads,) got its living once on a time in this very island of England! But such is the way of this wise world! When Le Vaillant, in the last century, assured the Parisians that he had shot a giraffe at the Cape, he was politely informed that the giraffe was fabulous, extinct,—in short, that he lied; and now, behold! this very year the respectable old unicorn (and good Tories ought to rejoice to hear it) has been discovered at last by a German naturalist, Von Müller, in Abyssinia, just where our fathers told us to look for it! And why should we not find the flying serpent, too? The interior of Africa is as yet an unknown world of wonders. If half the money had been spent on exploration there which has gone on increasing the horrors of the slave-trade, at the price of good English blood, we might have discovered—for aught we know, the descendants of the very satyr who chatted with St. Anthony!

No doubt the discovery of huge fossil animals, as Mrs. Jameson says, on the high authority of Professor Owen, may have modified our ancestors' notions of dragons; but in the old serpent worship we believe the real explanation of these stories is to be found. There is no doubt that human victims, and even young maidens, were offered to these snake gods; even the sunny mythology of Greece retains horrible traces of such customs, which lingered in Arcadia, the mountain-fastness of the older and conquered race. Similar cruelties existed among the Mexicans; and there are but too many traces of it throughout the history of heathendom.

And the same superstition may, as the legends assert, have lingered on, or been, at least, revived during the later ages of the empire, in remote provinces, left in their primeval barbarism, at the same time that they were brutalized by the fiendish exhibitions of the Circus and persecutions of the Christians, which the Roman governors found it their interest to introduce everywhere. Thus the serpent became naturally regarded as the manifestation of the evil spirit by Christians as well as by the old Hebrews; thus, also, it became the presiding genius of the malaria and fever, which arose from the fens haunted by it—a superstition which gave rise to the theory that the tales of Hercules, and the Hydra, Apollo and the mud-Python, St. George and the Dragon, were sanitary-reform allegories, and the monsters whose poisonous breath destroy cattle and young maidens only typhus and consumption. We see no reason why early Christian heroes should not have actually met with such snake gods, and felt themselves bound, like Southey's Madoc, or Daniel in the old rabbinical story,

whose truth has never been disproved, to destroy the monsters at all risk. And we doubt not that their righteous daring would have been crowned with victory; and that on such events were gradually built up the dragon-slaying legends, which charmed all Europe, and grew in extravagances and absurdities, till they began to degenerate into the bombast of the *Seven Champions*, and expired in the immortal ballad of the *Dragon of Wantley*, in which More of More Hall, on the morning of his battle with the monster, invoked the saints no more, but

To make him strong and mighty  
He drank by the tale  
Six pots of ale,  
And a quart of aqua-vitæ.

So ended the sublime sport of dragon-slaying. Its only remnant may now be seen in Hindostan, where some sacred alligator, for years the tenant of a tank or moat, and piously allowed to devour at his will the washerwomen and girls who fetch water, expiates his murders, not on the point of saintly lance, but in our stupid practical English way, by the rifle-bullet of some subaltern lounging in the barrack window, who is suddenly awakened from tobacco and vacuity by the reflection,—“It’s a cursed shame that that big fellow should eat up all the pretty girls!”

## NORTH DEVON.

[*Fraser's Magazine.*]

## CHAPTER I.

## NORTH DEVON AS IT IS NOT.

IT has long seemed to us most marvellous, that the beauties of this remote district have as yet called out the talents of no good artist or poet. Strange that fifty miles of coast, from Minehead to Tintagel, combining every variety of beauty, from the softest to the most savage—the fauna and flora of which, both by land and sea, are two of the richest in curious and nearly extirpated species which any part of England possesses; inhabited by a race of people peculiarly remarkable, both in physical and intellectual development; rich in legends, romances, and superstitions of every kind, still recent and living in the belief of the inhabitants,—most strange is it that such a country should still remain dumb, illustrated by nothing better, as far as we have seen, than a few paltry, incorrect lithographs, and sung in no worthier strains than those of Mr. Bamfield's *Ilfracombe Guide*, a very faithful and well-stuffed half-crown's worth no doubt, but of the "hod-carrying" and not the "architectural" kind.

It was, therefore, with hope and pleasure that we saw announced in the publisher's list a book called *Exmoor, or the Footsteps of St. Hubert in the West*. "Now," thought we, "the old county has found a voice at last." Our half-enlightened cockney public, who follow each other, summer after summer, artists and tourists, reading parties and idling parties, like sheep after the bellwether, through the accredited gaps, along the accredited trackways, sheltering themselves at night only under the accredited furze-bushes, though there may be hundreds of taller and warmer ones around them, will hear, for once in their lives, of this western garden of the Hesperides, as yet visited by hardly any townsfolk,

*Exmoor; or, the Footsteps of St. Hubert in the West.* By H. BYNG HALL, Esq.

except the good people of Bristol, who seem to keep it all a secret, as the Phœnicians did their tin islands, for their own private behoof.

Full of faith, therefore, in the subject, and full of hope for the author, we opened and tried to read, and found, not a mere sporting-book, but, according to our humble judgment, more—a very stupid and vulgar sporting-book.

Now, we do not object to sporting-books in general, least of all to one on Exmoor. No place in England more worthy of one. No place whose beauties and peculiarities are more likely to be thrown into strong relief by being looked at with a sportsman's eye. It is so with all forests and moor-lands. The spirit of Robin Hood and Johnny of Breadislee is theirs. They are remnants of the home of man's fierce youth, still consecrated to the genius of animal excitement and savage freedom; after all, not the least noble qualities of human nature. Besides, there is no better method of giving a living picture of a whole county than by taking some one feature of it as a guide, and bringing all other observations into harmony with that original key. Even in merely scientific books this is very possible. Look, for instance, at Hugh Miller's *Old Red Sandstone*, *The Voyage of the Beagle*, and Professor Forbes's work (we had almost said epic poem) on *Glaciers*. Even an agricultural writer, if he have a real insight in him—if he have any thing of that secret of the *più nel uno*, "the power of discovering the infinite in the finite;" of seeing, like a poet, trivial phenomena in their true relation to the whole of the great universe, into which they are so cunningly fitted; if he has learned to look at all things and men, down to the meanest, as living lessons, written with the finger of God; if, in short, he has any true dramatic power, he may impart to that apparently muddiest of sciences a poetic or a humorous tone, and give the lie to Mephistopheles when he dissuades Faust from farming as an occupation too mean and filthy for a man of genius. The poetry of agriculture remains as yet, no doubt, unwritten, and the comedy of it also; though its farce-tragedy is being now, alas! very extensively enacted in practice—unconsciously to the players. As for the old "pastoral" school, it only flourished before agriculture really existed; that is, before sound science, hard labour, and economy, were necessary, and has been for the last two hundred years simply a lie. Nevertheless, as signs of what may be done even now by a genial man with so stubborn a subject as "turnips, barley, clover, wheat," it is worth while to look at old Arthur Young's books, both travels and treatises, and also at certain very spirited *Chronicles of a Clay Farm*, by Talpa, lately publishing in the *Agricultural Gazette*, which teem with humour

and wisdom, and will hereafter, we hope, be given to us in the form of a separate book.

In sporting literature, (a tenth muse, exclusively indigenous to England,) the same observation holds good tenfold. Some of our most perfect topographical sketches have been the work of sportsmen. Old Izaak Walton, and his friend Cotton, of Dove-dale, whose names will last as long as their rivers, have been followed by a long train of worthy pupils. White's *History of Selborne*; Sir Humphry Davy's *Salmonia*; *The Wild Sports of the West*; Mr. St. John's charming little works on Highland shooting; and, above all, Christopher North's *Recreations*—delicious book! to be read and re-read, and laughed over, and cried over, the tenth time even as the first—an inexhaustible fairy well, springing out of the granite rock of the sturdy Scotch heart, through the tender green turf of a genial boyish old age. We might mention, too, certain *Letters from an Angler in Norway* in the same style, which appeared, much to our pleasure and instruction, in this magazine last year. But it is really invidious to Mr. H. Byng Hall to quote any more books, merely to depreciate his work all the lower by the contrast. "Why, then," a reader may ask, "take notice of a book which you have already all but called not worth noticing?" Because, in the first place, gentle reader, people must be scared from meddling with fine subjects only to spoil them; and, in the next place, sporting-books form an integral and significant, and, in our eyes, a very honourable and useful part, of the English literature of this day; and, therefore, all shallowness, vulgarity, stupidity, or bookmaking in that class, must be as severely attacked as in novels and poems. We English owe too much to our field sports to allow people to talk nonsense about them.

Half the book is not about sporting at all, but consists merely of bills of fare of the various eatables, drinkables, and smokable, of which the author partook at various houses, gentle and other, in the course of his trip.—The accounts of the various gentlemen's *ménages* being of that minute and personal kind, which earned for the American Mr. Rush, and our own Capt. Basil Hall a somewhat unenviable notoriety, and which, we should say, will not promote Mr. Byng Hall's chance of being asked a second time to visit the hospitable squires whom he has thus unceremoniously put into print.

His one or two descriptions of scenery are the baldest commonplace, not fit for a county newspaper. His single good story, about a Quaker who, having been tempted out hunting, became a Nimrod for life, he has spoiled in the telling. Has the good gentleman, by the by, as he seems to consider this a singular

instance, been in Leicestershire during the last few years? There was a certain hard-riding Quaker there whom he ought hardly to have failed of meeting. And there are those who can recollect another Quaker keeping as good a stud of horses, and riding as hard, either in forest or enclosure, as most men south of Leicestershire. Mr. Byng Hall knows so little about the country, that he has never said a word, as far as we can find, about the splendid Exmoor fishing, the best in Devonshire, on the Barle, the Exe, and a dozen other tributaries, though he stayed at Dulverton, the finest fishing-station in the west of England; and he must needs carry us off to Axminster, a very good fishing-place in its way, but of which he seems to know nothing beyond the *comestibles*, and which has as much to do with Exmoor as it has with Salisbury Plain or Cheapside. As for his stories and statistics of stag and other hunting, few as they are, we used to see a dozen in every number of *Bell's Life* or the *Sporting Magazine*, in our own mad days, written with ten times the spirit and understanding, vigour, and picturesqueness, either venatic or literary. We suppose, though we have not been able to find any clear account of the fact, that Mr. Hall has ridden with the Exmoor staghounds himself once at least in his life, for he prefaces his book by a frontispiece of a "stag at bay in Watersmeet—taken from nature:" by memory, we apprehend, as sketch-books are not commonly carried out hunting. But, O favoured mortal! has he actually seen a real stag at bay there? We will forgive the badness of the drawing, for never stag or hounds "took soil"\* so coolly, and the utter unlikeness of the scenery to that magnificent gorge. But had he nothing to tell us about that run or any other? Does he fancy that it is an account of a run to tell us that "Found at . . . cover, held away at a slapping pace for . . . Barn, then turned down the . . . water for a mile, and *crossed the Forest*, (what a saying to him who has eyes and ears!) made for . . . Hill, but being headed, went by . . . woods to D . . ., where he was run into, after a gallant race of . . . hours and . . . miles?" It is nearly as bad as a history book!

Surely, like the old Greek, Diana struck him blind that day, for intruding unworthily on her sacred privacy. He has ridden with the Exmoor staghounds, and these are all the thoughts that he has brought away! Could not that sudden return from railroads and civilization to the wild joys of our old Norse forefathers awaken one new thought in him above commonplace claptrap,

\* Mr. Byng Hall does not, we have since remarked, know how to draw a stag's antlers with even tolerable correctness. And yet he "drew from Nature." How often, in the name of all bookmakers?



and the names of covers, hounds, and eatables? We never rode with those staghounds, and yet we could tell him something about that run, wherever the stag was roused—how the panting cavalcade rose and fell on the huge mile-long waves of that vast heather sea; how one long brown hill after another sunk down, grayer and grayer, behind them, and one long gray hill after another swelled up browner and browner before them; and how the sandstone rattled and flew beneath their feet, as the great horses, like Homer's of old, "devoured up the plain;" and how they struggled down the hill-side, through bushes and rocks, and broad, slipping, rattling sheets of scree, and saw beneath them stag and pack galloping down the shallow, glittering river bed, throwing up the shingle, striking out the water in long glistening sheets; and how they too swept after them, down the flat valley, rounding crag and headland, which opened one after another in interminable vista, along the narrow strip of sand and rushes, speckled with stunted, moss-bearded, heather-bedded hawthorns, between the great, grim, lifeless mountain walls. Did he feel even no delicious creeping of the flesh that day at the sound of his own horse-hoofs in the heath? The author of *Yeast* distinguishes between the "dull thunder of the clayey turf," and the "flame-like crackle of the dry stubbles;" but he forgot a sound more delicate than them both, when the hoofs sweep through the long ling with a sound as soft as the brushing of a woman's tresses, and then ring down on the spongy, black, reverberating soil, chipping the honey-laden fragrant heather blossoms, and tossing them out in a rosy shower. Or, if that were too slight a thing for the observation of a fine gentleman, surely he must recollect the dying away of the hounds' voices, as the woodland passes engulf them, whether it were at Brendon or at Badgerworthy, or any other name; how they brushed through the narrow forest paths, where the ashes were already golden, and the oaks still kept their sombre green, and the red leaves and berries of the mountain-ash showed bright beneath the dark forest aisles; and how all of a sudden the wild outcry before them seemed to stop and concentrate, thrown back, louder and louder as they rode, off the same echoing crag, till at a sudden turn of the road there stood the stag beneath them in the stream, his back against the black rock, with its green cushions of dripping velvet, knee deep in the clear amber water, the hounds around him, some struggling and swimming in the deep pool, some rolling, and tossing, and splashing in a mad, half-terrified ring, as he reared into the air on his great haunches, with the sparkling beads running off his red mane, and dropping on his knees plunged his antlers down among them, with blows which would have each brought certain death

with it if the yielding water had not broken the shock. Does he not remember the death? The huge carcass dragged out of the stream, followed by dripping, panting dogs, the blowing of the mort, and the last wild halloo, when the horn note and the voices rang through the autumn woods, and rolled up the smooth, flat, mountain sides; and Brendon answered Countisbury, and Countisbury sent it on to Lynmouth hills, till it swept out of the gorge and died away upon the Severn sea. And then, does he not remember the pause, and the revulsion, and the feeling of sadness and littleness, almost of shame, as he looked up for the first time—we can pardon his not having done so before,—and saw where he was, and the stupendous beauty of the hill-sides, with the lazy autumn clouds crawling about their tops, and the great sheets of screes, glaciers of stone, covering acres and acres of the smooth hill side, eating far into the woods below, bowing down the oak scrubs with their weight, and the vast, circular sweeps of down above him, flecked with innumerable dark spots of gorse, each of them guarded where they open into the river chasm by two mighty fortresses of “giant-snouted crags,”—delicate pink and gray sandstone, from which blocks and crumbling boulders have been toppling slowly down for ages, beneath the frost and the whirlwind, and now lie in long downward streams upon the slope, as if the mountain had been weeping tears of stone? And then, as the last notes of the mort had died away, did not there come over him an awe at the deathless silence of the woods, not broken, but deepened, by the solemn unvarying monotone of the roaring stream beneath, which flashed and glittered, half-hidden in the dark leafy chasm, in clear, brown pools, reflecting every leaf and twig, in boiling pits and walls of foam, ever changing, and yet for ever the same, fleeting on past the poor, dead, reeking stag, and the silent hounds lying about on the moss-embroidered stones, their lolling tongues showing like bright crimson sparkles in the deep rich Venetian air of the green sombre shades; while the startled water-ousel, with his white breast, flitted a few yards and stopped to stare from a rock's point at the strange intruders; and a single stockdove, out of the bosom of the wood, began calling, sadly and softly, with a dreamy peaceful moan? Did he not see and hear all this, for surely it was there to see and hear?

Not he. The eye only sees that which it brings within the power of seeing; and all we can say of him is, that a certain apparition in white leathers was at one period of its appearance dimly conscious of equestrian motion towards a certain brown, two-horned phenomenon, and other spotted phenomena, at which he had been taught by habit to make the articulate noises “stag”

and "hounds," among certain gray, and green, and brown appearances, at which the same habit and the example of his fellows had taught him to say, "Rock, and wood, and mountain," and perhaps the further noises of "Lovely, splendid, majestic."

Come, we will leave Mr. Byng Hall to his names and his dates, and his legs of pork, and his bottles of claret, and you shall wander if you choose, for a day or two with an old North Devon man, and he will show you what the land is like.

## CHAPTER II.

### A DAY ON EXMOOR.

SUCH was the substance of the monologue with which the other evening we put to sleep our old friend Claude Mellot, artist and Londoner, whom we found at the Lyndale Hotel, in a state of infuriation at his own incapacity to put on canvas the manifold beauty with which he was surrounded. We need not say that we fraternized with him on the spot. Claude was full of declamations about the "new scientific school of painting" which he expected daily to arise; he was "ravi" with *Politics for the People*; he "considered *Punch* becoming weekly, more and more, the most extraordinary specimen of blameless humour and high satiric morality which Europe had ever seen;" possessing "every excellence of poor, dear, naughty old Rabelais, without one of his faults;" and, above all, he was as ready as ever to push forward, cheerfully and trustfully, into the chances of this strange new time, with a courage very refreshing to us in these maudlin, cowardly days, when in too many lands, alas!—

"Has come that last drear mood  
Of sated lust, and dull decrepitude—  
No faith, no art, no priest, no king, no God;  
While round their crumbling fanes in peevish ring,  
Crouched on the bare-worn sod,  
Babbling about the unreturning spring,  
And whining for dead forms, that will not save,  
The toothless sects sink snarling to their grave."

The conversation recommenced the next morning, as we rode out together over the hills upon a couple of ragged ponies—he with his sketch-book, we with our fishing-rod and creel—up into the heart of Exmoor, towards a certain stream.—But, gentle reader, in these days, when every one is an angler, we are not the schoolboy, who, as Shakspeare says, tells his companions of the bird's nest that he may go and steal it; so we will not mention where the said stream was. After all one stream is very like another, especially to the multitude who fish and can catch nothing.

“Well, Claude,” we said, “you confess yourself baffled with this magnificence?”

“Yes! to paint it worthily one would require to be a Turner, a Copley Fielding, and a Creswick, all in one.”

“Well, you shall try your pencil to-day on simpler and severer subjects. I can promise you nothing rich, nothing grand, nothing which will even come under the denomination of that vile word “picturesque.” But I will show you one scrap of England, left just as it was before either Celt, Cymry, Saxon, or Norseman, trod its shores; and that surely is a sight which may give some new notions to a Londoner. And before we reach it, why should we not pray to the Maker of it and us to “open our eyes, that we may understand the wondrous things of his law,”—written there all around in the great green book, whose two covers are the star vault and the fire kingdoms; whose leaves are the mountain ridges; whose letters are the oak boughs, and the heather bells, and the gnats above the stream; and the light whereby we read it, the simple loving heart which is content to go wondering and awe-struck all its days, and find in that mood peace, and strength, and wisdom?”

“Amen!” he answered. “‘If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.’ And surely there was never a fitter place wherein to offer up such a prayer than in this most glorious of the rock-aisles of God’s island temple of England. For here, too, is ‘a sanctuary not made with hands;’ here, too, if you will but listen, the earth spirits are praising God night and day, with ‘voices like the sound of many waters.’”

“A somewhat narrow and materialist adaptation of Scripture, Claude,” we rejoined.

“Heaven forbid! What is earth but the image of heaven? Does not Solomon tell us, how the things which are seen are the doubles of the things which are not seen?”

“Did you ever remark,” we asked, after a pause, “how such unutterable scenes as this gorge of the ‘Waters-meet’ stir up a feeling of shame, almost of peevishness, before the sense of a mysterious meaning which we ought to understand and cannot?”

He smiled.

“Our torments do by length of time become our elements; and painful as that sensation is to the earnest artist, he will feel it, I fancy, at last sublime itself into an habitually, gentle, reverent, almost melancholy tone of mind, as of a man bearing the burden of an infinite, wonderful message, which his own frivolity and laziness hinder him from speaking out; and it should beget in him too” (with a glance at us,) “something of merciful in-

dulgence towards the stupidity of those who see, after all, only a very little shallower than he does into the unfathomable depths of nature."

"You mean," we said, "that we were too hard last night upon the poor gentleman who took upon himself to write about Exmoor?"

"I do indeed. How has he harmed you, or any one but himself? He has gained a few more days' pleasure in his way. Let us thank God that he has even so far enjoyed himself, and call that fact, as it is, fairly *lucro apponendum* in the gross sum of human happiness."

"Friend Claude, we are the last to complain of any man's innocent pleasure, down to the joys of pork and claret. We only complain of his putting it into print. Surely the gentlemen of England must help, at least, to save her, if she is to be saved, from what is happening to every continental nation. And this it is, Claude, which makes us so indignant when we see a gentleman writing a foolish or a vulgar book. Here is a man whose education, for aught we know, has cost a thousand pounds or so, at home or abroad. Does not such a man, by the very expense of him, promise more than this? And do not our English field-sports, which, with the exception of that silly and brutal Irish method of gambling called steeple-chasing, we reverence and enjoy,—do not they, by the expense of them, promise something more than this?"

"Well, as I told you last night, sporting books and sportsmen seem to me, by their very object, not to be worth troubling our heads about. Out of nothing, comes nothing. See, my hands are as soft as any lady's in Belgravia. I could not, to save my life, lift a hundred weight a foot off the ground; while you have been a wild man of the woods, a leaper of ditches, and a rower of races, and a wanton destroyer of all animal life, and yet——"

"You would hint politely that you are as open as ourselves to all noble, and chivalrous, and truly manly emotions?"

"What think you?"

"That you are far worthier in such matters than we, friend. But do not forget that it may be your intellect, and your profession—in one word, God's mercy, which have steered you clear of shoals upon which you will find the mass of our class founder. Woe to the class or the nation which has no manly physical training! Look at the manners, the morals, the faces of the young men of the shop-keeping classes, if you wish to see the effects of utterly neglecting the physical development of man, of fancying that all the muscular activity he requires under the sun is to be able to stand behind a counter, or sit on a desk-stool

without tumbling off. Be sure, be sure, that ever since the days of the Persians of old, effeminacy, if not twin-sister of cowardice and dishonesty, has always gone hand in hand with them. To that utter neglect of any exercises which call out fortitude, patience, self-dependence, and daring, we attribute a great deal of the low sensuality, the conceited vulgarity, the utter want of a high sense of honour, which prevails just now among the middle classes; and from which the navigator, the engineer, the miner, and the sailor, are comparatively free."

"And perhaps, too, that similar want of any high sense of honour, which seems, from the religious periodicals, to pervade a large proportion of a certain more venerable profession?"

"Seriously, Claude, we believe you are not far wrong. But we are getting on delicate ground there: but we have always found, that of whatever profession he may be—to travestie Shakspeare's words,—

The man that hath not *sporting* in his soul,  
Is fit for treason's direst stratagems—

and so on."

"Civil to me!"

"Oh, you have a sporting soul in you, like hundreds of other Englishmen who never handled rod or gun, or you would not be steering for Exmoor to-day. But such I have almost invariably found to have been men of the very highest intellect. If your boy be a genius, you may trust him to find some original means for developing his manly energies, whether in art, agriculture, civil engineering, or travels, discovery, and commerce. But if he be not, as there are a thousand chances to one he will not be, whatever you teach him, let the first two things be, as they were with the old Persians, 'To speak the truth, and to draw the bow.'"

By this time we had reached the stream, just clearing from the last night's showers. A long, transparent, amber shallow, dimpled with fleeting silver rings by rising trout; a low cascade of green-veined snow; a deep, dark pool of swirling orange-brown, walled in with heathery rocks, and paved with sandstone slabs and boulders, distorted by the changing refractions of the eddies,—sight delicious to the angler.

We commenced our sport at once, while Claude wandered up the glen to sketch a knoll of crags, on which a half-wild moorland pony, the only living thing in sight, stood staring and snuffing at the intruder, his long mane and tail streaming out wildly against the sky.

We had fished on for some hour or two; Claude had long since disappeared among the hills; we fancied ourselves miles

from any human being, when a voice at our elbow startled us:—

“A bleak place for fishing this, sir!”

We turned; it was an old gray-whiskered labouring man, with pick and spade on shoulder, who had crept on us unawares beneath the wall of the neighbouring deer-cover. Keen, honest eyes, gleamed out from his brown, scarred, weather-beaten face; and as he settled himself against a rock, with the deliberate intention of a chat, we commenced by asking after Mr. Knight, “The Lord of Stags,” well known and honoured both by sportsman and by farmer.

“He was gone to Malta—a warmer place than Exmoor.”

“What! have you been in Malta?”

“Yes, he had been in Malta, and in stranger places yet. He had been a sailor; he had seen the landing in Egypt, and heard the French cannon thundering vainly from the sandhills on the English boats. He had himself helped to lift Abercrombie up the ship’s side to the death-bed of the brave. He had seen Caraccioli hanging at his own yard-arm, and heard Lady Hamilton order out the barge herself, and row round the frigate of the murdered man, to glut her eyes with her revenge. He had seen, too, the ghastly corpse floating upright, when Nelson and the enchantress met their victim, returned from the sea-depths to stare at them, as Banquo’s ghost upon Macbeth. But she was ‘a mortal fine woman,’ was Lady Hamilton, though she was a queer one, and ‘cruel kind to the sailors;’ and many a man she saved from flogging; and one from hanging, too; that was a marine that got a-stealing; for Nelson, though he was kind enough, yet it was a word and a blow with him; and quite right he, sir; for there be such rascals on board ship, that if you arn’t as sharp with them as with wild beastesses, no man’s life, nor the ship’s neither, would be worth a day’s purchase.”

So he, with his simple straight-forward notions of right and wrong, worth much maudlin unmerciful indulgence which we hear in these days,—and yet not going to the bottom of the matter either, as we shall see in the next war. But, rambling on, he told me how he had come home, war-worn and crippled, to marry a wife and get tall sons, and lay his bones in his native village; till which time, (for death to the aged poor man is a Sabbath, of which he talks freely, calmly, even joyously,) “he just got his bread, by Mr. Knight’s kindness, patching and mending at the stone deer-fences.”

We gave him something to buy tobacco, and watched him as he crawled away, with a sort of stunned surprise. And he had actually seen Nelson sit by Lady Hamilton! It was so strange,

to have that gay Italian bay, with all its memories,—the orgies of Baia, and the unburied wrecks of ancient towns, with the smoking crater far above; and the world-famous Nile-mouths, and those great old wars, big with the destinies of the world; and those great old heroes, with their awful deeds for good and evil, all brought so suddenly and livingly before us, up there in the desolate moorland, where the deer, and birds, and heath, and rushes, were even as they had been from the beginning. Like Wordsworth with his *Leech-Gatherer*, (a poem which we, in spite of laughter, will rank among his very highest.)—

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,  
The old man's shape, and speech—all troubled me:  
In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace  
About the weary moors continually,  
Wandering about alone and silently.

Just then we heard a rustle, and turning, saw Claude toiling down to us over the hill-side. He joined us, footsore and weary, but in great excitement; for the first minute or two he could not speak, and at last,—

“Oh, I have seen such a sight!—but I will tell you how it all was. After I left you I met a keeper. He spoke civilly to me—you know my antipathy to game and those who live thereby, but there was a wild, bold, self-helping look about him and his gun alone there in the waste—And after all he was a man and a brother. Well, we fell into talk, and fraternized; and at last he offered to take me to a neighbouring hill and show me ‘sixty head of red-deer all together:’ and as he spoke he looked quite proud of his words. ‘I was lucky,’ he said, ‘to come just then, for in another week the stags would all have lost their heads.’ At which speech I wondered; but was silent, and followed him, I, Claude the Cockney, such a walk as I shall never take again. Behold these trousers—behold these hands! scratched to pieces by crawling on all-fours through the heather. But I saw them.”

“A sight worth many pairs of plaid trousers?”

“Worth Saint Chrysostom's seven years' nakedness on all-fours! And so I told the fellow, who by some cunning calculations about wind, and sun, and so forth, which he imparted to my uncomprehending ears, brought me suddenly to the top of a little crag, below which, some sixty yards off, the whole herd stood, stags, hinds—but I can't describe them. I have not brought away a scrap of sketch, though we watched them full ten minutes undiscovered; and then the stare, and the toss of those antlers, and the rush! That broke the spell with me; for I had been staring stupidly at them, trying in vain to take in the wonder, with the strangest new excitement heaving and boiling up in my



throat, and at the sound of their hoofs on the turf I woke, and found the keeper staring, not at them, but at me, down whose cheeks the tears were running in streams."

"'Arn't you well, sir?' said he. 'You needn't be afeard; it's only at the fall of the year the stags is wicked.'

"I don't know what I answered at first; but the fellow understood me when I shook his hand frantically and told him that I should thank him to the last day of my life, and that I would not have missed it for a thousand pounds. In part-proof whereof I gave him a sovereign on the spot, which seemed to clear my character in his eyes, as much as the crying at the sight of a herd of deer had mystified it."

"Claude, well-beloved," said we, "will you ever speak contemptuously of sportsmen any more?"

"*Do manus*, I have been vilifying them, as one does most things in the world, only for want of understanding them. I will go back to town, and take service with Edwin Landseer, as colour-grinder, footboy, anything."

"You will then be very near to a very great poet," quoth we, "and one whose works will become, as centuries roll on, more and more valuable to art, to science, and, as we think also, to civilization, and to Religion."

"I begin now to guess your meaning," answered Claude.

And thereon commenced a discussion, which it is not expedient at this time to report in *Fraser*, as it was rather a wild-goose chase for truths, in a vast, new field of thought, than any satisfactory carrying home and cooking of the same.

"So we lounged, and dreamt, and fished, in heathery Highland," as the author of *The Bothie* would say, while the summer snipes flitted whistling up the shallow before us, and the soft, southeastern clouds slid lazily across the sun, and the little trout snapped and dimpled at a tiny partridge hackle, with a twist of orange silk, whose elegance of shape and colour reconciled Claude's heart somewhat to our everlasting whipping of the water. When at last:—

"You seem to have given up catching any thing. You have not stirred a fish in these last two pools, except that little saucy yellow shrimp, who jumped over your fly, and gave a spiteful slap at it with his tail."

Too true; and what could be the cause? Had that impudent sandpiper frightened all the fish on his way up? Had an otter paralyzed them with terror for the morning? Or had a stag been down to drink? We saw the fresh slot of his broad claws, by the by, in the mud a few yards back.

"We must have seen the stag himself, if he had been here lately," said Claude.

“Mr. Landseer knows too well by this time that that is a *non sequitur*.”

“I’m no more a *non sequitur* than you are,” answered the Cornish magistrate to the barrister.

“Fish and deer, friend, see us purblind sons of men, somewhat more quickly than we see them, fear sharpening the senses. Perhaps, after all, the fault is in your staring white straw hat, a garment which has spoilt many a good day’s fishing. Ah, no! there is the cause; the hat of a mightier than you—the thunder-spirit himself. Thor is bringing home his bride; while the breeze, awe-stricken, falls dead calm before his march. Behold, climbing above that eastern ridge, his huge powdered cauliflower-wig, barred with a gray horizontal handkerchief of mist.”

“Oh, profane and uncomely simile! But what is the mystery of his bride?”

“Know you not, O Symbolist, that the law of sex, which holds good throughout all nature, is seen in the thunderstorm? Look at that vast gray ragged fan of mist which spreads up, higher and higher every moment, round the hard masses of the positively electric thunder-pillar. Those are the torn and streaming robes of that poor maiden, the negatively-electric or female cloud, whom Thor is bearing off, till some fit bridal-bed of hills shall attract him on Brendon or Oare-Oak, whereon he may fill her with his fiery might, and celebrate his nuptials in jubilant roars of thunder.”

“And then, O Bombastes, we may expect to feel the icy tears of the cold, coy maiden, pattering down in the form of a storm of hail!”

“Which is here already. Flee, oh, flee to yonder pile of crags, and thank your stars that there is one at hand! For these mountain tornadoes are at once tropic in their ferocity and Siberian in their cutting cold.”

Down it came. The brown hills vanished in white sheets of hail, first falling perpendicular, then slanting and driving furiously before the clod blast which issued from the storm. The rock above us rang with the thunder-peals, and the lightning, which might have fallen miles away, seemed to our dazzled eyes to dive into the glittering river at our feet. We sat silent some half-hour, listening to the voice of One more mighty than ourselves; and it was long after the uproar had rolled away among the hills, and a steady, sighing sheet of warmer rains, from banks of low gray fog, had succeeded the rattling of the hail upon the crisp heather, that we turned to Claude.

“And now, since your heart is softened toward these wild, stag-hunting, trout-fishing, jovial west-countrymen, we will give

you a ballad which sprung up in us once, when fishing among these very hills. It expresses feelings not yet extinct in the minds of a large portion of the lower orders, as you would know had you lived, like ourselves, all your life in poaching counties, and on the edges of one forest after another,—feelings which *must* be satisfied, even in the highest development of the civilization of the future, for they are innate in every thoughtful and energetic race,—feelings which, though they have often led to crime, have far oftener delivered from hoggish sensuality; the feelings which drove into the merry greenwood ‘Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John;’ ‘Adam Bell, and Clym of the Cleugh, and William of Cloudeslee;’ feelings which prompted one half of his inspiration to the nameless immortal who wrote the *Nutbrown Maid*,—feelings which could not then and cannot now be satisfied by the drudgery of a barbaric agriculture, which, without science, economy, or enterprise, offers no food for the higher instincts of the human mind, its yearnings after Nature and freedom, and the noble excitement of self-dependent energy. We threw it into the Scotch dialect, because it is, indeed, the classic one for such subjects, as the Doric was for certain among the Greeks; for deeply as we Southrons have felt upon these matters we are a dumb people, and our Norse brethren of the border have had to speak for us and for themselves, and monopolize the whole of our ballad literature; and though we will not go as far as Sir Walter Scott in asserting that there never was a genuine ballad written south of Tweed, there is little doubt that few ever rose above doggerel which were written south of Trent,—that is, beyond the line which bounds the impregnation of the Saxon by the more intellectual and fiery Norse race. Will you hear it?”—

Oh, I wadna be a yeoman, mither, to follow my father's trade,  
To bow my back in miry fallows over plough, and hoe, and spade.  
Stinting wife, and bairns, and kye, to fat some courtier lord,—  
Let them die o' rent wha like, mither, and I'll die by sword.

Nor I wadna be a clerk, mither, to bide aye ben,  
Scrabbling aye on sheets o' parchment with a weary, weary pen,  
Looking through the lang stane windows at a narrow strip o' sky,  
Like a laverock in a wity cage, until I pine away and die.

Nor I wadna be the merchant, mither, in his langfurred gown,  
Trailing strings o' footsore horses through the noisy, dusty town;  
Louting low to knights and ladies, fumbling o'er his wares,  
Telling lies, and scraping siller, heaping cares on cares.

Nor I wadna be a soldier, mither, to dice wi' ruffian bands,  
Pining weary months in castles, looking over wasted lands,  
Smoking byres, and shrieking women, and the grewsome sights o' war,—  
There's blood oh my hand enough, mither—it's ill to make it mair.

If I had married a wife, mither, I might ha' been douce and still,  
 And sat at hame be the ingle-side to crack and laugh my fill,  
 Sat at hame wi' the woman I looed, and bairnies at my knee,—  
 But death is bauld, and age is cauld, and luve 's no for me.

For when first I stirred in your side, mither, you ken full well  
 How you lay all night up among the deer on the open fell;  
 And so it was that I got the heart to wander far and near,  
 Caring neither for land nor lassie, but the bonny dun deer.

Yet I am not a lozel and idle, mither, nor a thief that steals;  
 I do but hunt God's cattle, upon God's ain hills:  
 For no man buys and sells the deer, and the fells are free  
 To a knight that carries hawk and spurs, and a hind like me.

So I'm aff and away to the muirs, mither, to hunt the deer,  
 Ranging far fra frowning faces, and the douce folk here;  
 Crawling up through burn and bracken, louping madly down the screes,  
 Speering out fra craig and headland, drinking up the simmer breeze.

Oh, the wafts o' heather honey, and the music o' the brae,  
 As I watch the great harts feeding, nearer, nearer a' the day!  
 Oh, to hark the eagle screaming, sweeping, ringing round the sky!—  
 That's a bonnier life than stumbling owre the muck to hog and kye!

And when I am taen and hangit, mither, a brittling o' my deer,  
 Ye'll no leave your bairn to the corbie craws to dangle in the air?  
 But ye'll send up my twa douce brethren, and ye'll steal me fra the tree,  
 And bury me up on the brown, brown muirs, where I aye loved to be.

Ye'll bury me 'twixt the brae and the burn, in a glen far away,  
 Where I may hear the heathcock crawl and the great harts bray;  
 And if my ghaist can walk, mither, I'll sit glowering at the sky,  
 The live long night on the black hill-sides where the dun deer lie.

The ballad ended, but the rain did not; and we were at last fain to leave our shelter, and let ourselves be blown by the gale (the difficulty being not to progress forward, but to keep our feet) back to the shed where our ponies were tied, and canter home to Lynmouth, with the rain cutting our faces like showers of pebbles, and our little mountain ponies staggering before the wind, with their long tails about our ears, and more than once, if Londoners will believe us, blown sheer up against the bank by some mad gust, which rushed perpendicularly, not down, but up, the vast chasms of the glens below.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE COAST LINE.

It is four o'clock on a May morning, and Claude and ourselves are just embarking on board a Clovelly trawling-skiff, which, having disposed of her fish at various ports along the Channel, is about to run leisurely homewards with an ebb tide, and a soft north-

easterly breeze; and we expect, gentle reader, the pleasure of your most polished and intellectual society. If you should prove a bad sailor, which Heaven forbid, you may still lie on deck, and listen—half-sleepy, half-envious—to our rhapsodies, and to the ruthless clatter of our knives and forks: but we will forestall no sorrows,—we will speak no words but of good omen.

So farewell, fair Lynmouth; and ye mountain storm-spirits, send us a propitious day, and dismiss those fantastic clouds which are coquetting with your thrones, crawling down one mountain face, and whirling and leaping up another, in wreaths of snow, and dun, and amber, pierced every minute by some long, glittering, upward arrow from the level sun, which gilds gray crags and downs a thousand feet above us, while underneath the mountain gorges still sleep black and cold in shade.

There, they have heard us! the cap rises off that “summer-house hill,” that eight hundred feet of upright wall, which seems ready to topple down into the nest of bemyrtled cottages at its foot; and as we sweep out into the deeper water the last mist-flake streams up from the Foreland and vanishes in white threads into the stainless blue.

“Look at the colours of that Foreland!” cried Claude, in ecstasy. “The vast, simple monotone of pearly green, broken only at intervals by blood-red stains, where the turf has slipped and left the fresh rock bare, and all glimmering softly through a delicate blue haze, like the bloom on a half-ripened plum!”

“And look, too, how the gray pebble beach is already dancing and quivering in the mirage which steams up, like the hot breath of a limekiln, from the drying stones! Talk of ‘glazings and scumblings,’ ye artists! and bungle at them as you will, what are they to Nature’s own glazings, deepening every instant there behind us?”

“Mock me not. I have walked up and down here with a humbled and a broken spirit, and had nearly forsworn the audacity of painting any thing beyond a beech stem, or a frond of fern.”

“The little infinite in them would have baffled you just as much as the only somewhat bigger infinite of the hills on which they grow.”

“Confest: and so farewell to unpaintable Lynmouth! Farewell to the charming contrast of civilized English landscape-gardening, with its villas, and its exotics, and its evergreens, thus strangely, and yet harmoniously, confronted with the mad chaos of the rocks and mountain-streams. Those grounds of Sir William Herries’s are a double paradise, the wild Eden of the Past side by side with the cultivated Eden of the Future. How its alternations of Art and Savagery at once startle and relieve the

sense, as you pass suddenly out of wildernesses of piled boulders, and torrent-shattered trees, and the roar of a hundred fern-fringed waterfalls, into 'trim walks, and fragrant alleys green,' and the door of a summer-house transports you at a step from Richmond to the Alps. Happy he who 'possesses,' as the world calls it, and happier still he whose taste could organize, that fairy bower."

So he, magniloquently, as was his wont; and yet his declamations always flowed with such a graceful ease,—a simple, smiling earnestness,—an unpractised melody of voice, that what would have been rant from other lips, from his showed only as the healthy enthusiasm of the passionate, all-seeing, all-loving artist.

But our companion the reader, has been some time gazing up at that huge boulder-strewn hill-side above us, and wondering whether the fable of the giants be not true after all,—and that "Vale of Rocks," hanging five hundred feet in air, with all its crag-castles, and tottering battlements, and colossal crumbling idols, and great blocks, which hang sloping, caught in act to fall, be not some enormous Cyclopean temple left half-disinterred.

"A fragment of old Chaos," said Claude, "left unorganized,—or, perhaps, the waste heap of the world, where, after the rest of England had been made, some angel put up a notice for his fellows, 'Dry rubbish shot here.'"

"Not so, unscientific! It is the grandfather of hills,—a fossil bone of some old continent, which stood here ages before England was. And the great earth-angel, who grinds up mountains into paint, as you do bits of ochre, for his 'Continental Sketches,' found in it the materials for a whole dark ground-tone of coal-measures, and a few hundred miles of warm high-lights, which we call New Red Sandstone.

"And what a sea-wall they are, these Exmore hills! Sheer upward from the sea a thousand feet rises the mountain range; and as we slide and stagger lazily along before the dying breeze, through the deep water which never leaves the cliff, the eye ranges, almost dizzy, up some five hundred feet of rock, dappled with every hue, from the intense black of the tide line, through the warm green and brown shadows, out of which the horizontal cracks of the strata, and the loom black, and the breeding gulls, show like lingering snow-flakes up to the middle cliff, where delicate grays fade into pink, pink into red, red into glowing purple, and the purple is streaked with glossy ivy wreaths, and black-green yews; and all the choir of colours stop abruptly on the mid-hill, to give place to one yellowish-gray sheet of upward down, sweeping smooth and unbroken, except by a lonely stone, or knot of clambering sheep, to end in one great rounded waving

line, sharp-cut against the brilliant blue. The sheep hang like white daisies upon the steep hill-side, and a solitary falcon rides a speck in air, yet far below the crest of that tall hill. Now he sinks to the cliff edge, and hangs quivering, supported like a kite, by the pressure of his breast and long-carved wings, against the breeze.

“There he hangs, the peregrine,—a true ‘falcon gentle,’ ‘sharp-notched, long-taloned, crooked-winged,’ whose uncles and cousins, ages ago, have struck at roe and crane, and sat upon the wrists of kings. And now he is full proud of any mouse or cliff-lark; like an old Chingachgook, last of the Mohicans, he lingers round ‘the hunting-field of his fathers.’” So all things end.

The old order changeth, giving place to the new;  
And God fulfils himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

“Ay, and the day shall come,” said Claude, “when the brows of that huge High-Vere shall be crowned with golden wheat, and every rock-ledge on Trentishoe, like those of Petra and the Rhine, support its garden-bed of artificial soil.”

“And when,” we answered, “the shingley sides of that great chasm of Headon’s Mouth shall be clothed with the white mulberry, and the summer limestone-skiffs shall go back freighted with fabrics which vie with the finest woof of Italy and Lyons.”

“You believe, then, in Mrs. Whitby of Lymington?”

“Seeing is believing, Claude: through laughter, and failures, and the stupidity of half-barbarous clods, she has persevered in her silk-growing, and succeeded; and we should like to *afficher* her book to the doors of every west-country squire.”

“Better require them to pass an examination in it, and several other better-known things, before they take possession of their estates. In the mean time, what is that noble conical hill, which has increased my wonder at the infinite variety of beauty which The Spirit can produce by combinations so simple as a few gray stones and a sheet of turf?”

“The Hangman.”

“An ominous name. What is its history?”

“Some sheep-stealer, they say, clambering over a wall with his booty slung round his neck, was literally *hung* by the poor brute’s struggles, and found days after on the mountain-side, a blackened corpse suspended on one side of the wall, with the sheep hanging on the other, and the ravens —. You may fill up the picture for yourself.”

But, see, as we round the Hangman, what a change of scene! The huge square-blocked sandstone cliffs dip suddenly under dark slate-beds, fantastically bent and broken by primeval earth-

quakes. Wooded combes, and broken ridges of rich pasture-land, wander and slope towards a labyrinth of bush-fringed coves, black isolated tide-rocks, and land-locked harbours. There shines among the woods the castle of Watermouth, on its lovely little salt-water loch, the safest harbour on the coast; and there is Combe-Martin, mile-long man-stye, which seven centuries of fruitless silver-mining, and of the right (now deservedly lost) of "sending a talker to the national palaver," have neither cleansed nor civilized. Turn, turn thy head away, dear reader, lest even at this distance some foul odour taint the summer airs, and complete the misfortune already presaged by that pale, sad face, sickening in the burning calm! For this great sun-roasted fire-brick of the Exmore range is fairly "burning up the breeze," and we have nothing but the tide to drift us slowly down to Ilfracombe.

Now we open Rillage, and now Hillsborough, two of the most picturesque of headlands; see how their huge round foreheads of glistening gray shale sink down into two dark, jagged moles, running far out to seaward, and tapering off, each into a long, black horizontal line, vanishing at last beneath its lace-fringe of restless hissing foam. How grand the contrast of the delicate severe lightness of those sea-lines, with the vast solid mass which rests upon them! Look, too, at the glaring lights and the Tartarean shadows of those gloomy chasms and caves, which the tide never leaves, or the foot of man explores; and hark, at every rush of the long ground-swell, mysterious mutterings, solemn sighs, sudden thunders, as of a pent-up earthquake, boom out of them across the glassy swell. Look at those blasts of delicate vapour that shoot up from hidden rifts, and hang a moment, and vanish; and those 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, for the loss of the magic raven flag, battle-worn, and sad of heart, from the fight at Appledore, to sit down and starve on "the island of Bradanrelice, which men call Flat Holms!" 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? Is it true, that when thou shalt be no more, then, too, "there shall be no more sea;" and this ocean bed, this great grave of fertility, into which all earth's



wasted riches stream, day and night, from hill and town, shall rise and become fruitful soil, corn-field and meadow-land; and earth shall teem as thick with living men, as bean-fields with the summer bees? What a consummation! At least there is One greater than sea, or time: and the Judge of all the earth will do *right*.

But there is Ilfracombe, with its rock-walled harbour, its little wood of masts within, its white terraces, rambling up the hills, and its capstone sea-walk, the finest "marine parade," as flunkydome terms it, in all England, except that splendid Hoe at Plymouth, "Lam Goemagot," Gog-magog's leap, as the old Britons called it, where Corineus —, but no, gentle Editor, we will wander no more. And there is the little isolated rock-chapel, where seven hundred years ago, our west-country forefathers used to go to pray St. Nicholas for deliverance from shipwreck, — a method lovingly regretted by Mr. Titmarsh's friend, the Rev. L. Oriel, of St. Waltheof's, as a "pious idea of the Ages of faith." Claude, however, prefers the present method of light-houses and the worthy Trinity Board, as more godly, and faithful, as well as more useful; and, we suspect, so do the sailors themselves.

But our reader is by this time nearly sick of the roasting calm, and the rolling ground-swell, and the smell of fish, and is somewhat sleepy also, between early rising and incoherent sermons; wherefore, dear reader, we advise you to stay and recruit yourself at Ilfracombe, before you proceed further with your self-elected cicerone on the grand tour of North Devon. Believe us, you will not stir from the place for a month at least. For be sure, if you are sea-sick, or heart-sick, or pocket-sick either, there is no pleasanter or cheaper place of cure (to indulge in a puff, of a species now well-nigh obsolete, the puff honest and true) than this same Ilfracombe, with its quiet nature and its quiet luxury, its rock fairy-land and its sea-walks, its downs and combes, its kind people, and, if possible, still kinder climate, which combines the soft warmth of South Devon with the bracing freshness of the Welsh mountains; where winter has slipped out of the list of the seasons, and mother Earth makes up for her summer's luxury by fasting, "not in sackcloth and ashes, but in new silk and old sack;" and instead of standing three months chin deep in ice, and christening great snowballs its "friend and family," as St. Fransis of Assisi did of old, knows no severer asceticism than tepid shower-baths, and a parasol of soft grey mist.

So farewell. True, you have seen but half North Devon. But, alas! the pages of *Fraser* are of paper, not of India-rubber; and when men write of places which they love, their ink-stream

is as the letting out of waters ; and other people are long-winded, besides Nestor and Mr. Chisholm Anstey. Wherefore our wise Editor, that intellectual Soyer, and infallible caterer for the public appetite, practised to foresee afar the slightest chance of an æsthetic surfeit, has for your sakes treated us as schoolboys treat slow-worms,—made us break off our own tail, for the pleasure of seeing it grow again.

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## PART II.

### I. MORTE.

I HAD been wandering over the southern side of Exmoor, marking my track with heaps of slaughtered trout, through a country which owes its civilization and tillage to the genius of one man, who has found stag-preserving by no means incompatible with the most magnificent agricultural improvement, among a population who still evince an unpleasant partiality for cutting and carrying farmers' crops by night without leave or license, and for housebreaking after the true classic method of Athens, by fairly digging holes through the house walls—a little nook of primeval savagery, fast reorganizing itself under the Gospel and scientific farming. I had been on Dartmoor, too ; but of that noble mountain range so much has been said and sung of late, that I really am afraid it is becoming somewhat cockney and trite. So what I have to say thereupon may well wait for another opportunity.

Opposite me at the Clarence sat Claude Mellot, just beginning to bloom again into cheerfulness, after the purgatory of the previous day in the Channel lop and the Swansea steamer, his portfolio stuffed with sketches of South Wales, which, as I told him, he might as well have left behind him, seeing that half-a-dozen of Turner's pictures have told the public as much about the scenery of Siluria as they ever need know, and ten times more than they ever will understand.

We were on the point of starting for Morte, and so round to Saunton Court and the sands beyond it, where a Clovelly trawler, which I had chartered for the occasion, had promised to send a boat on shore and take us off, provided the wind lay off the land.

But, indeed, the sea was calm as glass, the sky cloudless azure ; and the doubt was not whether we should be able to get

on board through the surf, but whether, having got on board, we should not lie till nightfall, as idle

As a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.

And now behold us on our way up lovely combes, with their green copses, and ridges of rock, and golden furze, fruit-laden orchards, and slopes of emerald pasture, pitched as steep as house-roofs, where the red long-horns are feeding, with their tails a yard above their heads, and under us, seen in bird's-eye view, the ground-plans of the little snug farms and homesteads of the Damnonii, "dwellers in the valley," as we West-countrymen were called of old. Now we are leaving them far below us; and the blue hazy sea is showing far above the serrated ridge of the Tors, and their huge bank of sunny green; and before us is a desolate table-land of rushy pastures and mouldering banks, festooned with the delicate network of the little ivy-leaved campanula, loveliest of British wild-flowers, fit with its hair-like stems and tiny bells of blue, to wreath the temples of Titania. Alas! we have passed out of the world into *limbus patrum*, and the region of ineffectuality and incompleteness. The only cultivators here, and through tens of thousands of acres in the North of Devon, are the rook and mole; and yet the land is rich enough—the fat deep crumbling of the shale and iron-stone, returning year by year into the mud, from whence it hardened ages ago. There are scores of farms of far worse land in mid-England, under "a four-course shift," yielding their load of wheat an acre. When will this land do as much? When will the spirit of Smith of Deanston, and Hewitt Davies, descend on North Devon? When will that true captain of industry, and new Theseus of the nineteenth century, Mr. Warnes of Trimmingham, teach the people here to annihilate poor-rates by growing flax upon some of the finest flax land, and in the finest flax climate, that we have in England? The shrewd Cornishmen of Launceston and Bodmin have awakened long ago to "the new gospel of fertility." When will North Devon awake?

"When landlords and farmers," said Claude, "at last acknowledge their divine vocation, and feel it a noble and holy duty to produce food for God's people of England—when they learn that to grow rushes where they might grow corn, ay, to grow four quarters of wheat where they might grow five, is to sin against God's blessings and against the English nation. No wonder that sluggards like these cry out for protection—that those who cannot take care of the land feel that they themselves need artificial care."

“We will not talk politics, Claude. The present ministry has made them *pro tempore* an extinct science. ‘Let the dead bury their dead.’ The social questions are nowadays becoming far more important than the House of Commons ones.”

“There does seem here and there,” he said, “some sign of improvement. I see the paring plough at work on one field and another.”

“Swift goes the age, and slowly crawls improvement. The greater part of that land will be only broken up to be exhausted by corn-crop after corn-crop, till it can bear no more, and the very manure which is drawn home from it in the shape of a few turnips will be wasted by every rain of heaven, and the straw probably used to mend bad places in the road with; while the land returns to twenty years of worse sterility than ever—

“Veather did zo, and gramfer did zo, and why shouldn’t Jean do the zame?” \* \* \* \* \*

“But here is Morte below us. ‘The little gray church on the windy shore,’ which once belonged to William de Tracy, one of your friend Thomas à Becket’s murderers. If you wish to vent your wrath against those who cut off your favourite Saxon hero, there is a tomb in the church which bears De Tracy’s name, over which rival Dryasdusts contend fiercely with paper-arrows: the one party asserting that he became a priest, and died here in the wilderness; the others, that the tomb is of later date, that he fled hence to Italy, under favour of a certain easy-going Bishop of Exeter, and died penitent and duly shriven, according to the attestations of a certain or uncertain bishop of Cosenza.”

“Peace be with him and with the bishop! The flight to Italy seems a very needless precaution to a man who owned this corner of the world. A bailiff would have had even less chance here than in Connemara a hundred years ago.”

“He certainly would have fed the crabs and rock-cod in two hours after his arrival. Nevertheless, I believe the Cosenza story is the safer one.”

“Tweedledum is sometimes slightly superior to Tweedledee. But what a chaos of rock-ridges!—old starved mother Earth’s bare-worn ribs and joints peeping out through every field and down; and on three sides of us the sullen thunder of the unseen surge. What a place for some ‘gloom-pampered man’ to sit and misanthropize!”

“Morte, says the Devonshire proverb, is the place on earth which heaven made last, and the devil will take first.”

“All the fitter for a misanthrope. But where are the trees? I have not seen one for the last four miles.”

“Nor will you for a few miles more. Whatever will grow

here (and most things will) they will not, except, at least, hereafter the sea-pine of the Biscay shore. You would know why, if you had ever felt a southwesterly gale here, when the foam-flakes are flying miles inland, and you are fain to cling breathless to bank and bush, if you want to get one look at those black fields of shark's-tooth tide-rocks, champing and churning the great green rollers into snow. Wild folk are these here, gatherers of shell-fish and laver, and merciless to wrecked vessels, which they consider as their own by immemorial usage, or rather right divine. Significant, how an agricultural people is generally as cruel to wrecked seamen as a fishing one is merciful. I could tell you twenty stories of the baysmen down there to the westward risking themselves like very heroes to save strangers' lives, and beating off the labouring folk who swarmed down for plunder from the inland hills."

"Knowledge, you see, breeds sympathy and love. But what a merciless coast!"

"Hardly a winter without a wreck or two. You see there lying about the timbers of more than one tall ship. You see, too, that black rock a-wash far out at sea, apparently a submarine outlier of the north horn of this vast rock-amphitheatre below us. That is the Morte stone, the 'Death-rock,' as the Normans christened it of old; and it does not belie its name even now. See how, even in this calm, it hurls up its column of spray at every wave; and then conceive being entrapped between it and the cliffs, on some blinding, whirling winter's night, when the land is shrouded thick in clouds, and the roar of the breakers hardly precedes by a minute the crash of your bows against the rocks."

"I never think, on principle, of things so painful, and yet so irrelievable. Yet why does not your much-admired Trinity House erect a light there?"

"So ask the sailors; for it is indeed one of the gateway-jambes of the Channel, and the deep water and the line of coast tempts all craft to pass as close to it as possible."

"Look at the noble sheet of yellow sand below us now, banked to the inland with sandhills and sunny downs, and ending abruptly at the foot of that sombre wall of slatehill, which runs out like a huge pier into the sea some two miles off."

"That is Woollacombe; but here on our right is a sight worth seeing. Every gully and creek there among the rocks is yellow, but not with sand. Those are shells, the sweepings of the ocean bed for miles around, piled there, millions upon millions yards deep, in every stage of destruction. There they lie grinding to dust; and every gale brings in fresh myriads from the inexhaustible sea-world, as if Death could be never tired of devouring, or

God of making. The brain grows dizzy and tired, as one's feet crunch over the endless variety of their forms—and then one recollects that every one of them has been a living thing—a whole history of birth, and growth, and propagation, and death. Waste it cannot be, or cruelty on the part of the Maker, but why this infinite development of life, apparently only to furnish out of it now and then a cartload of shellsand to these lazy farmers?"

"After all, there is not so much life in all those shells put together as in one little child, and *it* may die the hour that it is born! What we call life is but appearance; the true life belongs only to spirits. And whether or not we, or the sea-shell there, are at any given moment helping to make up part of some pretty little pattern in this kaleidoscope called earth; yet 'in the spirit all live to Him, and shall do so for ever.'"

And thereon he rambled off into a long lecture on "species-spirits," and "individual-spirits," and "personal-spirits," doubtless most important. But I, what between the sun, the luncheon, and the metaphysic, sank into soft slumbers, from which I was only awakened by the carriage stopping, according to our order, on the top of Saunton hill.

We left the fly, and wandered down towards the old gabled "court," nestling amid huge walnuts in its southward glen; while before us spread a panorama, half sea, half land, than which, perhaps our England owns no lovelier.

At our feet was a sea of sand—for the half-mile to the right smooth as a floor, bounded by a broad band of curling waves, which crept slowly shorewards with the advancing tide. Right underneath us the sand was drifted for miles into fantastic hills, which quivered in the heat, the glaring yellow of its lights checkered by delicate pink shadows and sheets of gray-green bent. To the left were rich alluvial marshes, covered with red cattle sleeping in the sun, and laced with creeks and flowery dykes; and here and there a scarlet line, which gladdened Claude's eye as being "a bit of positive colour in the foreground," and ours, because they were draining-tiles. Beyond again, two broad tide-rivers, spotted with white and red brown sails, gleamed like avenues of silver, past knots of gay dwellings, and tall lighthouses, and church-towers, and wandered each on its own road, till they vanished among the wooded hills. On the eastern horizon the dark range of Exmoor sank gradually into lower and more broken ridges, which rolled away, woodland beyond woodland, till all outlines seem lost in purple haze; while, far beyond, the granite peaks of Dartmoor hung like a delicate blue cloud, and enticed the eye away into infinity. From thence, as our eyes swept

round the horizon, the broken hills above the river's mouth gradually rose into the table-land of the "barren coal-measures" some ten miles off,—a long straight wall of cliffs which bounded the broad bay, buried in deepest shadow, except where the opening of some glen revealed far depths of sunlit wood. A faint perpendicular line of white houses, midway along the range, marked our destination; and far to the westward, the land ended sheer and suddenly at the cliffs of Hartland, the "Promontory of Hercules," as the old Romans called it, to reappear some ten miles out in the Atlantic, in the blue flat-topped island of Lundy, so exactly similar in height and form to the opposite cape, that it required no scientific imagination to supply the vast gap which the primæval currents had sawn out. There it all lay beneath us like a map; its thousand hues toned down harmoniously into each other by the summer haze, and "the eye was not filled with seeing," nor the spirit with the intoxicating sight of infinitely various life and form in perfectest repose.

I was the first to break the silence.

"Claude, well-beloved, will you not sketch a little?"

No answer.

"Not even rhapsodize? call it 'lovely, exquisite, grand, majestic?' There are plenty of such words in worldings' mouths—not a young lady but would burst out with some enthusiastic commonplace at such a sight—surely one or other of them must be appropriate."

"Silence, profane! and take me away from this. Let us go down, and hide our stupidities among those sandhills, and so forget the whole. What use standing here to be maddened by this tantalizing earth-spirit, who shows us such glorious things, and will not tell us what they mean?"

So down we went upon the "burrows" among the sands, which hid from us every object but their own chaotic curves and mounds. Above, a hundred skylarks made the air ring with carollings; strange and gaudy plants flecked the waste round us, and myriads of the great spurge-moth, only found upon those burrows, whirred like humming-birds over our heads, or hung poised with their pink and grey wings outspread on the tall stalks of marram grass. All at once a cloud hid the sun, and a summer whirlwind, presage of the thunder-storm, swept past us, carrying up with it a column of dry sand, and rattling the dry bents over our heads.

"What a chill, doleful sigh comes from those reeds!" said Claude. "I can conceive this desert, beneath a driving winter's sky instead of this burning azure, one of the most desolate places on the earth."

"It inspired, once at least," I answered, "verses melancholy enough. The man who wrote them would not finish them; for when the sadness was past, he thought it a sin, as I do, to turn on the 'Werterian' tap of malice prepense. But you shall have the verses, to cool you, as we lie roasting here, with a few wintry thoughts."

Wearily stretches the sand to the surge, and the surge to the cloudland;  
 Wearily onward I ride, watching the wild wave alone.  
 Not as of old, like Homeric Achilles, *κῦδεῖ γάϊων*,  
 Joyous knight-errant of God, thirsting for labour and strife;  
 No more on magical steed borne free through the regions of ether,  
 But, like the poor hack I ride, selling my sinew for gold.  
 Fruit-bearing autum is gone; let the sad quiet winter hang o'er me—  
 What were the spring to a soul laden with sorrow and shame?  
 Green leaves would fret me with beauty; my heart has no time to bepraise them;  
 Gray rock, bough, surge, cloud—these wake no yearnings within,  
 Sing not, thou skylark above! even angels pass hushed by the weeper!  
 Scream on, ye sea-fowl! my heart echoes your desolate cry.  
 Sweep the dry sand on, thou sad wind, to drift o'er the shell and the sea-weed;  
 Sea-weed and shell, like my dreams, swept down the pitiless tide.  
 Just is the wave which uptore us; 'tis Nature's own law which condemns us;  
 Woe to the weak who, in pride, build on the faith of the sand!  
 Joy to the oak of the mountain, he trusts to the might of the rock-clefts;  
 Deeply he mines, and in peace feeds on the wealth of the stone.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Amen!" answered Claude; "and health and long life, in spite of all false quantities, to the exquisite old elegiac metre, like, as Coleridge says,—

The rise of the fountain's silvery column,  
 In the pentameter aye falling in melody back.

But I hear a halloo from the shore; there are our boatmen waiting for us."

"Ay, desolate enough," I said, as we walked down beyond the tide-mark, over the vast fields of ribbed and splashy sands, "when the dead shells are rolling and crawling up the beach in wreaths before the gale, with a ghastly rattle as of the dry bones in the 'Valley of Vision,' and when not a flower shows on that sandcliff, which is now one broad bed of yellow, scarlet, and azure."

"That is the first spot in England," said Claude, "except, of course, 'the meads of golden king-cups,' where I have seen wild flowers give a tone to the colouring of the whole landscape, as they are said to do in the prairies of Texas. And look how flowers and cliff are both glowing in a warm green haze, like that of Cuypp's wonderful sandcliff picture in the Dulwich Gallery, wonderful, as I think, and true—let Mr. Ruskin revile it as much as he will."



“Strange, that you should have quoted that picture here; its curious resemblance to this very place first awoke in me, years ago, a living interest in landscape-painting. But look there; even in these grand summer days there is a sight before us sad enough. There are the ribs of some ill-fated ship, a man-of-war, too, as the story goes, standing like huge black fangs, half-buried in the sand. And off what are those two ravens rising, stirring up with their great obscene wings a sickly, putrescent odour? A corpse?”

No, it was not a corpse; but the token of many corpses. A fragment of some ship; its gay green paint and half-effaced gilding contrasting mockingly with the long ugly feathered barnacle-shells, which clustered on it, rotting into slime beneath the sun, and torn and scattered by the greedy beaks of the ravens.

“In what tropic tornado, or on what coral-key of the Bahamas, months ago, to judge by those barnacles, did that tall ship go down? How long has this scrap of wreck gone wandering down the Gulf-stream, from Newfoundland to the Azores, from the Azores to Biscay, from Biscay hitherward on its homeless voyage past the Norwegian shore? And who were all those living men who ‘went down to Hades, even many stalwart souls of heroes,’ to give no sign until the sea shall render up her dead?”

“And every one of them,” said Claude, “had a father, and mother!—a wife, perhaps, and children, waiting for him!—at least a whole human life, childhood, boyhood, manhood, in him! All those years of toil and education, to get him so far on his life-voyage; and here is the end thereof!”

“Say rather, the beginning thereof, Claude,” we answered, stepping into the boat. “This wreck is but a torn scrap of the chrysalis-cocoon; we may meet the butterflies themselves hereafter.”

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“And now we are on board; and alas! some time before the breeze will be so. Take care of that huge boom landsman Claude, swaying and sweeping backwards and forwards across the deck, unless you wish to be knocked overboard. Take care, too, of that loose rope’s end, unless you wish to have your eyes cut out. Take my advice, lie down here across the deck, as I am doing. Cover yourself with great coats, like an Irishman, to keep yourself cool, and let us meditate a little on this strange thing, and strange place, which holds us now.

“Look at those spars, how they creak and groan with every heave of the long glassy swell. How those sails flap, and thunder, and rage, with useless outcries and struggles—only because they are idle. Let the wind take them, and they will be steady,

silent in an instant—their deafening, dissonant grumbling exchanged for the soft victorious song of the breeze through the rigging, musical, self-contented, as of bird on bough. So it is through life, Claude; there is no true rest but labour. ‘No true misery,’ as Carlyle says, ‘but in that of not being able to work.’ You may call it a pretty conceit. I call it a great world-wide law, which reaches from earth to heaven. Whatever the Preacher may have thought it in a moment of despondency, what is it but a blessing that ‘sun, and wind, and rivers, and ocean,’ as he says, and ‘all things, are full of labour—man cannot utter it.’ This sea which bears us would rot and poison, did it not sweep in and out here twice a-day in swift, refreshing current; nay, more, in the very water which laps against our bows troops of glossy-limbed negro girls may have hunted the purblind shark in West Indian harbours, beneath glaring white-walled towns, with their rows of green jalousies, and cocoa-nuts, and shaddock groves. For on those white sands there to our left, year by year, are washed up foreign canes, cassia beans, and tropic seeds; and sometimes, too, the tropic ocean snails, with their fragile shells of amethystine blue, come floating in mysteriously in fleets from the far west out of the passing Gulf-stream, where they have been sailing out their little life, never touching shore or ground, but buoyed each by his cluster of air-bubbles, pumped in at will under the skin of his tiny foot, by some cunning machinery of valves—small creatures truly, but very wonderful to men who have learned to reverence not merely the size of things, but the wisdom of their idea,—raising strange longings and dreams about that submarine ocean world which stretches, teeming with richer life than this terrestrial one, away, away there westward, down the path of the sun, toward the future centre of the world’s destiny.

“Wonderful ocean-world! three fifths of our planet! Can it be true that no rational beings are denizens there? Science is severely silent—having as yet seen no mermaids—our captain there forward is not silent—if he has not seen them, plenty of his friends have. The young man here has been just telling me that it was only last month one followed a West Indiaman right across the Atlantic. ‘For,’ says he, ‘there must be mermaids, and such-like. Do you think God would have made all that there water only for the herrings and mackerel?’”

We do not know, Tom; but we, too, suspect not; and we do know that honest men’s guesses are sometimes found by science to have been prophecies, and that there is no smoke without fire, and few universal legends without their nucleus of fact. After all, those sea-ladies are too lovely a dream to part with in a

hurry, at the mere despotic fiat of stern old Dame Analysis, divine and reverend as she is. Why, like Keats's Lamia,

Must all charms flee  
At the mere touch of cold Philosophy,

who will not even condescend to be awe-struck at the new wonders which she herself reveals daily? Perhaps, too, according to the Duke of Wellington's great dictum, that each man must be the best judge in his own profession,—sailors may know best whether mermaids exist or not. Besides, was it not here on Croyde Sands, abreast of us, this very last summer, that a maiden—by which beautiful old word West-country people still call young girls—was followed up the shore by a mermaid who issued from the breakers, green-haired, golden-combed, and all; and, fleeing home, took to her bed and died, poor thing! of sheer terror in the course of a few days, persisting in her account of the monster? True, the mermaid may have been an overgrown Lundy Island seal, carried out of his usual haunts by spring-tides and a school of fish. Be it so. Lundy and its seals are wonderful enough in all reason to thinking men, as it looms up there out of the Atlantic with its two great square headlands, not twenty miles from us, in the white summer haze. We will go there some day, Claude, and pick up a wild tale or two about it, which we will some day report also to the readers of *Fraser*, if time and space (“No gods,” as Lange says, but very stubborn, unyielding brute Titans nevertheless) allow us.

But, lo! a black line creeps up the western horizon. Tom, gesticulating, swears that he sees “a billow break.” True, there they come; the great white horses, that “champ, and chafe, and toss in the spray.” That long-becalmed trawler to seaward fills, and heels over, and begins to tug and leap, like an impatient horse, at the weight of her heavy trawl. Five minutes more, and the breeze will be down upon us. The young men whistle openly to woo it; the old father thinks such a superstition somewhat beneath both his years and his religion, but cannot help pursing up his lips into a sly “whe-eugh” when he has got well forward out of sight.

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Five long minutes; there is a breath of air; a soft, distant murmur; the white horses curve their necks, and dive and vanish, and rise again like snowy porpoises, nearer, and nearer, and nearer. Father and sons are struggling with that raving, riotous, drunken squaresail forward; while we, according to our weakness, haul away upon the mainsheet.

When will it come? It is dying back—sliding past us. “Hope

deferred maketh the heart sick." No, louder and nearer swells "the voice of many waters," "the countless laugh of ocean," like the mirth of ten thousand girls, before us, behind us, round us; and the oily swells darken into crisp velvet-green, till the air strikes us and heels us over, and leaping, plunging, thrashing our bows into the seas, we spring away close-hauled upon the ever-freshening breeze, and Claude is holding on by ropes and bulwarks, and I, whose "sea-legs" have not yet forgot their craft, am swinging like a pendulum as I pace the deck, enjoying, as the Norse vikings would have called it, "the gallop of the flying sea-horse, and the shiver of her tawny wings."

Exquisite motion! more maddening than the smooth floating stride of the race-horse, or the crash of the thorn-hedges before the stalwart hunter, or the swaying of the fir-boughs in the gale, when we used to climb as schoolboys after the lofty hawk's-nest; but not so maddening as the new motion of our age—the rush of the express-train on the Great Western, when the live iron pants, and leaps, and roars, through the long chalk cutting, and white mounds gleam cold a moment against the sky and vanish; and rocks, and grass, and bushes, fleet by in dim blended lines; and the long hedges revolve like the spokes of a gigantic wheel; and far below, meadows, and streams, and homesteads, with all their lazy auld-warld life open for an instant, and then rush away! and awe-struck, silent, choked with the mingled sense of pride and helplessness, we are swept on by that great pulse of England's life-blood, rushing down her iron veins; and dimly out of the future looms the fulfilment of our primæval mission, to conquer and subdue the earth,—and space, too, and time, and all things,—even, hardest of all tasks, *yourselves*, my cunning brothers; ever learning some fresh lesson, except that hardest one of all, that it is *the Spirit of God which giveth you understanding*.

"Yes, great railroads, and great railroad age, who would exchange you, with all your sins, for any other time? For swift as rushes matter, more swiftly rushes mind,—more swiftly still rushes the heavenly dawn up the eastern sky. 'The night is far spent, the day is at hand.' 'Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching!'"

"But come, my poor Claude, I see you are too sick for such deep subjects, so let us while away the time by picking the brains of this tall, handsome boy at the helm, who is humming a love-song to himself *sotto voce*, lest it should be overheard by the gray-headed father, who is forward, poring over his Wesleyan hymn-book. He will have something to tell you; he has a soul in him looking out of those wild dark eyes, and delicate aquiline

features of his. He is no spade-drudge or bullet-headed Saxon clod; he has in his veins the blood of Danish rovers and passionate southern Milesians, who came hither from Teffrobani, the Isle of Summer, as the old Fenic myths inform us. Come and chat with him. You dare not stir? Well, perhaps you are in the right. I shall go and fraternize, and bring you reports.

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“Well, he has been, at all events, ‘*up the Straits,*’ as the Mediterranean voyage is called here, and seen ‘Palermey’ and the Sicilians. But for his imagination, I confess that what seems to have struck it most was that it was a fine place for Jack, for a man could get *mools* there for a matter of three half pence a-day.”

“And was that all you got out of him?” asked Claude, sickly and sulkily.

“Oh, you must not forget the halo of glory and excitement which in a sailor’s eyes surrounds the delights of horseback! But he gave me besides a long glowing account of the catechism which they had there, three quarters of a mile long.”

“Pope Pius’s Catechism, I suppose?”

“So thought I, at first; but it appeared that all the dead of the city were arranged therein, dried and dressed out in their finest clothes, ‘every sect and age,’ as Tom said, ‘by itself, as natural as life;’ whence I opine that he means some catacombs or other.”

Poor Claude could not even get up a laugh; but his sorrows were coming swiftly to an end. The rock clefts grew sharper and sharper before us. The soft masses of the huge bank of wooded cliff rose higher and higher. The white houses of Clovelly, piled stair above stair up the rocks, gleamed more and more brightly out of the green round bosoms of the forest, as we shut in headland after headland; and one tall conical rock after another darkened with its black pyramid the bright orb of the setting sun. Soon we began to hear the soft murmur of the snowy surf line, then the merry voices of the children along the shore; and running straight for the cliff-foot beneath a towering wall of mountain we slipped into the little pier, from whence the red-sailed herring-boats were swarming forth like bees out of a hive, full of gay handsome faces, and all the busy blue-jacketed life of seaport towns, to their night’s fishing in the bay.

## II. CLOVELLY.

A couple of days had passed, and I was crawling up the paved stairs inaccessible to cart or carriage, which are flatteringly denominated “Clovelly Street,” a landing-net full of shells in one

hand, and a couple of mackerel lines in the other; behind me a sheer descent, roof below roof, at an angle of  $75^{\circ}$ , to the pier and bay, 200 feet below, and in front of me, another hundred feet above, a green amphitheatre of oak, and ash, and larch, shutting out all but a narrow slip of sky, across which the low, soft, formless mist, was crawling, opening every instant to show some gap of intense dark rainy blue, and send down a hot vaporous gleam of sunshine upon the white cottages, with their gray steaming roofs, and bright green railings, packed one above another upon the ledges of the cliff; and on the tall tree-fuchsias and gaudy dahlias in the little scraps of court-yard, calling the rich faint odour out of the verbenas and jessamines, and, alas! out of the herring-heads and tails, also, as they lay in the rivulet; and lighting up the wings of the gorgeous butterflies, almost unknown in our colder eastern climate, which fluttered from woodland down to garden, and from garden up to woodland, and seemed to form the connecting link between that swarming hive of human industry and the deep wild woods in which it was embosomed. So up I was crawling, to dine off gurnards of my own catching,—excellent fish, despised by deluded Cockneys, who fancy that because its head is large and prickly, therefore its flesh is not as firm, and sweet, and white, as that of any cod who ever gobbled shell-fish,—when down the stair front of me, greasy as ice from the daily shower, came, slipping and staggering, my friend Claude, armed with camp-stool and portfolio.

“Where have you been wandering to-day?” I asked. “Have you yet been as far as the park, which, as I told you, would supply such endless subjects for your pencil?”

“Not I. I have been roaming up and down this same ‘New Road’ above us, and find there materials for a good week’s more work, if I could afford it. Indeed, it was only to-day, for the first time, that I got as far as the lodge at the end of it, and then was glad enough to turn back, shuddering at the first glimpse of the flat, dreary moorland beyond,—as Adam may have turned back into Eden after a peep out of the gates of Paradise.”

“You should have taken courage, and gone a half-mile further,—to the furze-grown ruins of a great Roman camp, which gives its name to the place, ‘Clovelly,’—*Vallum Clausum*, or *Vallis Clausa*, as antiquarians derive it; perhaps, ‘the hidden camp,’ or glen,—perhaps something else. Who cares? The old Romans were there, at least, ten thousand strong; and some sentimental tribune or other of them had taste enough to perch his summer-house out on a comical point of the Hartland Cliffs, now tumbling into the sea, tessellated pavement, baths, and all. And strange work, I doubt not, went on in that lonely nook,

looking out over the Atlantic swell,—nights and days fit for Petronius's own pen, among a seraglio of dark Celtic beauties. It has been—perhaps it was well that it should be; and even in it there was a use and meaning, doubt not, else why was it permitted? But they are past like a dream, those ten thousand stalwart men, who looked far and wide over the Damnonian moors from a station which would be, even in these days, a first-rate military position. Gone, too, are the old Saxon Franklins who succeeded. Old Wrengils, or some such name, whoever he was, at last found some one's bill too hard for his brainpan; and there he lies on the hill above, in his 'barrow' of Wrinklebury. And gone, too, the gay Norman squire, who, as tradition says, kept his fair lady in the old watchtower, on the highest point of the White Cliff,—'Gallantry Bower,' as they call it to this day, now a mere ring of turf-covered stones, and a few low stunted oaks, shorn by the Atlantic blasts into the shape of two huge cannon, which form a favourite landmark for the fishermen of the bay. Gone they all are, Cymry and Roman, Saxon and Norman; and upon the ruins of their accumulated labour we stand here. Each of them had his use,—planted a few more trees or cleared a few more, tilled a fresh scrap of down, organized a scrap more of chaos. Who dare wish the tide of improvement, which has been flowing for nineteen centuries, swifter and swifter still as it goes on, to stop, just because it is not convenient to us just now to move on? It will not take another nineteen hundred years, be sure, to make even this lovely nook as superior to what it is now, as it is now to the little knot of fishing-huts where naked Britons peeped out, trembling, at the iron tramp of each insolent legionary from the camp above. It will not take another nineteen hundred years to develop the capabilities of this place,—to make it the finest fishery in England next to Torbay,—the only safe harbour of refuge for West Indiamen, along sixty miles of ruthless coast, and a commercial centre for a vast tract of half-tilled land within, which only requires means of conveyance to be as fertile and valuable as nine-tenths of England. You ought to have seen that deer-park, Claude. The panorama from that old ruined 'bower' of cliff and woodland, down and sea, is really unique in its way."

"So is the whole place, in my eyes. I have seen nothing in England to be compared with this little strip of semi-tropic paradise between two great waste worlds of sea and moor. Lynmouth might be matched among the mountains of Wales and Ireland. The first three miles of the Rheidol, from the Devil's Bridge towards Aberystwith, or the gorge of the Wye, down the opposite watershed of the same mountains, from Castle Dufferin

down to Rhaiadyr, are equal to it in magnificence of form and colour, and superior in size. But I question whether any thing ever charmed me more than did the return to the sounds of nature which greeted me to-day, as I turned back from the dreary, silent moorland turnpike, into this magnificent new road, terraced along the cliffs and woods (those who first thought of cutting it must have had souls in them above the herd,) and listened to a glorious concert in four parts, blending and supporting each other in the most exquisite harmony, from the shrill treble of a thousand birds, and the soft melancholy alto of the moaning woods, downward through the rich tenor hum of innumerable insects, that hung like sparks of fire beneath the glades of oak, to the base of the unseen surge below,

Whose deep and dreadful organ-pipe

far below me contrasted strangely with the rich soft inland character of the deep woods, luxuriant ferns, and gaudy flowers. It is that very contrast which makes the place so unique. One is accustomed to connect with the notion of the sea, bare cliffs, breezy downs, stunted shrubs struggling for existence; and instead of them behold a forest-wall five hundred feet high, of almost semi-tropic luxuriance. At one turn, a deep glen, with its sea of green woods, filled up at the mouth with the bright azure sheet of ocean.—Then some long stretch of the road would be banked up on one side with crumbling rocks, festooned with heath, and golden hawkweed, and London pride, like velvet cushions covered with pink lace, and beds of white bramble blossom alive with butterflies; while above my head, and on my right, the delicate cool canopy of oak and birch leaves shrouded me so close, that I could have fancied myself miles inland, buried in some glen unknown to any wind of heaven, but that everywhere, between green sprays and gray stems, gleamed that same boundless ocean blue, seeming from the height at which I was, to mount into the very sky. It looked but a step out of the leafy covert into blank infinity. And then, as the road wound round some point, one's eye could fall down, down, through the abyss of perpendicular wood, tree below tree clinging to and clothing the cliff, or rather no cliff, but perpendicular sheet of deep wood sedge, and enormous crown ferns, spreading their circular fans.—But there is no describing them, or painting them either.—And then to see how the midday sunbeams leapt past one down the abyss, throwing out here a gray stem by one point of burnished silver, there a hazel branch by a single leaf of glowing golden green, shooting long bright arrows down, down, through the dim, hot, hazy atmosphere of the wood, that steamed up like a vapour-



bath, till it rested at last upon the dappled beach of pink and gray pebbles, and the dappled surge which wandered up and down among them, and broke up into richer intricacy, with its chequer-work of woodland shadows, the restless net of snowy foam."

"You must be fresh from reading Mr. Ruskin's book, Claude, to be able to give birth to such a piece of complex magniloquence as that last period of yours."

"Why, I saw all that, and ten thousand things more; and yet do you complain of me for having tried to put one out of all those thousand things into words? And what do you mean by sneering at Mr. Ruskin? Are there not in his books more and finer passages of descriptive poetry—word-painting—call them what you will, than in any other prose book in the English language?"

"Not a doubt of it, my dear Claude; but it will not do for every one to try Mr. Ruskin's tools. Neither you nor I possess that almost Roman severity, that stern precision of conception and expression, which enables him to revel in the most gorgeous language, without ever letting it pall upon the reader's taste by affectation or over-lusciousness. His style is like the very hills along which you have been travelling, whose woods enrich, without enervating, the grand simplicity of their forms."

"The comparison is just," said Claude. "Mr. Ruskin's style, like those very hills, and like, too, the glorious Norman cathedrals of which he is so fond, is rather magnified than concealed by the innumerable multiplicity of its ornamental chasing and colouring."

"And is not that," I asked, "the very highest achievement of artistic style?"

"Doubtless. The severe and grand simplicity, of which folks talk so much, is great indeed, but only the greatest as long as men are still ignorant of Nature's art of draping her forms with colour, chiaroscuro, ornament, not at the expense of the original design, but in order to perfect it by making it appeal to every faculty, instead of those of form and size alone."

"Still you will allow the beauty of a bare rock, a down, a church spire, a sheet or line of horizontal water,—their necessity to the completion of a landscape. I recollect well having the value of a stern straight line in Nature brought home to me, when, during a long ride in the New Forest, after my eye had become quite dulled and wearied with the monotonous softness of rolling lawns, feathery heath, and rounded oak and beech woods, I suddenly caught sight of the sharp peaked roof of Rhinefield Lodge, and its row of tall stiff poplar-spires, cutting the endless

sea of curves. The relief to the eye was delicious. I really believe it heightened the pleasure with which I reined in my mare for a chat with old Toomer the keeper, and the glorious bloodhound who eyed me from between his master's legs."

"I can well believe it. Simple lines in a landscape are of the same value as the naked parts of a richly-clothed figure. They act both as contrasts, and as indications of the original substratum of the figure; but to say that severe simplicity is the highest ideal is mere pedantry and Manicheism."

"Oh, every thing is Manicheism with you, Claude!"

"And no wonder, while the world is as full of it now as it was in the thirteenth century. But let that pass. This craving after so-called classic art, whether it be Manicheism or not, is certainly a fighting against God,—a contempt of every thing which he has taught us artists since the introduction of Christianity. I abominate this setting up of Sculpture above Painting, of the Greeks above the Italians,—as if all Eastern civilization, all Christian truth, had taught Art nothing,—as if there was not more real beauty in a French cathedral or a Venetian palazzo than in a dozen Parthenons, and more soul in one Raffaele, or Titian either, than in all the Greek statutes of the Tribune or Vatican."

"You have changed your creed, I see, and, like all converts, are somewhat fierce and fanatical. You used to believe in Zeuxis and Parrhasius in old times."

"Yes, as long as I believed in Fuseli's *Lectures*; but when I saw at Pompeii the ancient paintings which still remain to us, my faith in their powers received its first shock; and when I re-read in the *Lectures* of Fuseli and his school all their extravagant praises of the Greek painters, and separated their few facts fairly out from among the floods of rant on which they floated, I came to the conclusion that the ancients knew as little of colour or chiaroscuro as they did of perspective, and as little of spiritual expression as they did of landscape-painting. What do I care for the birds pecking at Zeuxis's grapes, or Zeuxis himself trying to draw back Parrhasius's curtain? Imitative art is the lowest trickery. There are twenty men in England now capable of the same sleight of hand; and yet these are recorded as the very highest triumphs of ancient art by the only men who have handed down to us any record of it."

"Well, when you have said your say, and eaten your luncheon, let us start forth again together, and see the coast-line to the westward, which you will find strangely different, though quite as charming in its way as the scenery with which you have been already so enraptured."

## PART III.

## CLOVELLY.

WHERE were we at the end of our last number? Preparing to start for the coast to the westward of Clovelly. Exactly; so here recommences my story. Claude and I went forth along the cliffs of a park, which though not of the largest, is certainly of the loveliest, in England,—perhaps unique, from that abrupt contact of the richest inland scenery with the open sea, which is its distinctive feature. As we wandered along the edge of the cliff, beneath us on our left lay wooded valleys, lawns spotted with deer, huge timber trees, oak and beech, birch and alder, growing as full and round-headed as if they had been buried in some Shropshire valley fifty miles inland, instead of having the Atlantic breezes all the winter long sweeping past a few hundred feet above their still seclusion. Glens of forest wound away into the high inner land, with silver burns sparkling here and there under their deep shadows; while from the lawns beneath the ground sloped rapidly upwards towards us, to stop short in a sheer wall of cliff, over which the deer were leaning to crop the shoots of ivy, where the slipping of a stone would have sent them 400 feet perpendicular into the sea. On our right, from our very feet, the sea spread out to the horizon; a single falcon was wheeling about the ledges below; a single cormorant was fishing in the breakers, diving and rising again like some tiny water-beetle;

The murmuring surge  
That on the unnumbered pebbles idly chafed  
Could not be heard so high.

The only sound besides the rustle of the fern before the startled deer was the soft mysterious treble of the wind as it swept over the face of the cliff beneath us; but the cool air was confined to the hill-tops round; beneath, from within a short distance of the shore, the sea was shrouded in soft summer haze. The far Atlantic lay like an ocean of white wool, out of which the Hartland Cliffs and the highest point of Lundy just showed their black peaks. Here and there the western sun caught one white bank of mist after another, and tinged them with glowing gold; while nearer us long silvery zigzag tide-lines, which I could have fancied the tracks of water-fairies, wandered away under the smoky gray-brown shadows of the fog, and seemed to vanish hundreds of miles off into an infinite void of space, so completely was all notion of size or distance destroyed by the soft gradations of the mist. Suddenly, as we stood watching, a

breeze from the eastward dived into the basin of the bay, swept the clouds out, packed them together, rolled them over each other, and hurled them into the air miles high in one vast Cordillera of snow mountains, sailing slowly out into the Atlantic; and instead of the chaos of mist, the whole amphitheatre of cliffs, with their gay green woods, and spots of bright red marl and cold black iron-stone, and the gleaming white sands of Braunton, and the hills of Exmoor bathed in sunshine—so near and clear we almost fancied we could see the pink heather-hue upon them; and the bay one vast rainbow, ten miles of flame-colour and purple, emerald and ultra-marine, flecked with a thousand spots of flying snow. You may believe or not, readers of *Fraser*, but we saw it then, not for the first time, or the last, please God. No one knows what gigantic effects of colours even our temperate zone can show till they have been in Devonshire and Cornwall; and last, but not least, Ireland—the Emerald Isle, in truth. No stay-at-home knows the colour of the sea till he has seen the West of England; and no one, either stay-at-home or traveller, I suspect, knows what the colour of a green field can be till he has seen it among the magic smiles and tears of an Irish summer shower in county Down.

Down we wandered from our height through “trim walks and alleys green,” where the arbutus and gum-cistus fringed the cliffs, and through the deep glades of the park, towards the delicious little cove which bounds it.—A deep crack in the wooded hills, an old mill half-buried in rocks and flowers, a stream tinkling on from one rock-basin to another towards the beach, a sandy lawn gay with sea-side flowers over which wild boys and bare-footed girls were trotting their ponies with panniers full of sand, and as they rattled back to the beach for a fresh load, standing upright on the backs of their steeds, with one foot in each pannier, at full trot over rocks and stones where a landsman would find it difficult to walk on his own legs.

Enraptured with the place and people, Claude pulled out his sketch-book and sat down.

“What extraordinary rocks!” said he at length. “How different from those Cyclopean blocks and walls along the Exmoor cliffs are these rich brown purple and olive iron-stone layers, with their sharp serrated lines and polished slabs, set up on edge, snapped, bent double, twisted into serpentine curves, every sheet of cliff scored with sharp parallel lines at some fresh fantastic angle!”

“Yes, Claude, there must have been strange work here when all these strata were being pressed and squeezed together like a ream of wet paper between the rival granite pincers of Dart-

moor and Lundy. They must have suffered enough then in a few hours to give them a fair right to lie quiet till Doomsday, as they seem likely to do. But I can assure you that it is only old Mother Earth who has fallen asleep hereabouts. Air and sea are just as live as ever. Aye, lovely and calm enough spreads beneath us now the broad semicircle of the bay; but to know what it can be, you should have seen it as I have done, when, in the roaring December morning, I have been galloping along the cliffs, wreck-hunting.—One morning, I can remember now well, how we watched from the Hartland Cliffs a great barque, that came drifting and rolling in before the western gale, while we followed her up the coast, parsons and sportsmen, farmers and Preventive men, with the Manby's mortar lumbering behind us in a cart, through stone gaps and track-ways, from headland to headland.—The maddening excitement of expectation as she ran wildly towards the cliffs at our feet, and then sheered off again inexplicably—her foremast and bowsprit, I recollect, were gone short off by the deck; a few wild rags of sail fluttered from her main and mizen. But with all straining of eyes and glasses, we could discern no sign of man on board. Well I recollect the mingled disappointment and admiration of the Preventive men, as a fresh set of salvors appeared in view, in the form of a boat's crew of Clovelly fishermen; how we watched breathlessly the little black speck crawling and struggling up in the teeth of the gale, under the shelter of the land, till, when the ship had rounded a point into smooth water, she seized on her like some tiny spider on a huge unwieldy fly; and then how one still smaller black speck showed aloft on the mainyard, and another—and then the desperate efforts to get the topsail set—and how we saw it tear out of their hands again, and again, and again, and almost fancied we could hear the thunder of its flappings above the roar of the gale, and the mountains of surf which made the rocks ring beneath our feet—and how we stood silent, shuddering, expecting every moment to see whirled into the sea from the plunging yards one of those same tiny black specks, in each one of which was a living human soul, with wild women praying for it at home! And then how they tried to get her head round to the wind, and disappeared instantly in a cloud of white spray—and let her head fall back again—and jammed it round again, and disappeared again—and at last let her drive helplessly up the bay, while we kept pace with her along the cliffs; and how at last, when she had been mastered and fairly taken in tow, and was within two miles of the pier, and all hearts were merry with the hopes of a prize which would make them rich, perhaps, for years to come—one third, I suppose, of the whole value of her

cargo—how she broke loose from them at the last moment, and rushed frantically in upon those huge rocks below us, leaping great banks of slate at the blow of each breaker, tearing off masses of iron-stone which lie there to this day to tell the tale, till she drove up high and dry against the cliff, and lay, the huge brute, like an enormous stranded whale, grinding and crashing itself to pieces against the walls of its adamantine cage. And well I recollect the sad records of the log-book that was left on board the deserted ship; how she had been water-logged for weeks and weeks, buoyed up by her timber cargo, the crew clinging in the tops, and crawling down, when they dared, for putrid biscuit-dust and drops of water, till the water was washed overboard and gone; and then notice after notice, "On this day such an one died," "On this day such an one was washed away." The log kept up to the last, even when there was only *that* to tell, by the stern, business-like merchant skipper, whoever he was; and how at last, when there was neither food nor water, the strong man's heart seemed to have quailed, or, perhaps, risen, into a prayer, jotted down in the log, "The Lord have mercy on us!"—and then a blank of several pages, and, scribbled with a famine-shaken hand, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth;"—and so the log and the ship were left to the rats, which covered the deck when our men boarded her. And well I remember the last act of that tragedy; for a ship has really, as sailors feel, a personality, almost a life and soul of her own; and as long as her timbers hold together, all is not over. You can hardly call her a corpse, though the human beings who inhabited her, and were her soul, may have fled into the far eternities; and so I felt that night, as I came down along the very woodland road on which we are now walking with the northwest wind hurling dead branches and showers of crisp oak-leaves about my head; and suddenly, as I staggered out of the wood here, I came upon such a piece of chiaroscuro as would have baffled Correggio, or Rembrandt himself. Under that very wall was a long tent of sails and spars, filled with Preventive men, fishermen, Lloyd's underwriters, lying about in every variety of strange attitude and costume; while candles stuck in bayonet-handles in the wall, poured out a wild glare over shaggy faces and glittering weapons, and piles of timber, and rusty iron cable that glowed red-hot in the light, and then streamed up the glen towards me through the salt misty air in long fans of light, sending fiery bars over the brown transparent oak foliage and the sad beds of withered autumn flowers, and glorifying the wild flakes of foam, as they rushed across the light-stream, into troops of tiny silver angels, that vanished into the night and hid themselves among the woods

from the fierce spirit of the storm. And then, just where the glare of the lights and watch-fires was most brilliant, there too the black shadows of the cliff had placed the point of intensest darkness, lightening gradually upwards right and left, between the two great jaws of the glen, into a chaos of gray mist, where the eye could discern no form of sea or cloud, but a perpetual shifting and quivering as if the whole atmosphere was writhing with agony in the clutches of the wind.

"The ship was breaking up," and they sat by her like hopeless physicians by a deathbed-side, to watch the last struggle,—and 'the effects of the deceased.' I recollect our literally *warping* ourselves down to the beach, holding on by rocks and posts. There was a saddened, awe-struck silence, even upon the gentleman from Lloyd's with the pen behind his ear. A sudden turn of the clouds let in a wild gleam of moonshine upon the white leaping heads of the giant breakers, and on that tall pyramid of the Black-church Rock, which now stands in such calm grandeur gazing down on the smiling summer bay, with the white sand of Braunton and the red cliffs of Portledge shining through its two vast arches; and there, against that slab of rock on your right, still discoloured with her paint, lay the ship, rising slowly on every surge, to drop again with a piteous crash as the wave fell back from the cliff, and dragged the roaring pebbles back with it under the coming wall of foam. You have heard of ships at the last moment crying aloud like living things in agony? I heard it then, as the stumps of her masts rocked and reeled in her, and every plank and joint strained and screamed with the dreadful tension.

A horrible image,—a woman shrieking on the rack, rose up before me at those strange semi-human cries, and would not be put away—and I tried to turn, and yet my eyes were rivetted on the black mass, which seemed vainly to implore the help of man against the stern ministers of the Omnipotent.

Still she seemed to linger in the death-struggle, and I turned at last away; when, lo! a wave, huger than all before it, rushed up the boulders towards us.—We had just time to save ourselves.—A dull, thunderous groan, as if a mountain had collapsed, rose above the roar of the tempest; and we all turned with an instinctive knowledge of what had happened, just in time to see the huge mass *melt* away into the boiling white, and vanish for evermore. And then the very raving of the wind seemed hushed with awe; the very breakers plunged more silently towards the shore, with something of a sullen compunction; and as we stood and strained our eyes into the gloom, one black plank after another crawled up out of the darkness upon the head of

the coming surge, and threw itself at our feet like the corpse of a drowning man, too spent to struggle more.

There is another subject for a picture for you ; but your gayer fancy will prefer the scene just as you are sketching it now, as still and bright as if this coast had never seen the bay darkened with the gray columns of the waterspouts, stalking across the waves before the northern gale ; and the tiny herring-boats fleeing from their nets right for the breakers, hoping more mercy even from those iron walls of rock than from the pitiless howling wilderness of spray behind them ; and that merry beach beside the town covered with shrieking women and old men casting themselves on the pebbles in fruitless agonies of prayer, as corpse after corpse swept up at the feet of wife and child, till in one case alone a single dawn saw upwards of sixty widows and orphans weeping over those who had gone out the night before in the fulness of strength and courage. Hardly an old playmate of mine, Claude, but is drowned and gone :—

Their graves are scattered far and wide  
By mount, by stream, and sea.

One poor little fellow's face starts out of the depths of memory as fresh as ever, my especial pet and bird-nesting companion as a boy—a little delicate precocious large-brained child, that might have written books some day, if he had been a gentleman's son ; but when his father's ship was wrecked they found him left alone of all the crew, just as he had been lashed into the rigging by loving and dying hands, but cold and stiff, the little soul beaten out of him by the cruel waves before it had time to show what growth there might have been in it. We will talk no more of such things. It is thankless to be sad when all heaven and earth are keeping holiday under the smile of God.

And now let us return. At four o'clock to-morrow morning, you know, we are to start for Lundy.

#### LUNDY.

It was four o'clock on an August morning. Our little party had made the sleeping streets ring with jests and greetings, as it collected on the pier. Some dozen young men and women, sons and daughters of the wealthier coasting captains and owners of fishing-smacks, chaperoned by our old landlord, whose delicate and gentlemanlike features and figure were strangely at variance with the history of his life,—daring smuggler, daring man-of-war sailor, and then most daring and successful of coast-guard men. After years of fighting and shipwreck and creeping for kegs of brandy ; after having seen, too,—sight not to be forgotten—the



Walcheren dykes and the Walcheren fever, through weary months of pestilence,—most bootless of all the chimerical jobs which ever disgraced ministerial ignorance, he had come back with a little fortune of prize-money to be a village oracle, loving and beloved, as gentle and courteous as if he had never “*stato al inferno*,” and looked Death in the face. Heaven bless thee, shrewd loyal heart, a gentleman of God’s making, not unrecognized either by many of men’s making. The other chaperone was a lady of God’s making too; one who might have been a St. Theresa, had she been born there and then; but as it was, had been fated to become only the Wesleyan abbess of the town, and, like Deborah, “a mother in Israel.” With her tall slim queenly figure, massive forehead, wild glittering eyes, features beaming with tenderness and enthusiasm, and yet overcast with a peculiar expression of self-consciousness and restraint, well-known to those who have studied the physiognomies of “*saints*,” she seemed to want only the dress of some monastic order to make her the ideal of a mediæval abbess, watching with a half pitying, half complacent smile, the gambols of a group of innocent young worldlings. I saw Claude gazing at her full of admiration and surprise, which latter was certainly not decreased when, as soon as all had settled themselves comfortably on board, and the cutter was slipping quietly away under the magnificent deer-park cliffs, the Lady Abbess pulling out her Wesleyan hymn-book gave out the Morning Hymn, apparently as a matter of course.

With hardly a demur one sweet voice after another arose; then a man gained courage, and chimed in with a full harmonious bass; then a rich sad alto made itself heard, as it wandered in and out between the voices of the men and women. And at last a wild mellow tenor, which we discovered after much searching to proceed from the most unlikely-looking lips of an old dry, weather-bleared, mummified chrysalis of a man, who stood aft, steering with his legs, and showing no sign of life except when he slowly and solemnly filled his nose with snuff.

“What strange people have you brought me among?” asked Claude. “I have been wondering ever since I came here at the splendid faces and figures of men, women, and children, which popped out upon me from every door in that human rabbit-burrow above. I have been in raptures at the gracefulness, the courtesy, the intelligence of almost every one I meet; and now, to crown all, every one among them seems to be a musician.”

“Really you are not far wrong, and you will find them as remarkable morally as they are physically and intellectually.

The simplicity and purity of the women here put one more in mind of the valleys of the Tyrol than of an English village."

"And in proportion to their purity, I suppose," said Claude, "is their freedom and affectionateness?"

"Exactly. It would do your "naturalist" heart good, Claude, to see a young fellow just landed from a foreign voyage rolling up the street which we have just descended, and availing himself of the immemorial right belonging to such cases of kissing and being kissed by every woman whom he meets, young and old. You will find yourself here among those who are too simple-minded, and too full of self-respect, to be either servile or uncourteous."

"I have found out already that Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality, in such company as this, are infinitely pleasanter as well as cheaper than the aristocratic seclusion of a cutter hired for our own behoof."

"True; and now you will not go home and, as most tourists do, say that you know a place, without knowing the people who live in it—as if the human inhabitants of a range of scenery were not among its integral and most important parts?"

"What? are Copley Fielding's South Down landscapes incomplete without a half-starved seven shillings a-week labourer in the foreground?"

"Honestly, are they not a text without a sermon? a premise without a conclusion? Is it not partly because the land *is* down, and not well-tilled arable, that the labourer is what he is? And yet, perhaps, the very absence of human beings in his vast sheets of landscape, when one considers that they are scraps of great, overcrowded, scientific England in the nineteenth century, is in itself the bitterest of all satires. But, hush! there is another hymn commencing—not to be the last by many."

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We had landed, and laughed and scrambled, eaten and drank, seen all the sights of Lundy, and heard all the traditions. Are they not written in Mr. Bamfield's Ilfracombe guide? What is Mr. Reynolds about that he does not write a fire-and-brimstone romance about them? *Moresco Castle; or, the Pirate Knight of the Atlantic Wave.* What a title! Or he might try, *The Seal Friend; or, the Nemesis of the Scuttled West Indiaman.* If I had paper and *lubricité* enough—that delightful carelessness of any moral or purpose, except that of writing fine and turning pennies, which possesses our modern scribblers—I could tales unfold— But neither pirate legends, nor tales of cheated insurance offices, nor wrecks and murders, will make my readers understand Lundy—what it is "considered in its idea," as

the new slang is. It may be defined as a *lighthouse-bearing* island. The whole three miles of granite table-land, seals, sea-birds, and human beings, are mere accidents and appendages—the pedestal and the ornaments of that great white tower in the centre, whose sleepless fiery eye blinks all night long over the night-mists of the Atlantic. If, as a wise man has said, the days will come when our degenerate posterity will fall down and worship rusty locomotives and fossil electric-telegraphs, the relics of their ancestors' science, grown to them mythic and impossible, as the Easter-islanders bow before the colossal statues left by a nobler and extinct race, then surely there will be pilgrimages to Lundy, and prayers to that white granite tower, with its unglazed lantern and rusting machinery, to light itself up again and help poor human beings! Really, my dear brothers, I am not joking—you seem in a very fair way nowadays of getting to that—Emersonian sentimental philosophy for the “enlightened” few, and fetish-worship for the masses.—That is what you will get to—unless you repent, and “get back your souls.”

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We had shot along the cliffs a red-legged chough or two, and one of the real old black English rat, exterminated on the mainland by the gray Hanoverian new-comer, and weary with sight-seeing and scrambling, we sat down to smoke and meditate on a slab of granite, which hung three hundred feet in air above the western main.

“This is even more strange and new to me,” said Claude, at length, “than any thing I have yet seen in this lovely west. I now appreciate Ruskin’s advice to all painters, to go and study the coasts of Devon and Cornwall, instead of lingering about the muddy seas and tame cliffs of the Channel and the German Ocean.”

“How clear and brilliant,” said I, “everything shows through this Atlantic atmosphere. The intensity of colouring may vie with that of the shores of the Mediterranean. The very raininess of the climate, by condensing the moisture into an ever-changing phantasmagoria of clouds, leaves the clear air and sunshine when we do get a glimpse of them, all the more pure and transparent.”

“The distinctive feature of the scene is, in my eyes, the daring juxtaposition of large simple masses of positive colour. There are none of the misty enamelled tones of Lynmouth, or the luscious richness of Clovelly. The forms are so simple and severe, that they would be absolutely meagre, were it not for the gorgeous colouring with which nature has so lovingly made up for the absence of all softness, all picturesque outline. One does

not regret or even feel the want of trees here, while the eye ranges down from that dappled cloudworld above, over that vast sheet of purple heather, those dells bedded with dark velvet green fern, of a depth and richness of hue which I never saw before—over these bright gray granite rocks, spangled with black glittering mica and golden lichens, to rest at last on that sea below, which streams past the island in a swift roaring torrent of tide."

"Sea, Claude? say, ocean. This is real Atlantic blue here beneath us. No more Severn mud, no more glass-green bay-water, but real ocean sapphire—black, deep, intense, Homeric purple, it spreads away—away, there before us, without a break or islet, to the shores of America. You are sitting on one of the last points of Europe, and therefore all things round you are stern and strange with a barbaric pomp, such as befits the boundary of a world."

"Ay, the very form of the cliffs shows them to be the breakwaters of a continent. No more fantastic curves and bands of slate, such as harmonize so well with the fairy-land which we left this morning: the cliffs, with their horizontal rows of cubical blocks, seem built up by Cyclopean hands."

"Yet how symbolic is the difference between them and that equally Cyclopic masonry of the Exmoor coast. There every fracture is fresh, sharp-edged crystalline; the worn-out useless hills are dropping to pieces with their own weight. Here each cube is delicately rounded off at the edges, every crack worn out into a sinuous furrow, like the scars of an everlasting warfare with the winds and waves."

"Does it not raise strange longings in you," said Claude, "to gaze out yonder over the infinite calm, and then to remember that beyond it lies America!—the New World! the *future world!* The great Titan-baby, who will be teeming with its own Athens and Londons, with new Bacons and Shakspeares, Newtons and Goethes, when this old worn-out island will be—what? Oh! when I look out here, like a bird from its cage, a captive from his dungeon, and remember what lies behind me, to what I must return to-morrow—the over-peopled Babylon of misery and misrule, puffery and covetousness—and there before me great countries untilled, uncivilized, unchristianized, crying aloud for man to come and be man indeed, and replenish the earth and subdue it. 'Oh, that I had wings as a dove, then would I flee away and be at rest!' Here, lead me away; my body is growing as dizzy as my mind. I feel coming over me that horrible longing of which I have heard, to leap out into empty space. How the blank air whispers, 'Be free!' How the broad sea smiles, and calls with

its ten thousand waves, 'Be free!'—As I live, if you do not take me away, I shall throw myself over the cliff."

I did take him away, for I knew the sensation and its danger well. It has nothing to do with physical giddiness. I am cliff-bred, and never was giddy for an instant in my life, and yet I have often felt myself impelled to leap from masts, and tree-tops, and cliffs, and nothing but the most violent effort of will could break the fascination. I am sure, by the by, that many a puzzling suicide might be traced to this same emotion acting on a weak and morbid brain.

We returned to the little landing-cove. The red-sailed cutter lay sleeping below us—floating "double, ship and shadow." Shoals of innumerable mackerel broke up, making acres of water foam and sparkle round their silvery sides, with a soft roar (call it "a bull" if you like, it is the only expression for that mysterious sound,) while among them the black head of a huge seal was slowly and silently appearing and vanishing, as he got his dinner in a quiet business-like way, among the unhappy wanderers.

We put off in the boat, and just half way from the cutter Claude gave a start, and the women a scream, as the enormous brute quietly raised his head and shoulders out of the water ten yards off, with a fish kicking in his mouth, and the water running off his nose, to take a deliberate stare at us, after the fashion of seals, whose ruling passion is curiosity. The sound of a musical instrument, the sight of a man bathing—any thing, in short, which their small wits cannot explain at first sight, is enough to make them forget all their cunning, and thrust their heads suicidally into any danger; and even so it fared with the "black man," as the girls, in their first terror, declared him to be. My gun went off—of itself I should like to believe—but the whole cartridge disappeared into his sleek round visage, knocking the mackerel from between his teeth, and he turned over a seven-foot lump of lifeless blubber.

"Wretch!" cried Claude, as we lugged him into the boat, where he lay with his head and arms hanging helplessly over the bows, like a sea-sick alderman on board a Margate steamer. "What excuse can you give for such a piece of wanton cruelty?"

"I assure you his skin and oil are very valuable."

"Hypocrite! were you thinking of his skin and oil when you pulled the trigger? or merely obeying the fleshy lust of destructiveness—the puppet of two bumps on the back of your head?"

"My dear Claude, man is the microcosm, and as the highest animal, the ideal type of the mammalia, he, like all true types,

comprises in himself the attributes of all lower species. Therefore he must have a tiger-vein in him, my dear Claude, as well as a beaver-vein and a spider-vein, and no more shame to him. You are a butterfly, I am a beast of prey; both may have their own work to do in this age just as they had in the old ones; and if you do not like that explanation, all I can say is, I can sympathize with you and with myself too. *Homo sum—nil humani a me alienum puto.* Trim the boat, uncle, or the seal will swamp us, and, like Samson, slay more in his death than ever he slew in his life."

We slipped on homeward. The cliff-wall of Lundy stood out blacker and blacker every moment against the gay western sky, greens, grays, and purples, dyeing together into one rich deep monotone, for which our narrow colour-vocabulary has no word—and threw a long cold shadow toward us across the golden sea; and suddenly above its dark ridge a wild wreath of low rack caught the rays of the setting sun, and flamed up like a volcano towards the dun and purple canopy of upper clouds. Before us the blue sea and the blue land-line were fading into mournful gray, on which one huge West Indiaman blazed out, orange and scarlet, her crowded canvas all a-flame from the truck to the water's edge.—A few moments and she, too, had vanished into the gray twilight, and a chill night-wind crisped the sea. It was a relief to hear the Evening Hymn rise rich and full from one voice, and then another, and another, till the men chimed in one by one, and the whole cutter, from stem to stern, breathed up its melody into the silent night.

But the hymns soon flagged—there was more mirth on board than could vent itself in old Charles Wesley's words; and one began to hum a song tune, and then another, with a side glance at the expression of the Lady Abbess's face, till at last, when a fair wife took courage, and burst out with full pipe into "The sea, the sea," the ice was fairly broken; and among jests and laughter one merry harmless song after another rang out, many of them, to Claude's surprise, fashionable London ones, which sounded strangely enough out there on the wild western sea. At last,—

"Claude, friend," I whispered, "you must sing your share too—and mine also, for that matter."

"What shall I sing?"

"Any thing you will, from the sublime to the ridiculous. They will understand and appreciate it as well as yourself. Recollect, you are not among bullet-headed South Saxon clods, but among wits as keen and imaginations as rich as those of any Scotch shepherd or Manchester operative."

“Well, then, I will feel my way with a little ‘healthy animalism,’ as Goethe would have said.”

And up rose his exquisite tenor :—

There sits a bird on every tree,  
With a heigh-ho!  
There sits a bird on every tree,  
Sings to its love, as I to thee,  
With a heigh-ho, and a heigh-ho!  
Young maids must marry.

There grows a flower on every bough,  
With a heigh-ho!  
There grows a flower on every bough;  
Its gay leaves kiss—I’ll show you how—  
With a heigh-ho, and a heigh-ho!  
Young maids must marry.

The sun’s a bridegroom, earth a bride;  
With a heigh-ho!  
The sun’s a bridegroom, earth a bride;  
They court from morn to eventide:  
The earth shall pass but love abide.  
With a heigh-ho, and a heigh-ho!  
Young maids must marry.

The song was received rapturously by the women, wives and maids both. The abbess herself only objected, as in duty bound, by a faint half pitying “Tut—tut—tut!” and then quoted meditatively and half aside a certain text about “charity abiding for ever,” which, to do Claude justice, he believed quite as firmly as the good Wesleyan matron, but perhaps in a somewhat larger and more philosophic sense.

This was his first song, but it was not allowed to be his last. German ballads, Italian Opera airs, were all just as warmly, and perhaps far more sincerely, appreciated, as they would have been by any London evening party; and the singing went on, hour after hour, as we slipped slowly on upon the tide, till it grew late, and the sweet voices died away one by one, and the Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, which had reigned so pleasantly throughout the day took a new form, as the women huddled together to sleep in each other’s arms, and the men and ourselves clustered forwards; and from every mouth fragrant incense steamed upwards into the air. “Man a cooking animal?” my dear Doctor Johnson—pooh! man is a *smoking* animal. There is his ergon, his “differential energy,” as the Aristotelians say—his true distinction from the ourang-outang. Ponder it well.

The men were leaning on the trawl capstan, while our old landlord, with half a dozen pipes within a foot of his face, droned out some long sea-yarn about Ostend, and muds, and snow-storms, and revenue cruisers going down stern foremost,

kegs of brandy and French prisons, which we shall not repeat; for indeed the public has been surfeited with sea stories of late, from Captain Chamier's dull ones up to the genial wisdom of *Peter Simple*, and the gorgeous word-painting of *Tom Cringle's Log*. And now the subject is stale—the old war and the wonders thereof have died away into the past, like the men who fought in it; and Trafalgar and the Bellerophon are replaced by Manchester and *Mary Barton*. We have solved the old sea-going problems, pretty well—thanks to wise English-hearted Captain Marryat, now gone to his rest, just when his work was done; and we must turn round and face a few land-going problems not quite so easy of solution. So Claude and I thought as we leant over the sloop's bows, listening neither to the Ostend story forewards, nor to the forty-stanza ballad aft, which the old steersman was moaning on, careless of listeners, to keep himself awake at the helm. Forty stanzas or so we *did* count from curiosity. The first line of each of which ended infallibly with

Says the commodo—ore.

And the third with

Says the female smuggler.

And then gave up in despair; and watched in a dreamy, tired, half-sad mood, the everlasting sparkle of the water as our bows threw it gently off in sheets of flame and “tender curving lines of creamy” fire, that ran along the glassy surface, and seemed to awaken the sea for yards round into glittering life, as countless diamonds, and emeralds, and topazes, leaped and ran and dived round us, while we slipped slowly by—and then a speck of light would show far off in the blank darkness, and another, and another, and slide slowly up to us—shoals of medusæ, every one of them a heaving globe of flame—and some unseen guillemot would give a startled squeak, or a shearwater close above our heads suddenly stopped the yarn, and raised a titter among the men, by announcing in most articulate English his intention of invading the domestic happiness of his neighbour—and then a fox's bark from the cliffs came wild and shrill, although so faint and distant; or the lazy gaff gave a sad uneasy creak.—And then a soft, warm air, laden with heather honey, and fragrant odours of sedge, and birch, and oak, came sighing from the land. And all around us was the dense blank blackness of the night, except where now and then some lonely gleam through the southern clouds showed the huge cliff tops on our right.—It was almost unearthly, dream-like, a strange phantasmagoria, like some scenes from *The Ancient Mariner*—all the world shut out,



silent, invisible, and we floating along there alone, like a fairy ship creaking through Chaos and the unknown Limbo. Was it an evil thought that rose within us as we said to Claude,—

“Is not this too like life? Our only light the sparkles that rise up round us at every step, and die behind us; and all around, and all before, the great, black, unfathomable eternities? A few souls brought together as it were by chance, for a short friendship and mutual dependence in this little ship of earth, so soon to land her passengers and break up the company for ever?”

He laughed.

“There is a devil’s meaning to everything in nature, and a God’s meaning, too. Your friends, the zoologists, have surely taught you better than that. As I read Nature’s parable to-night, I find nothing in it but hope. What if there be darkness, the sun will rise to-morrow. What if there seem a chaos, the great organic world is still living, and growing, and feeding, unseen by us, all the black night through; and every phosphoric atom there below is a sign that even in the darkest night there is still the power of light, ready to flash out, wherever and however it is *stirred*. Does the age seem to you dark? Do you, too, feel as I do at times, the awful sadness of that text,—“The time shall come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Lord and shall not see it?” Then remember that

The night is never so long  
But at last it ringeth for matin song.

And even as it is around us here, so it is in the world of men; the night is peopled not merely with phantoms, and wizards, and spirits of evil, but under its shadow all opinions, systems, social energies, are taking rest, and growing, and feeding, unknown to themselves, that they may awake into a new life, and intermarry, and beget children nobler than themselves, when “the day-spring from on high comes down.” Even now, see! the dawn is gilding the highest souls, as it is those Exmoor peaks afar; and *we* are in the night, only because we crawl below. What if we be unconscious of all the living energies which are fermenting round us now? Have you not shown me in this last week every moorland pool, every drop of the summer sea, alive with beautiful organizations, multiplying as fast as the thoughts of man? Is not every leaf breathing still? every sap vein drinking still, though we may not see them? “Even so is the kingdom of God, like seed sown on the ground, and men rise, and lie down and sleep, and it groweth up they know not how.” Must I quote your own verse against you? Must I appeal from Philip drunk

to Philip sober? Listen to what you said to me only last week, and be ashamed of yourself:—

The day of the Lord is at hand, at hand!  
 Its storms roll up the sky;  
 A nation sleeps starving on heaps of gold;  
 All dreamers toss and sigh;  
 The night is darkest before the dawn—  
 When the pain is sorest, the child is born—  
 And the day of the Lord at hand.

Gather you, gather you, angels of God,  
 Freedom, and mercy, and truth.  
 Come! for the earth is grown coward and old,  
 Come down and renew us her youth!  
 Wisdom, self-sacrifice, daring and love,  
 Haste to the battle-field, stoop from above,  
 To the day of the Lord at hand.

Gather you, gather you, hounds of hell,  
 Famine, and plague, and war.  
 Idleness, bigotry, cant, and misrule,  
 Gather, and fall in the snare!  
 Hirelings and mammonites, pedants and knaves,  
 Crawl to the battle-field, sneak to your graves,  
 In the day of the Lord at hand.

Who would sit down and sigh for a lost age of gold,  
 While the Lord of all ages is here?  
 True hearts will leap up at the trumpet of God,  
 And those who can suffer, can dare.  
 Each old age of gold was an iron age too,  
 And the meekest of saints may find stern work to do,  
 In the day of the Lord at hand.'

He ceased, and we both fell into a reverie. The yarn and the ballad were finished, and not a sound broke the silence, except the screaming of the sea fowl, which led my thoughts wandering back to nights long past, when we dragged the seine up to our chins in water through the short midsummer night, and scrambled and rolled over on the beach in boyish glee, after the skate and mullet, with those now gone; and as I thought and thought, old voices seemed to call to me, old faces looked at me, of playmates, and those nearer than playmates, now sleeping in the deep, deep sea, amid far coral islands; and old figures seemed to glide out of the mysterious dark along the still sea floor, as if the ocean were indeed giving up her dead. I shook myself, turned away, and tried to persuade myself that I was dreaming. Perhaps I had been doing so. At least, I remember very little more, till I was roused by the rattling of the chain-cable through the hawse-hole, opposite the pier-head.

And now, gentle readers, farewell; and farewell, Clovelly, and all the loving hearts it holds; and farewell, too, the soft still summer weather. Claude and I are taking our last walk together

along the deer-park cliffs. Lundy is shrouded in the great gray fan of dappled haze which streams up from the westward, dimming the sickly sun. "There is not a breath the blue wave to curl." Yet, lo! round "Chapman's Head" creeps a huge bank of polished swell, and bursts in thunder on the cliffs.—Another follows, and another.—The Atlantic gales are sending in their *avant-couriers* of ground-swell—six hours more, and the storm which has been sweeping over "the still-vexed Bermoothes," and bending the tall palms on West Indian isles, will be roaring through the oak-woods of Devon. The old black buck is calling his does with ominous croakings, and leading the way slowly into the deepest coverts of the glens. The stormy petrels, driven in from the Atlantic, are skimming like great black swallows over the bay beneath us. Long strings of sea-fowl are flagging on steadily at railroad pace, towards the sands and salt-marshes of Braunton. The herring-boats are hastily hauling their nets—you may see the fish sparkling like flakes of silver as they come up over the gunwale; all craft, large and small, are making for the shelter of the pier. Claude starts this afternoon to sit for six months in Babylonian smoke, working up his sketches into certain unspeakable pictures, with which the world will be astonished, or otherwise, at the next Royal Academy Exhibition; while I, for whom another fortnight of pure western air remains, am off to well-known streams, to be in time for the autumn floods, and the shoals of fresh-run salmon-trout.

## PHAETHON ;

OR,

## LOOSE THOUGHTS FOR LOOSE THINKERS.

"Words are the fool's counters, but the wise man's money."

TRENCH.

"*Equidem, collabente in vitium atque errorem loquendi usu, occasum ejus urbis remque humilem atque obscuram subsequi crediderim: verba enim partim inscita et putida, partim mendosa et perperam prolata, quid nisi ignavos et oscitantes et ad servile quidvis jam olim paratos incolarum animos haud levi indicio declarant?*"—MILTON.

TEMPLETON and I were lounging by the clear limestone stream which crossed his park, and wound away round wooded hills toward the distant Severn. A lovelier fishing morning sportsmen never saw. A soft grey under-roof of cloud slid on before a soft west wind, and here and there a stray gleam of sunlight shot into the vale across the purple mountain-tops, and awoke into busy life the denizens of the water, already quickened by the mysterious electric influences of the last night's thunder-shower. The long-winged cinnamon-flies spun and fluttered over the pools; the sand-bees hummed merrily round their burrows in the marly bank; and delicate iridescent ephemerae rose by hundreds from the depths, and dropping their shells, floated away, each a tiny Venus Anadyomene, down the glassy ripples of the reaches. Every moment a heavy splash beneath some overhanging tuft of milfoil or water-hemlock proclaimed the death-doom of a hapless beetle who had dropped into the stream beneath; yet still we fished and fished, and caught nothing, and seemed utterly careless about catching any thing; till the old keeper who followed us, sighing and shrugging his shoulders, broke forth into open remonstrance:—

"Excuse my liberty, gentlemen, but whatever is the matter with you and master, Sir? I never did see you miss so many honest rises before."

"It is too true," said Templeton to me with a laugh. "I must

confess, I have been dreaming instead of fishing the whole morning. But what has happened to you, who are not as apt as I am to do nothing by trying to do two things at once?"

"My hand may well be somewhat unsteady; for to tell the truth, I sat up all last night writing."

"A hopeful preparation for a day's fishing in limestone water! But what can have set you on writing all night, after so busy and talkative an evening as the last, ending too, as it did, somewhere about half-past twelve?"

"Perhaps the said talkative evening itself; and I suspect, if you will confess the truth, you will say that your morning's meditations are running very much in the same channel."

"Lewis," said he, after a pause, "go up to the hall, and bring some luncheon for us down to the lower waterfall."

"And a wheelbarrow to carry home the fish, Sir?"

"If you wish to warm yourself, certainly. And now, my good fellow," said he, as the old keeper toddled away up the park, "I will open my heart—a process for which I have but few opportunities here—to an old college friend. I am disturbed and saddened by last night's talk, and by last night's guest."

"By the American professor? How, in the name of English exclusiveness, did such a rampantly heterodox spiritual guerilla invade the respectabilities and conservatism of Herefordshire?"

"He was returning from a tour through Wales, and had introductions to me from some Manchester friends of mine, to avail himself of which, I found, he had gone some thirty miles out of his way."

"Complimentary to you, at least."

"To Lady Jane, I suspect, rather than to me; for he told me broadly enough that all the flattering attentions which he had received in Manchester—where, you know, all such prophets are welcomed with open arms, their only credentials being that, whatsoever they believe, they shall not believe the Bible—had not given him the pleasure which he had received from that one introduction to what he called 'the inner hearth-life of the English landed aristocracy.' But what did you think of him?"

"Do you really wish to know?"

"I do."

"Then, honestly, I never heard so much magniloquent un-wisdom talked in the same space of time. It was the sense of shame for my race which kept me silent all the evening. I could not trust myself to argue with a gray-haired Saxon man, whose fifty years of life seemed to have left him a child, in all but the childlike heart which alone can enter into the kingdom of heaven."

"You are severe," said Templeton, smilingly though, as if his estimate were not very different from mine.

"Can one help being severe when one hears irreverence poured forth from reverend lips? I do not mean merely irreverence for the Catholic Creeds; that to my mind—God forgive me if I misjudge him—seemed to me only one fruit of a deep root of irreverence for all things as they are, even for all things as they seem. Did you not remark the audacious contempt for all ages but 'our glorious nineteenth century,' and the still deeper contempt for all in the said glorious time, who dared to believe that there was any ascertained truth independent of the private fancy and opinion of—for I am afraid it came to that—him, Professor Windrush, and his circle of elect souls? 'You may believe nothing, if you like, and welcome; but if you do take to that unnecessary act, you are a fool if you believe anything but what I believe;—though I do not choose to state what that is.' . . . . Is not that, now, a pretty fair formulization of his doctrine?"

"But, my dear raver," said Templeton, laughing, "the man believed at least in physical science. I am sure we heard enough about its triumphs."

"It may be so. But to me his very 'spiritualism' seemed more materialistic than his physics. His notion seemed to be, though Heaven forbid that I should say that he ever put it formally before himself—"

"Or anything else," said Templeton, *sotto voce*.

"—that it is the spiritual world which is governed by physical laws, and the physical by spiritual ones; that while men and women are merely the puppets of cerebrations and mentations, and attractions and repulsions, it is the trees, and stones, and gases, who have the wills and the energies, and the faiths and the virtues and the personalities."

"You are caricaturing."

"How so? How can I judge otherwise, when I hear a man talking, as he did, of God in terms which, every one of them, involved what we call the essential properties of matter—space, time, passibility, motion; setting forth phrenology and mesmerism as the great organs of education, even of the regeneration of mankind; apologizing for the earlier ravings of the Poughkeepsie seer, and considering his later eclectic-pantheist far-faragos as great utterances: while, whenever he talked of nature he showed the most credulous craving after everything which we the countrymen of Bacon, have been taught to consider unscientific—Homœopathy, Electro-biology, Loves of the Plants à la Darwin, Vestiges of Creation, Vegetarianisms, Teetotalisms

—never mind what, provided it was unaccredited or condemned by regularly educated men of science?”

“But you don’t mean to assert that there is nothing in any of these theories?”

“Of course not. I can no more prove a universal negative about them, than I can about the existence of life on the moon. But I do say that this contempt for that which has been already discovered—this carelessness about induction from the normal phenomena, coupled with this hankering after theories built upon exceptional ones—this craving for ‘signs and wonders,’ which is the sure accompaniment of a dying faith in God, and in nature as God’s work—are symptoms which make me tremble for the fate of physical as well as of spiritual science, both in America and in the Americanists here at home. As the Professor talked on, I could not help thinking of the Neo-Platonists of Alexandria, and their exactly similar course,—downward from a spiritualism of notions and emotions, which in every term confessed its own materialism, to the fearful discovery that consciousness does not reveal God, not even matter, but only its own existence; and then onward, in desperate search after something external wherein to trust, toward theurgic fêtish worship, and the secret virtues of gems and flowers and stars; and, last of all, to the lowest depth of bowing statues and winking pictures. The sixth century saw that career, Templeton: the nineteenth may see it re-enacted, with only these differences, that the nature-worship which seems coming will be all the more crushing and slavish, because we know so much better how vast and glorious nature is; and that the superstitions will be more clumsy and foolish in proportion as our Saxon brain is less acute and discursive, and our education less severely scientific, than those of the old Greeks.”

“Silence, raver!” cried Templeton, throwing himself on the grass in fits of laughter. “So the Professor’s grandchildren will have either turned Papists, or be bowing down before rusty locomotives and broken electric telegraphs? But, my good friend, you surely do not take Professor Windrush for a fair sample of the great American people?”

“God forbid that so unpractical a talker should be a sample of the most practical people upon earth. The Americans have their engineers, their geographers, their astronomers, their scientific chemists; few indeed, but such as bid fair to rival those of any nation upon earth. But these, like other true workers, hold their tongues and do their business.”

“And they have a few indigenous authors too: you must have read the *Biglow Papers*, and the *Fable for Critics*,—and last but not least, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*?”

“Yes; and I have had far less fear for Americans since I read that book; for it showed me that there was right healthy power, artistic as well as intellectual, among them even now,—ready, when their present borrowed peacock’s feathers have fallen off, to come forth and prove that the Yankee Eagle is a right gallant bird, if he will but trust to his own natural plumage.”

“And they have a few statesmen also.”

“But they are curt, plain-spoken, practical,—in every thing antipodal to the knot of hapless men, who, unable from some defect or morbidity to help on the real movement of their nation, are fain to get their bread with tongue and pen, by retailing to ‘silly women,’ ‘ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth,’ second-hand German eclecticism, now exploded even in the country where they arose, and the very froth and scum of the Medea’s caldron, in which the *disjecta membra* of old Calvinism are pitiably seething.”

“Ah! It has been always the plan, you know, in England, as well as in America, courteously to avoid taking up a German theory till the Germans had quite done with it, and thrown it away for something new. But what are we to say of those who are trying to introduce into England these very Americanized Germanisms, as the only teaching which can suit the needs of the old world?”

“We will, if we are in a vulgar humour, apply to them a certain old proverb about teaching one’s grandmother a certain simple operation on the egg of the domestic fowl; but we will no less take shame to ourselves, as sons of Alma Mater, that such nonsense can get even a day’s hearing, either among the daughters of Manchester manufacturers, or among London working men. Had we taught them what we were taught in the schools, Templeton—”

“Alas, my friend, we must ourselves have learnt it first. I have no right to throw stones at the poor Professor; for I could not answer him.”

“Do not suppose that I can either. All I say is,—mankind has not lived in vain. Least of all has it lived in vain during the last eighteen hundred years. It has gained something of eternal truth in every age, and that which it has gained is as fresh and young now as ever; and I will not throw away the bird in the hand, for any number of birds in the bush.”

“Especially when you suspect most of them to be only wooden pheasants, set up to delude poachers. Well, you are far more of a Philister and a Conservative than I thought you.”

“The New is coming, I doubt not; but it must grow organically out of the Old,—not root the old up, and stick itself full



grown into the place thereof, like a French tree of liberty,—sure of much the same fate. Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid already, in spiritual things or in physical; as the Professor and his school will surely find.”

“You recollect to whom the Bible applies that text?”

“I do.”

“And yet you say you cannot answer the Professor?”

“I do not care to do so. There are certain root-truths which I know, because they have been discovered and settled for ages; and instead of accepting the challenge of every I-know-not-whom to reëxamine them, and begin the world’s work all over again, I will test his theories by them; and if they fail to coincide, I will hear no more speech about the details of the branches and flowers, for I shall know the root is rotten.”

“But he, too, acknowledged certain of those root-truths,” said Templeton, who seemed to have a lingering sympathy with my victim; “he insisted most strongly, and spoke, you will not deny, eloquently and nobly on the Unity of the Deity.”

“On the non-Trinity of *it*, rather; for I will not degrade the word ‘Him,’ by applying it here. But, tell me honestly—*c’ est le timbre qui fait la musique*—did his ‘Unity of the Deity’ sound in your English Bible-bred heart at all like that ancient, human, personal ‘Hear, O Israel! the Lord thy God is one Lord?’”

“Much more like ‘The Something our Nothing is one Something.’”

“May we not suspect, then, that his notion of the ‘Unity of the Deity’ does not quite coincide with the foundation already laid, whosoever else may?”

“You are assuming rather hastily.”

“Perhaps I may prove also, some day or other. Do you think, moreover, that the theory which he so boldly started, when his nerves and his manners were relieved from the unwonted pressure by Lady Jane and the ladies going up stairs, was part of the same old foundation?”

“Which, then?”

“That, if a man does but believe a thing, he has a right to speak it and act on it, right or wrong. Have you forgotten his vindication of your friend, the radical voter, and his ‘spirit of truth?’”

“What, the worthy who, when I canvassed him as the liberal candidate for . . . , and promised to support complete freedom of religious opinion, tested me by breaking out into such blasphemous ribaldry as made me run out of the house, and then went and voted against me as a bigot?”

"I mean him, of course. The Professor really seemed to admire the man, as a more brave and conscientious hero than himself. I am not squeamish, as you know: but I am afraid that I was quite rude to him when he went as far as that."

"What,—when you told him that you thought that, after all, the old theory of the Divine Right of Kings was as plausible as the new theory of the Divine Right of Blasphemy?—My dear fellow, do not fret yourself on that point. He seemed to take it rather as a compliment to his own audacity, and whispered to me that 'The Divine Right of Blasphemy' was an expression of which Theodore Parker himself need not have been ashamed."

"He was pleased to be complimentary. But, tell me, what was it in his oratory which has so vexed the soul of the country squire?"

"That very argument of his, among many things. I saw, or rather felt, that he was wrong; and yet, as I have said already, I could not answer him; and, had he not been my guest, should have got thoroughly cross with him as a *pis aller*."

"I saw it. But, my friend, used we not to read Plato together, and enjoy him together, in old Cambridge days? Do you not think that Socrates might at all events have driven the Professor into a corner?"

"He might: but I cannot. Is that, then, what you were writing about all last night?"

"It was. I could not help, when I went out on the terrace to smoke my last cigar, fancying to myself how Socrates might have seemed to set you, and the Professor, and that warm-hearted, right-headed, wrong-tongued High-Church Curate, all together by the ears, and made confusion worse confounded for the time being, and yet have left for each of you some hint whereby you might see the darling truth, for which you were barking, all the more clearly in the light of the one which you were howling down."

"And so you sat up, and—I thought the corridor smelt somewhat of smoke."

"Forgive, and I will confess. I wrote a dialogue;—and here it is, if you choose to hear it. If there are a few passages, or even many, which Plato would not have written, you will consider my age and inexperience, and forgive."

"My dear fellow, you forgot that I, like you, have been ten years away from dear old Alma-Mater, Plato, the boats, and Potton Wood. My authorities now are Morton on Soils, and Miles on the Horse's Foot. Read on, fearless of my criticisms. Here is the waterfall; we will settle ourselves on Jane's favourite seat. You shall discourse, and I, till Lewis brings the luncheon,

will smoke my cigar ; and if I seem to be looking at the mountain, don't fancy that I am only counting how many young grouse those heath-burning worthies will have left me by the twelfth."

So we sat down, and I began :—

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PHAETHON.

ALCIBIADES and I walked into the Pnyx early the other morning, before the people assembled. There we saw Socrates standing, having his face turned toward the rising sun. Approaching him, we perceived that he was praying ; and that so ardently, that we touched him on the shoulder before he became aware of our presence.

"You seem like a man filled with the God, Socrates," said Alcibiades.

"Would that were true," answered he, "both of me and of all who will counsel here this day. In fact, I was praying for that very thing ; namely, that they might have light to see the truth, in whatsoever matter might be discussed here."

"And for me also ?" said Alcibiades ;—"but I have prepared my speech already."

"And for you also, if you desire it,—even though some of your periods should be spoiled thereby. But why are you both here so early, before any business is stirring ?"

"We were discussing," said I, "that very thing for which we found you praying, namely, truth, and what it might be."

"Perhaps you went a worse way toward discovering it than I did. But let us hear. Whence did the discussion arise ?"

"From something," said Alcibiades, "which Protagoras said in his lecture yesterday,—How truth was what each man troweth, or believeth to be true. 'So that,' he said, 'one thing is true to me, if I believe it true, and another opposite thing to you, if you believe that opposite. For,' continued he, 'there is an objective and a subjective truth ; the former, doubtless, one and absolute, and contained in the nature of each thing ; but the other manifold and relative, varying with the faculties of each perceiver thereof.' But as each man's faculties, he said, were different from his neighbour's, and all more or less imperfect, it was impossible that the absolute objective truth of any thing could be seen by any mortal, but only some partial approximation, and, as it were, sketch of it, according as the object was represented with more or less refraction on the mirror of his subjectivity. And there—

fore, as the true inquirer deals only with the possible, and lets the impossible go, it was the business of the wise man, shunning the search after absolute truth as an impious attempt of the Titans to scale Olympus, to busy himself humbly and practically with subjective truth, and with those methods—rhetoric, for instance—by which he can make the subjective opinions of others either similar to his own, or, leaving them as they are,—for it may be very often unnecessary to change them,—useful to his own ends.”

Then Socrates, laughing,—

“My fine fellow, you will have made more than one oration in the Pnyx to-day. And indeed, I myself felt quite exalted, and rapt aloft, like Bellerophon on Pegasus, upon the eloquence of Protagoras and you. But yet forgive me this one thing; for my mother bare me, as you know, a man-midwife, after her own trade, and not a sage.”

ALCIBIADES. “What then?”

SOCRATES. “This, my astonishing friend—for really I am altogether astonished and struck dumb, as I always am whenever I hear a brilliant talker like you discourse concerning objectivities and subjectivities, and such mysterious words: at such moments I am like an old war-horse, who, though he will rush on levelled lances, shudders and sweats with terror at a boy rattling pebbles in a bladder; and I feel altogether dizzy, and dread lest I should suffer some such transformation as Scylla, when I hear awful words, like incantations, pronounced over me, of which I, being no sage, understand nothing.—But tell me now, Alcibiades; did the opinion of Protagoras altogether please you?”

A. “Why not? Is it not certain that two equally honest men may differ in their opinions on the same matter?”

S. “Undeniable.”

A. “But if each is equally sincere in speaking what he believes, is not each equally moved by the spirit of truth?”

S. “You seem to have been lately initiated, and that not at Eleusis merely, nor in the Cabiria, but rather in some Persian or Babylonian mysteries, when you discourse thus of spirits. But you, Phaeton,” (turning to me,) “how did you like the periods of Protagoras?”

“Do not ask me, Socrates,” said I, “for indeed we have fought a weary battle together ever since sundown last night; and all that I had to say I learnt from you.”

S. “From me, my good fellow?”

PHAETHON. “Yes, indeed. I seemed to have heard from you that truth is simply ‘facts as they are.’ But when I urged this on Alcibiades, his arguments seemed superior to mine.”

A. "But I have been telling him, drunk and sober, that it is my opinion also as to what truth is. Only I, with Protagoras, distinguish between objective fact and subjective opinion."

S. "Doing rightly, too, fair youth. But how comes it then that you and Phaeton cannot agree?"

"That," said I, "you know better than either of us."

"You seem both of you," said Socrates, "to be, as usual, in the family way. Shall I exercise my profession on you?"

"No, by Zeus!" answered Alcibiades, laughing; "I fear thee, thou juggler, lest I suffer once again the same fate with the woman in the myth, and after I have conceived a fair man-child, and, as I fancy, brought it forth, thou hold up to the people some dead puppy, or log, or what not, and cry, 'Look what Alcibiades has produced!'"

S. "But, beautiful youth, before I can do that, you will have spoken your oration on the bema, and all the people will be ready and able to say, 'Absurd! nothing but what is fair can come from so fair a body.' Come, let us consider the question together."

I assented willingly; and Alcibiades, mincing and pouting, after his fashion, still was loth to refuse.

S. "Let us see, then. Alcibiades distinguishes, he says, between objective fact and subjective opinion?"

A. "Of course I do."

S. "But not, I presume, between objective truth and subjective truth, whereof Protagoras spoke?"

A. "What trap are you laying now? I distinguish between them also, of course."

S. "Tell me, then, dear youth, of your indulgence, what they are; for I am shamefully ignorant on the matter."

A. "Why, do they not call a thing objectively true, when it is true absolutely in itself; but subjectively true, when it is true in the belief of a particular person?"

S. "—Though not necessarily true objectively, that is, absolutely and in itself?"

A. "No."

S. "But possibly true so?"

A. "Of course."

S. "Now, tell me—a thing is objectively true, is it not, when it is a fact as it is?"

A. "Yes."

S. "And when it is a fact as it is not, it is objectively false; for such a fact would not be true absolutely, and in itself, would it?"

A. "Of course not."

S. "Such a fact would be, therefore, no fact, and nothing."

A. "Why so?"

S. "Because, if a thing exists, it can only exist as it is, not as it is not; at least, my opinion inclines that way."

"Certainly not," said I; "why do you haggle so, Alcibiades?"

S. "Fair and softly, Phaethon! How do you know that he is not fighting for wife and child, and the altars of his gods? But if he will agree with you and me, he will confess that a thing, which is objectively false does not exist at all, and is nothing."

A. "I suppose it is necessary to do so. But I know whither you are struggling."

S. "To this dear youth, that, therefore, if a thing subjectively true be also objectively false, it does not exist, and is nothing."

"It is so," said I.

S. "Let us, then, let nothing go its own way, while we go on ours with that which is only objectively true, lest coming to a river over which it is subjectively true to us that there is a bridge, and trying to walk over that work of our own mind, but no one's hands, the bridge prove to be objectively false, and we, walking over the bank into the water, be set free from that which is subjective on the further bank of Styx."

Then I, laughing, "This hardly coincides, Alcibiades, with Protagoras's opinion, that subjective truth was alone useful."

"But rather proves," said Socrates, "that undiluted draughts of it are of a hurtful and poisonous nature, and require to be tempered with somewhat of objective truth, before it is safe to use them;—at least in the case of bridges."

"Did I not tell you," interrupted Alcibiades, "how the old deceiver would try to put me to bed of some dead puppy or log? Or do you not see how, in order, after his custom, to raise a laugh about the whole question by vulgar examples he is blinking what he knows as well as I?"

S. "What then, fair youth?"

A. "That Protagoras was not speaking about bridges, or any other merely physical things, on which no difference of opinion need occur, because every one can satisfy himself by simply using his senses; but concerning moral and intellectual matters, which are not cognizable by the senses, and therefore permit, without blame, a greater diversity of opinion. Error on such points, he told us—on the subject of religion, for example—was both pardonable and harmless; for no blame could be imputed to the man who acted faithfully up to his own belief, whatsoever that might be."

S. "Bravely spoken of him, and worthily of a free state. But tell me, Alcibiades, with what matters does religion deal?"

A. "With the Gods."

S. "Then it is not hurtful to speak false things of the Gods?"

A. "Not unless you know them to be false."

S. "But answer me this, Alcibiades. If you made a mistake concerning numbers, as that twice two made five, might it not be hurtful to you?"

A. "Certainly; for I might pay away five obols instead of four."

S. "And so be punished, not by any anger of two and two against you, but by those very necessary laws of number, which you had mistaken?"

A. "Yes."

S. "Or if you made a mistake concerning music, as that two consecutive notes could produce harmony, that opinion also, if you acted upon it, would be hurtful to you?"

A. "Certainly; for I should make a discord, and pain my own ears, and my hearers."

S. "And, in this case also, be punished, not by any anger of the lyre against you, but by those very necessary laws of music which you had mistaken?"

A. "Yes."

S. "Or if you mistook concerning a brave man, believing him to be a coward, might not this also be hurtful to you? If, for instance, you attacked him carelessly, expecting him to run away, and he defended himself valiantly, and conquered you; or if you neglected to call for his help in need, expecting him falsely, as in the former case, to run away; would not such a mistake be hurtful to you, and punish you, not by any anger of the man against you, but by your mistake itself?"

A. "It is evident."

S. "We may assume, then, that such mistakes at least are hurtful, and that they are liable to be punished by the very laws of that concerning which we mistake?"

A. "We may so assume."

S. "Suppose, then, we were to say, 'What argument is this of yours, Protagoras?—that concerning lesser things, both intellectual and moral, such as concerning number, music, or the character of a man, mistakes are hurtful, and liable to bring punishment, in proportion to our need of using those things: but concerning the Gods, the very authors and lawgivers of number, music, human character, and all other things whatsoever, mistakes are of no consequence, nor in any way hurtful to man, who stands in need of their help, not only in stress of battle, once or twice in his life, as he might of the brave man, but always and in all things both outward and inward? Does it not seem strange to

you, for it does to me, that to make mistakes concerning such beings should not bring an altogether infinite and daily punishment, not by any resentment of theirs, but, as in the case of music or numbers, by the very fact of our having mistaken the laws of their being, on which the whole Universe depends?—What do you suppose Protagoras would be able to answer if he faced the question boldly?”

A. “I cannot tell.”

S. “Nor I either. Yet one thing more it may be worth our while to examine. If one should mistake concerning God, will his error be one of excess or defect?”

A. “How can I tell?”

S. “Let us see. Is not Zeus more perfect than all other beings?”

A. “Certainly, if it be true that, as they say, the perfection of each kind of being is derived from him; He must therefore be himself more perfect than any one of those perfections.”

S. “Well argued. Therefore, if he conceived of himself, his conception of himself would be more perfect than that of any man concerning him?”

A. “Assuredly; if he have that faculty, he must needs have it in perfection.”

S. “Suppose, then, that he conceived of one of his own properties, such as his justice; how large would that perfect conception of his be?”

A. “But how can I tell, Socrates?”

S. “My good friend, would it not be exactly commensurate with that justice of his?”

A. “How then?”

S. “Wherein consists the perfection of any conception, save in this, that it be the exact copy of that whereof it is conceived, and neither greater nor less?”

A. “I see now.”

S. “Without the Pythia’s help, I should say. But, tell me—We agree that Zeus’s conception of his own justice will be exactly commensurate with his justice?”

A. “We do.”

S. “But man’s conception thereof, it has been agreed, would be certainly less perfect than Zeus’s?”

A. “It would.”

S. “Man, then, it seems, would always conceive God to be less just than God conceives himself to be?”

A. “He would.”

S. “And therefore to be less just, according to the argument, than he really is?”



A. "True."

S. "And therefore his error concerning Zeus, would be in this case an error of defect?"

A. "It would."

S. "And so on of each of his other properties?"

A. "The same argument would likewise, as far as I can see, apply to them."

S. "So that, on the whole, man, by the unassisted power of his own faculty, will always conceive Zeus to be less just, wise, good, and beautiful than he is?"

A. "It seems probable."

S. "But does not that seem to you hurtful?"

A. "Why so?"

S. "As if, for instance, a man believing that Zeus loves him less than he really does, should become superstitious and self-tormenting. Or, believing that Zeus will guide him less than he really will, he should go his way through life without looking for that guidance: or if, believing that Zeus cares about his conquering his passions less than he really does, he should become careless and despairing in the struggle: or if, believing that Zeus is less interested in the welfare of mankind than He really is, he should himself neglect to assist them, and so lose the glory of being called a benefactor of his country: would not all these mistakes be hurtful ones?"

"Certainly," said I: but Alcibiades was silent.

S. "And would not these mistakes, by the hypothesis, themselves punish him who made them, without any resentment whatsoever, or Nemesis of the gods, being required for his chastisement?"

"It seems so," said I.

S. "But can we say of such mistakes, and of the harm which may accrue from them, anything but that they must both be infinite; seeing that they are mistakes concerning an infinite Being, and his infinite properties, on every one of which, and on all together, our daily existence depends?"

P. "It seems so."

S. "So that, until such a man's error concerning Zeus, the source of all things, is cleared up, either in this life or in some future one, we cannot but fear for him infinite confusion, misery, and harm, in all matters which he may take in hand?"

Then Alcibiades, angrily,—“What ugly mask is this you have put on, Socrates? You speak rather like a priest trying to frighten rustics into paying their first-fruits, than a philosopher inquiring after that which is beautiful. But you shall never terrify me into believing that it is not a noble thing to speak out

whatsoever a man believes, and to go forward boldly in the spirit of truth."

S. "Feeling first, I hope, with your staff, as would be but reasonable in the case of the bridge, whether your belief was objectively or only subjectively true, lest you should fall through your subjective bridge into objective water. Nevertheless, leaving the bridge and the water, let us examine a little what this said spirit of truth may be. How do you define it?"

A. "I assert, that whosoever says honestly what he believes, does so by the spirit of truth."

S. "Then if Lyce, patting those soft cheeks of yours, were to say, 'Alcibiades, thou art the fairest youth in Athens,' she would speak by the spirit of truth?"

A. "They say so."

S. "And they say rightly. But if Lyce, as is her custom, wished by so saying to cheat you into believing that she loved you, and thereby to wheedle you out of a new shawl, she would still speak by the spirit of truth?"

A. "I suppose so."

S. "But if, again, she said the same thing to Phaethon, she would still speak by the spirit of truth?"

"By no means, Socrates," said I, laughing.

S. "Be silent, fair boy; you are out of court as an interested party. Alcibiades shall answer. If Lyce, being really mad with love, like Sappho, were to believe Phaethon to be fairer than you, and say so, she would still speak by the spirit of truth?"

A. "I suppose so."

S. "Do not frown; your beauty is in no question. Only she would then be saying what is not true?"

"I must answer for him after all," said I.

S. "Then it seems, from what has been agreed, that it is indifferent to the spirit of truth, whether it speak truth or not. The spirit seems to be of an enviable serenity. But suppose again, that I believed that Alcibiades had an ulcer on his leg, and were to proclaim the same now to the people, when they come into the Pnyx, should I not be speaking by the spirit of truth?"

A. "But that would be a shameful and blackguardly action."

S. "Be it so. It seems, therefore, that it is indifferent to the spirit of truth whether that which it affirms be honourable or blackguardly. Is it not so?"

A. "It seems so, most certainly, in that case at least."

S. "And in others, as I think. But tell me—Is not the man who does what he believes, as much moved by this your spirit of truth as he who says what he believes?"

A. "Certainly he is."

S. "Then, if I believed it right to lie or steal, I, in lying or stealing, should lie or steal by the spirit of truth?"

A. "Certainly: but that is impossible."

S. "My fine fellow, and wherefore? I have heard of a nation among the Indians, who hold it a sacred duty to murder every one, not of their own tribe, whom they can waylay; and when they are taken and punished by the rulers of that country, die joyfully under the greatest torments, believing themselves certain of an entrance into the Elysian Fields, in proportion to the number of murders which they have committed."

A. "They must be impious wretches."

S. "Be it so. But believing themselves to be right, they commit murder by the spirit of truth."

A. "It seems to follow from the argument."

S. "Then it is indifferent to the spirit of truth, whether the action which it prompts be right or wrong?"

A. "It must be confessed."

S. "It is therefore not a moral faculty, this spirit of truth. Let us see now whether it be an intellectual one. How are intellectual things defined, Phaethon? Tell me, for you are cunning in such matters."

P. "Those things which have to do with processes of the mind."

S. "With right processes, or with wrong?"

P. "With right, of course."

S. "And processes for what purpose?"

P. "For the discovery of facts."

S. "Of facts as they are, or as they are not?"

P. "As they are."

S. "And he who discovers facts as they are, discovers truth; while he who discovers facts as they are not, discovers falsehood?"

P. "He discovers nothing, Socrates."

S. "True; but it has been agreed already that the spirit of truth is indifferent to the question whether facts be true or false, but only concerns itself with the sincere affirmation of them, whatsoever they may be. Much more then must it be indifferent to those processes by which they are discovered."

P. "How so?"

S. "Because it only concerns itself with affirmation concerning facts; but these processes are anterior to that affirmation."

P. "I comprehend."

S. "And much more is it indifferent to whether those are right processes or not."

P. "Much more so."

S. "It is therefore not intellectual. It remains, therefore, that it must be some merely physical faculty, like that of fearing, hungering, or enjoying the sexual appetite."

A. "Absurd, Socrates!"

S. "That is the argument's concern, not ours: let us follow manfully whithersoever it may lead us."

A. "Lead on, thou sophist!"

S. "It was agreed, then, that he who does what he thinks right, does so by the spirit of truth—was it not?"

A. "It was."

S. "Then he who eats when he thinks that he ought to eat, does so by the spirit of truth?"

A. "What next?"

S. "This next, that he who blows his nose when he thinks that it wants blowing, blows his nose by the spirit of truth."

A. "What next?"

S. "Do not frown, friend. Believe me, in such days as these, I honour even the man who is honest enough to blow his nose because he finds that he ought to do so. But tell me,—a horse, when he shies at a beggar, does not he also do so by the spirit of truth? For he believes sincerely the beggar to be something formidable, and honestly acts upon his conviction."

"Not a doubt of it," said I, laughing, in spite of myself, at Alcibiades's countenance.

S. "It is in danger, then, of proving to be something quite brutish and doggish, this spirit of truth. I should not wonder, therefore, if we found it proper to be restrained."

A. "How so, thou hair-splitter?"

S. "Have we not proved it to be common to man and animals; but are not those passions which we have in common with animals to be restrained?"

P. "Restrain the spirit of truth, Socrates?"

S. "If it be doggishly inclined. As, for instance, if a man knew that his father had committed a shameful act, and were to publish it, he would do so by the spirit of truth. Yet such an act would be blackguardly, and to be restrained."

P. "Of course."

S. "But much more, if he accused his father only on his own private suspicion, not having seen him commit the act; while many others, who had watched his father's character more than he did, assured him that he was mistaken."

P. "Such an act would be to be restrained, not merely as blackguardly, but as impious."

S. "Or if a man believed things derogatory to the character of the Gods, not having seen them do wrong himself, while all

those who had given themselves to the study of divine things assured him that he was mistaken, would he not be bound to restrain an inclination to speak such things, even if he believed them?"

P. Surely, Socrates; and that even if he believed that the Gods did not exist at all. For there would be far more chance that he alone was wrong, and the many right, than that the many were wrong, and he alone right. He would therefore commit an insolent and conceited action, and, moreover, a cruel and shameless one; for he would certainly make miserable, if he were believed, the hearts of many virtuous persons who had never harmed him, for no immediate or demonstrable purpose except that of pleasing his own self-will; and that much more, were he wrong in his assertion."

S. "Here, then, is another case in which it seems proper to restrain the spirit of truth, whatsoever it may be?"

P. "What, then, are we to say of those who speak fearlessly and openly their own opinions on every subject? for, in spite of all this, one cannot but admire them, whether rationally or irrationally."

S. "We will allow them at least the honour which we do to the wild boar, who rushes fiercely through thorns and brambles upon the dogs, not to be turned aside by spears or tree-trunks, and indeed charges forward the more valiantly the more tightly he shuts his eyes. That praise we can bestow on him, but, I fear, no higher one. It is expedient, nevertheless, to have such a temperament, as it is to have a good memory, or a loud voice, or a straight nose, unlike mine; only, like other animal passions, it must be restrained and regulated by reason and the law of right, so as to employ itself only on such matters and to such a degree as they prescribe."

"It may seem so in the argument," said I. "Yet no argument, even of yours, Socrates, with your pardon, shall convince me that the spirit of truth is not fair and good, ay, the noblest possession of all; throwing away which, a man throws away his shield, and becomes unworthy of the company of Gods or men."

S. "Or of beasts either, as it seems to me and the argument. Nevertheless, to this point has the argument, in its cunning and malice, brought us by crooked paths. Can we find no escape?"

P. "I know none."

S. "But may it not be possible that we, not having been initiated, like Alcibiades, into the Babylonian mysteries, have somewhat mistaken the meaning of that expression, 'spirit of truth?' For truth we defined to be 'facts as they are.' The spirit of truth then should mean, should it not, the spirit of facts as they are?"

P. "It should."

S. "But what shall we say that this expression, in its turn, means? The spirit which makes facts as they are?"

A. "Surely not. That would be the supreme Demiurgus himself."

S. "Of whom you were not speaking, when you spoke of the spirit of truth?"

A. "Certainly not. I was speaking of a spirit in man."

S. "And belonging to him?"

A. "Yes."

S. "And doing—what, with regard to facts as they are? for this is just the thing which puzzles me."

A. "Telling facts as they are."

S. "Without seeing them as they are?"

A. "How you bore one! of course not. It sees facts as they are, and therefore tells them."

S. "But perhaps it might see them as they are, and find it expedient, being of the same temperament as I, to hold its tongue about them? Would it then be still the spirit of truth?"

A. "It would, of course."

S. "The man then who possesses the spirit of truth will see facts as they are?"

A. "He will."

S. "And conversely?"

A. "Yes."

S. "But if he sees anything only as it seems to him, and is not in fact, he will not, with regard to that thing, see it by the spirit of truth?"

A. "I suppose not."

S. "Neither then will he be able to speak of it by the spirit of truth."

A. "Why?"

S. "Because, by what we agreed before, it will not be there to speak of, my wondrous friend! For it appeared to us, if I recollect right, that facts can only exist as they are, and not as they are not, and that therefore the spirit of truth had nothing to do with any facts but those which are."

"But," I interrupted, "O dear Socrates, I fear much that if the spirit of truth be such as this, it must be beyond the reach of man."

S. "Why then?"

P. "Because the immortal Gods only can see things as they really are, having alone made all things, and ruling them all according to the laws of each. They therefore, I much fear, will be alone able to behold them, how they are really in their inner

nature and properties, and not merely from the outside, and by guess, as we do. How then can we obtain such a spirit ourselves?"

S. "Dear boy, you seem to wish that I should, as usual, put you off with a myth, when you begin to ask me about those who know far more about me than I do about them. Nevertheless, shall I tell you a myth?"

P. "If you have nothing better."

S. "They say, then, that Prometheus, when he grew to man's estate, found mankind, though they were like him in form, utterly brutish and ignorant, so that, as Æschylus says:—

' Seeing they saw in vain,  
Hearing they heard not ; but were like the shapes  
Of dreams, and long time did confuse all things  
At random : '—

being, as I suppose, led like the animals, only by their private judgments of things as they seemed to each man, and enslaved to that subjective truth, which we found to be utterly careless and ignorant of facts as they are. But Prometheus, taking pity on them, determined in his mind to free them from that slavery and to teach them to rise above the beasts, by seeing things as they are. He therefore made them acquainted with the secrets of nature, and taught them to build houses, to work in wood and metals, to observe the courses of the stars, and all other such arts and sciences, which if any man attempts to follow according to his private opinion, and not according to the rules of that art, which are independent of him and of his opinions, being discovered from the unchangeable laws of things as they are, he will fail. But yet as the myth relates, they became only a more cunning sort of animals ; not being wholly freed from their original slavery to a certain subjective opinion about themselves, that each man should, by means of those arts and sciences, please and help himself only. Fearing, therefore, lest their increased strength and cunning should only enable them to prey upon each other all the more fiercely, he stole fire from heaven, and gave to each man a share thereof for his hearth, and to each community for their common altar. And by the light of this celestial fire they learnt to see those celestial and eternal bonds between man and man, as of husband to wife, of father to child, of citizen to his country, and of master to servant, without which man is but a biped without feathers, and which are in themselves, being independent of the flux of matter and time, most truly facts as they are. And since that time, whatsoever household or nation has allowed these fires to become extinguished, has sunk down again to the level of the brutes : while those who have passed them down to their children burn-

ing bright and strong, become partakers of the bliss of the Heroes, in the Happy Islands. It seems to me then, Phaethon and Alcibiades, that if we find ourselves in anywise destitute of this heavenly fire, we should pray for the coming of that day, when Prometheus shall be unbound from Caucasus, if by any means he may take pity on us and on our children, and again bring us down from heaven that fire which is the spirit of truth, that we may see facts as they are. For which if he were to ask Zeus humbly and filially, I cannot believe that he would refuse it. And indeed, I think that the poets, as is their custom, corrupt the minds of young men by telling them that Zeus chained Prometheus to Caucasus for his theft; seeing that it befits such a ruler, as I take the Father of Gods and men to be, to know that his subjects can only do well by means of his bounty, and therefore to bestow it freely, as the kings of Persia do, on all who are willing to use it in the service of their sovereign."

"So then," said Alcibiades laughing, "till Prometheus be unbound from Caucasus, we who have lost, as you seem to hint, this heavenly fire, must needs go on upon our own subjective opinions, having nothing better to which to trust. Truly, thou sophist, thy conclusion seems to me after all not to differ much from that of Protagoras."

S. "Ah dear boy! know you not that to those who have been initiated, and as they say in the mysteries, twice born, Prometheus is always unbound, and stands ready to assist them; while to those who are self-willed and conceited of their own opinions, he is removed to an inaccessible distance, and chained in icy fetters on untrodden mountain-peaks, where the vulture ever devours his fair heart, which sympathizes continually with the follies and the sorrows of mankind? Of what punishment, then, must not those be worthy, who by their own wilfulness and self-confidence bind again to Caucasus the fair Titan, the friend of men?"

"By Apollo!" said Alcibiades, "this language is more fit for the tripod in Delphos, than for the Bema in the Pnyx. So fare thee well, thou Pythoness! I must go and con over my oration, at least if thy prophesying has not altogether addled my thoughts."

But I, as soon as Alcibiades was gone, for I was ashamed to speak before, turning to Socrates said to him, all but weeping:—

"Oh Socrates, what cruel words are these which you have spoken? Are you not ashamed to talk thus contemptuously to one like me, even though he be younger and less cunning in argument than yourself; knowing as you do, how, when I might have grown rich in my native city of Rhodes, and marrying



there, as my father purposed, a wealthy merchant's heiress, so have passed my life delicately, receiving the profits of many ships and warehouses, I yet preferred Truth beyond riches; and leaving my father's house, came to Athens in search of wisdom, dissipating my patrimony upon one sophist after another, listening greedily to Hippias, and Polus, and Gorgias, and Protagoras, and last of all to you, hard-hearted man that you are? For from my youth I loved and longed after nothing so much as Truth, whatsoever it may be; thinking nothing so noble as to know that which is Right, and knowing it, to do it. And that longing, or love of mine, which is what I suppose Protagoras meant by the spirit of truth, I cherished as the fairest and most divine possession, and that for which alone it was worth while to live. For it seemed to me, that even if in my search I never attained to truth, still it were better to die seeking, than not to seek; and that even if acting by what I considered to be the spirit of truth, and doing honestly in every case that which seemed right, I should often, acting on a false conviction, offend in ignorance against the absolute righteousness of the Gods, yet that such an offence was deserving, if not of praise for its sincerity, yet at least of pity and forgiveness; but by no means to be classed, as you class it, with the appetites of brutes; much less to be threatened, as you threaten it, with infinite and eternal misery by I know not what necessary laws of Zeus, and to be put off at last with some myth or other about Prometheus. Surely your mother bare you a scoffer and pitiless, Socrates, and not, as you boast, a man-midwife fit for fair youths."

Then, smiling sweetly, "Dear boy," said he, "were I such as you fancy, how should I be here now discoursing with you concerning truth, instead of conning my speech for the Pnyx, like Alcibiades, that I may become a demagogue, deceiving the mob with flattery, and win for myself houses, and lands, and gold, and slave-girls, and fame, and power, even to a tyranny itself? For in this way I might have made my tongue a profitable member of my body; but now, being hurried up and down in barren places, like one mad of love, from my longing after fair youths, I waste my speech on them; receiving, as is the wont of true lovers, only curses and ingratitude from their arrogance. But tell me, thou proud Adonis—This spirit of truth in thee, which thou thoughtest, and rightly, thy most noble possession—did it desire truth or not?"

P. "But, Socrates, I told you that very thing, and said that it was a longing after truth, which I could not restrain or disobey."

S. "Tell me now, does one long for that which one possesses, or for that which one does not possess?"

P. "For that which one does not possess."

S. "And is one in love with that which is one's self, or with that which is not?"

P. "With that which is not one's self, thou mocker. We are not all, surely, like Narcissus?"

S. "No, by the dog! not quite all. But see now: it appears that when any one is in love with a thing, and longs for it, as thou didst for truth, it must be something which is not himself, and which he does not possess?"

P. "True."

S. "You, then, while you were loving facts as they are, and longing to see them as they are, yet did not possess that which you longed for?"

P. "True, indeed; else why should I have been driven forth by the anger of the gods, like Bellerophon, to pace the Aleian plain, eating my own soul, if I had possessed that for which I longed?"

S. "Well said, dear boy. But see again. This truth which you loved, and which was not yourself or part of yourself, was certainly also nothing of your own making?—Though they say that Pygmalion was enamoured of the statue which he himself had carved."

P. "But he was miserable, Socrates, till the statue became alive."

S. "They say so; but what has that to do with the argument?"

P. "I know not. But it seems to me horrible, as it did to Pygmalion, to be enamoured of anything which cannot return your love, but is, as it were, your puppet. Should we not think it a shameful thing, if a mistress were to be enamoured of one of her own slaves?"

S. "We should; and that, I suppose, because the slave would have no free choice whether to refuse or to return his mistress's love; but would be compelled, being a slave, to submit to her, even if she were old, or ugly, or hateful to him?"

P. "Of course."

S. "And should we not say, Phaethon, that there was no true enjoyment in such love, even on the part of the mistress; nay that it was not worthy of the name of love at all, but was merely something base, such as happens to animals?"

P. "We should say so rightly."

S. "Tell me, then, Phaethon,—for a strange doubt has entered my mind on account of your words.—This truth of which you were enamoured, seems, from what has been agreed, not to be a part of yourself, nor a creation of your own, like Pygma-

lion's statue :—how then has it not happened to you to be even more miserable than Pygmalion till you were sure that truth loved you in return?—and, moreover, till you were sure that truth had free choice as to whether it should return or refuse your love? For, otherwise, you would be in danger of being found suffering the same base passion as a mistress enamoured of a slave who cannot resist her."

P. "I am puzzled, Socrates."

S. "Shall we rather say, then, that you were enamoured, not of truth itself, but of the spirit of truth? For we have been all along defining truth to be 'facts as they are,' have we not?"

P. "We have."

S. "But there are many facts as they are, whereof to be enamoured would be base, for they cannot return your love. As, for instance, that one and one make two, or that a horse has four legs. With respect to such facts, you would be, would you not, in the same position as a mistress towards her slave?"

P. "Certainly. It seems, then, better to assume the other alternative."

S. "It does. But does it not follow, that when you were enamoured of this spirit, you did not possess it?"

P. "I fear so, by the argument."

"And I fear, too, that we agreed that he only who possessed the spirit of truth saw facts as they are; for that was involved in our definition of the spirit of truth."

P. "But, Socrates, I knew, at least, that one and one made two, and that a horse had four legs. I must then have seen some facts as they are."

S. "Doubtless, fair boy; but not all."

P. "I do not pretend to that."

S. "But if you had possessed the spirit of truth, you would have seen all facts whatsoever as they are. For he who possesses a thing can surely employ it freely for all purposes which are not contrary to the nature of that thing; can he not?"

P. "Of course he can. But if I did not possess the spirit of truth, how could I see any truth whatsoever?"

S. "Suppose, dear boy, that instead of your possessing it, it were possible for it to possess you; and possessing you, to show you as much of itself, or as little, as it might choose, and concerning such things only as it might choose: would not that explain the dilemma?"

P. "It would assuredly."

S. "Let us see, then, whether this spirit of truth may not be something which is capable of possessing you, and employing you, rather than of being possessed and employed by you. To

me, indeed, this spirit seems likely to be some demon or deity, and that one of the greatest."

P. "Why then?"

S. "Can lifeless and material things see?"

P. "Certainly not; only live ones."

S. "This spirit, then, seems to be living; for it sees things as they are."

P. "Yes."

S. "And it is also intellectual; for intellectual facts can be only seen by an intellectual being."

P. "True."

S. "And also moral; for moral facts can only be seen by a moral being."

P. "True also."

S. "But this spirit is evidently not a man; it remains, therefore, that it must be some demon."

P. "But why one of the greatest?"

S. "Tell me, Phaethon, is not God to be numbered among facts as they are?"

P. "Assuredly; for he is before all others, and more eternal and absolute than all."

S. "Then this spirit of truth must also be able to see God as he is."

P. "It is probable."

S. "And certain, if, as we agreed, it be the very spirit which sees all facts whatsoever as they are. Now tell me, can the less see the greater as it is?"

P. "I think not; for an animal cannot see a man as he is, but only that part of him in which he is like an animal, namely, his outward figure and his animal passions; but not his moral sense or reason, for of them it has itself no share."

S. "True; and in like wise, a man of less intellect could not see a man of greater intellect than himself, as he is, but only a part of his intellect."

P. "Certainly."

S. "And does not the same thing follow from what we said just now, that God's conceptions of himself must be the only perfect conceptions of him? For if any being could see God as he is, the same would be able to conceive of him as he is; which we agreed was impossible."

P. "True."

S. "Then, surely, this spirit which sees God as he is, must be equal with God."

P. "It seems probable; but none is equal to God except himself."

S. "Most true, Phaethon. But what shall we say now, but that this spirit of truth, whereof thou hast been enamoured, is, according to the argument, none other than Zeus, who alone comprehends all things, and sees them as they are, because he alone has given to each its inward and necessary laws?"

P. "But, Socrates, there seems something impious in the thought."

S. "Impious, truly, if we held that this spirit of truth was a part of your own self. But we agreed that it was not a part of you, but something utterly independent of you,"

P. "Noble would the news be, Socrates, were it true; yet it seems to me beyond belief."

S. "Did we not prove just now concerning Zeus, that all mistakes concerning him were certain to be mistakes of defect?"

P. "We did, indeed."

S. "How do you know, then, that you have not fallen into some such error, and have suspected Zeus to be less condescending towards you than he really is?"

P. "Would that it were so! But I fear it is too fair a hope."

S. "Do I seem to thee now, dear boy, more insolent and unfeeling than Protagoras, when he tried to turn thee away from the search after absolute truth, by saying sophistically that it was an attempt of the Titans to scale heaven, and bade thee be content with asserting shamelessly and brutishly thine own subjective opinions? For I do not bid thee scale the throne of Zeus, into whose presence none could arrive, as it seems to me, unless he himself willed it; but to believe that he has given thee from thy childhood a glimpse of his own excellence, that so thy heart, conjecturing, as in the case of a veiled statue, from one part the beauty of the rest, might become enamoured thereof, and long for that sight of him which is the highest and only good, that so his splendour may give thee light to see facts as they are."

P. "Oh, Socrates! and how is this blessedness to be attained?"

S. "Even as, the myths relate, the Nymphs obtained the embraces of the Gods; by pleasing him and obeying him in all things, lifting up daily pure hands and a thankful heart, if by any means he may condescend to purge thine eyes, that thou mayest see clearly, and without those motes, and specks, and distortions of thine own organ of vision, which flit before the eyeballs of those who have been drunk over-night, and which are called by sophists subjective truth; watching everywhere anxiously and reverently for those glimpses of his beauty, which he will vouchsafe to thee more and more as thou provest thyself worthy of them, and will reward thy love by making thee more

and more partaker of his own spirit of truth ; whereby seeing facts as they are, thou wilt see him who has made them according to his own ideas, that they may be a mirror of his unspeakable splendour. Is not this a fairer hope for thee, O Phaethon, than that which Protagoras held out to thee,—that neither seeing Zeus, nor seeing facts as they are, nor affirming any truth whatsoever, nor depending for thy knowledge on any one but thine own ignorant self, thou mightest nevertheless be so fortunate as to escape punishment ; not knowing, as it seems to me, that such a state of ignorance and blindfold rashness, even if Tartarus were a dream of the poets or the priests, is in itself the most fearful of punishments ? ”

P. “ It is, indeed, my dear Socrates. Yet what are we to say of those who, sincerely loving and longing after knowledge, yet arrive at false conclusions, which are proved to be false by contradicting each other ? ”

S. “ We are to say, Phaethon, that they have not loved knowledge enough to desire utterly to see facts as they are, but only to see them as they would wish them to be ; and loving themselves rather than Zeus, have wished to remodel in some things or other his universe, according to their own subjective opinions. By this, or by some other act of self-will, or self-conceit, or self-dependence, they have compelled Zeus, not, as I think, without pity and kindness to them, to withdraw from them in some degree the sight of his own beauty. We must, therefore, I fear, liken them to Acharis, the painter of Lemnos, who, intending to represent Phœbus, painted from a mirror a copy of his own defects and deformities ; or perhaps to that Nymph, who finding herself beloved by Phœbus, instead of reverently and silently returning the affection, boasted of it to all her neighbours, as a token of her own beauty, and despised the God ; so that he, being angry, changed her into a chattering magpie ; or again to Arachne, who having been taught the art of weaving by Athene, pretended to compete with her own instructress, and being metamorphosed by her into a spider, was condemned, like the sophists, to spin out of her own entrails endless ugly webs, which are destroyed, as soon as finished, by every slave-girl's broom.”

P. “ But shall we despise and hate such, O Socrates ? ”

S. “ No, dearest boy, we will rather pity and instruct them lovingly ; remembering always that we shall become such as they the moment we begin to fancy that truth is our own possession, and not the very beauty of Zeus himself, which he shows to those whom he will, and in such measure as he finds them worthy to behold. But to me, considering how great must be the condescension of Zeus in unveiling to any man, even the

worthiest, the least portion of his own loveliness, there has come at times a sort of dream, that the divine splendour will at last pierce through and illumine all dark souls, even in the house of Hades, showing them, as by a great sunrise, both what they themselves, and what all other things are, really and in the sight of Zeus; which if it happened, even to Ixion, I believe that his wheel would stop, and his fetters drop off of themselves, and that he would return freely to the upper air, for as long as he himself might choose."

Just then the people began to throng into the Pnyx; and we took our places with the rest to hear the business of the day, after Socrates had privately uttered this prayer:—

"O Zeu, give to me and to all who shall counsel here this day, that spirit of truth by which we may behold that whereof we deliberate, as it is in thy sight!"

"As I expected," said Templeton, with a smile, as I folded up my manuscript. "My friend the parson could not demolish the poor Professor's bad logic without a little professional touch by way of finish."

"What do you mean?"

"Oh—never mind. Only I owe you little thanks for sweeping away any one of my lingering sympathies with Mr. Windrush, if all you can offer me instead is the confounded old nostrum of religion over again."

"Heyday, friend! What next?"

"Really, my dear fellow, I beg your pardon. I forgot that I was speaking to a clergyman."

"Pray don't beg my pardon on that ground. If what you say be right, a clergyman above all others ought to hear it; and if it be wrong, and a symptom of spiritual disease, he ought to hear it all the more. But I cannot tell whether you are right or wrong, till I know what you mean by religion; for there is a great deal of very truly confounded and confounding religion abroad in the world just now, as there has been in all ages; and perhaps you may be alluding to that."

Templeton sat silent for a few minutes, playing with the tackle in his fly-book, and then murmured to himself the well-known lines of Lucretius:—

“ *Humana ante oculos fœde cum vita jaceret  
In terris oppressa gravi sub Relligione  
Quæ caput a cœli regionibus ostendebat,  
Horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans:—*”

“ . . . . There!—blasphemous, reprobate fellow, am I not? ”

“ On the contrary,” I said, “ I think that in the sense in which Lucretius intended that the lines should be taken, they contain a great deal of truth. He had seen the basest and foulest crimes spring from that which he calls *Relligio*, and he had a full right to state that fact. I am not aware that one blasphemes the Catholic and Apostolic Faith by saying that the devilries of the Spanish Inquisition were the direct offspring of that ‘ religious sentiment ’ which Mr. Windrush’s school—though they are at all events right in saying that its source is in man himself, and not in the *regionibus Cœli*—are now glorifying, as something which enables man to save his own soul without the interference of ‘ The Deity,’—indeed, whether ‘ The Deity ’ chooses or not.”

“ Do leave those poor Emersonians alone for a few minutes, and tell me how you can reconcile what you have just said with your own dialogue? ”

“ Why not? ”

“ Is not Lucretius glorying in the notion that the Gods do not trouble themselves with mortals, while you have been asserting that ‘ The Deity ’ troubles himself even with the souls of heathens? ”

“ Certainly. But that is quite a distinct matter from his dislike of what he calls ‘ *Relligio*. ’ In that dislike I can sympathize fully: but on his method of escape Mr. Windrush will probably look with more complaisance than I do, who call it by the ugly name of Atheism.”

“ Then I fear you would call me an Atheist, if you knew all. So we had better say no more about it.”

“ A most curious speech, certainly, to make to a parson, or soul-curer by profession! ”

“ Why, what on earth have you to do but to abhor and flee me? ” asked he, with a laugh, though by no means a merry one.

“ Would your having a headache be a reason for the medical man’s running away from you, or coming to visit you? ”

“ Ah, but this, you know, is my ‘ fault,’ and my ‘ crime,’ and my ‘ sin.’ Eh? ” and he laughed again.

“ Would the doctor visit you the less, because it was your own fault that your head ached? ”

“ Ah, but suppose I professed openly no faith in his powers of curing, and had a great hankering after unaccredited Homœopathies, like Mr. Windrush’s; would not that be a fair cause



for interdiction from fire and water, sacraments and Christian burial?"

"Come, come, Templeton," I said; "you shall not thus jest away serious thoughts with an old friend. I know you are ill at ease. Why not talk over the matter with me fairly and soberly? How do you know, till you have tried, whether I can help you or not?"

"Because I know that your arguments will have no force with me; they will demand of me, or assume in me, certain faculties, sentiments, notions, experiences—call them what you like—I am beginning to suspect sometimes with Cabanis that they are 'a product of the small intestines!'—which I never have had, and never could make myself have, and now don't care whether I have them or not."

"On my honour, I will address you only as what you are, and know yourself to be. But what are these faculties, so strangely beyond my friend Templeton's reach? He used to be distinguished at college for a very clear head, and a very kind heart, and the nicest sense of honour which I ever saw in living man; and I have not heard that they have failed him since he became Templeton of Templeton. And as for his Churchmanship, were not the county papers ringing last month with the accounts of the beautiful new church which he had built, and the stained glass which he brought from Belgium, and the marble font which he brought from Italy; and how he had even given for an altar-piece his own pet Luini, the gem of Templeton House?"

"Effeminate picture!" he said. "It was part and parcel of the idea. . . ."

Before I could ask him what he meant, he looked up suddenly at me with deep sadness on his usually nonchalant face.

"Well, my dear fellow, I suppose I must tell you all, as I have told you so much without your shaking the dust off your feet against me, and consulting Bradshaw for the earliest train to Shrewsbury. You knew my dear mother?"

"I did. The best of women."

"The best of women, and the best of mothers. But, if you recollect, she was a great Low-church saint."

"Why 'but'?" How does that derogate in any wise from her excellence?"

"Not from her excellence; God forbid! or from the excellence of the people of her own party, whom she used to have round her, and who were, some of them, I do believe, as really earnest, and pious, and charitable, and all that, as human beings could be. But it did take away very much indeed from her influence on me."

"Surely she did not neglect to teach you."

"It is a strange thing to say, but she rather taught me too much. I don't deny that it may have been my own fault. I don't blame her, or any one. But you know what I was at college—no worse than other men, I dare say; but no better. I had no reason for being better."

"No reason? Surely she gave you reasons."

"There—you have touched the ailing nerve now. The reasons were what you would call paralogisms. They had no more to do with me than with those trout."

"You mistake, friend, you mistake, indeed," said I.

"I don't mistake at all about this; that whether or not the reasons in themselves had to do with me, the way in which she put them made them practically so much Hebrew. She demanded of me, as the only grounds on which I was to consider myself safe from hell, certain fears and hopes which I did not feel, and experiences which I did not experience; and it was my fault, and a sign of my being in a wrong state—to use no harder term—that I did not feel them; and yet it was only God's grace which could make me feel them: and so I grew up with a dark secret notion that I was a very bad boy: but that it was God's fault and not mine that I was so."

"You were ripe indeed then," said I sadly, "like hundreds more, for Professor Windrush's teaching."

"I will come to that presently. But in the mean time,—was it my fault? I was never what you call a devout person. My 'organ of veneration,' as the phrenologists would say, was never very large. I was a shrewd dashing boy, enjoying life to the finger-tips, and enjoying above all, I will say, pleasing my mother in every way, except in the understanding what she told me,—and what I felt I could not understand. But as I grew older, and watched her, and the men round her, I began to suspect that religion and effeminacy had a good deal to do with each other. For the women, whatsoever their temperaments, or even their tastes might be, took to this to me incomprehensible religion naturally and instinctively: while the very few men who were in their clique were—I don't deny some of them were good men enough—if they had been men at all: if they had been well-read, or well-bred, or gallant, or clear-headed, or liberal-minded, or, in short, any thing but the silky, smooth-tongued hunt-the-slippers nine out of ten of them were. I recollect well asking my mother once, whether there would not be five times more women than men in heaven,—and her answering me sadly and seriously, that she feared there would be. And in the mean time she brought me up to pray and hope that I might some day

be converted, and become a child of God. . . . And one could not help wishing to enjoy one's self as much as possible before that event happened."

"Before that event happened, my dear fellow? Pardon me, but your tone is somewhat irreverent."

"Very likely. I had no reason put before me for regarding such a change as any thing but an unpleasant doom, which would cut me off, or ought to do so, from field sports, from poetry, from art, from science, from politics,—for Christians, I was told, had nothing to do with the politics of this world,—from man and all man's civilization in short; and leave to me, as the only two lawful indulgencies, those of living in a good house, and begetting a family of children."

"And did you throw off the old Creeds for the sake of the civilization which you fancied that they forbid?"

"No . . . I am a Churchman, you know; principally on political grounds, or from custom, or from,—the devil knows what, perhaps,—I do not."

"Probably it is God, and not the devil, who knows why, Templeton."

"Be it so . . . Frightful as it is to have to say it . . . I do not so much care . . . I suppose it is all right: if it is not, it will all come right at last. And in the mean time, I compromise, like the rest of the world; and hear Jane making the children every week-day pray that they may become God's children, and then teaching them every Sunday evening the Catechism, which says that they are so already. I don't understand it. . . . I suppose if it was important, one would understand it. One knows right from wrong, you know, and other fundamentals. If that were necessary, one would know that too."

"But can you submit quietly to such a barefaced contradiction?"

"I? I am only a plain country squire. Of course I should call such dealing with an act of parliament a lie and a sham . . . But about these things, I fancy, the women know best. Jane is ten thousand times as good as I am . . . you don't know half her worth. . . . And I haven't the heart to contradict her,—nor the right either; for I have no reasons to give her; no faith to substitute for hers."

"Our friend, the High-church curate, could have given you a few plain reasons, I should think."

"Of course he could. And I believe in my heart the man is in the right in calling Jane wrong. He has honesty and common sense on his side, just as he has when he calls the present state of Convocation, in the face of that prayer for God's Spirit

on its deliberations, a blasphemous lie and sham. Of course it is. Any ensign in a marching regiment could tell us that, from his mere sense of soldier's honour. But then—if she is wrong, is he right? How do I know? I want reasons: he gives me historic authorities."

"And very good things too; for they are fair phænomena for induction."

"But how will proving to me that certain people once thought a thing right, prove to me that it is right? Good people think differently every day. Good people have thought differently about those very matters in every age. I want some proof which will coincide with the little which I do know about science and philosophy. They must fight out their own battle, if they choose to fight it on mere authority. If one could but have the implicit faith of a child, it would be all very well: but one can't. If one has once been fool enough to think about these things, one must have reasons, or something better than mere *ipse dixits*, or one can't believe them. I should be glad enough to believe;—Do you suppose that I don't envy poor dear Jane from morning to night?—but I can't. And so . . . ."

"And so what?" I asked.

"And so, I believe, I am growing to have no religion at all, and no substitute for it either; for I feel I have no ground or reason for admiring or working out any subject. I have tired of philosophy.—Perhaps it's all wrong,—at least I can't see what it has to do with God, and Christianity, and all which, if it is true, must be more important than any thing else. I have tired of art for the same reason. How can I be any thing but a wretched dilettante, when I have no principles to ground my criticism on, beyond bosh about 'The Beautiful?' I did pluck up heart and read Mr. Ruskin's books greedily when they came out, because I heard he was a good Christian. But I fell upon a little tract of his, *Notes on Sheepfolds*, and gave him up again, when I found that he had a leaning to that 'Clapham sect.' I have dropped politics: for I have no reason, no ground, no principle in them, but expediency. When they asked me this summer to represent the interests of the County in parliament, I asked them how they came to make such a mistake as to fancy that I knew what was their interest, or any one else's? I am becoming more and more of an animal;—fragmentary, inconsistent, seeing to the root of nothing, unable to unite things in my own mind. I just do the duty which lies nearest, and looks simplest. I try to make the boys grow up plucky and knowing,—though what's the use of it? They will go to college with even less principles than I had, and will get into proportionably worse scrapes. I expect to be ruined

by their debts before I die. And for the rest, I read nothing but the *Edinburgh* and the *Agricultural Gazette*. My talk is of bullocks. I just know right from wrong enough to see that the farms are in good order, pay my labourers living wages, keep the old people out of the workhouse, and see that my cottages and schools are all right; for I suppose I was put here for some purpose of that kind,—though what it is, I can't very clearly define. . . . And there's an end of my long story."

"Not quite an animal yet, it seems?" said I with a smile, half to hide my own sadness at a set of experiences which are, alas! already far too common, and will soon be more common still.

"Nearer it than you fancy. I am getting fonder and fonder of a good dinner and a second bottle of claret; about their meaning there is no mistake. And my principal reason for taking the hounds two years ago, was, I do believe, to have something to do in the winter which required no thought, and to have an excuse for falling asleep after dinner, instead of arguing with Jane about her scurrilous religious newspapers. . . . There is a great gulf opening, I see, between me and her. . . . And as I can't bridge it over, I may as well forget it. Pah! I am boring you, and over-talking myself. Have a cigar, and let us say no more about it. There is more here, old fellow, than you will cure by doses of Socratic Dialectics."

"I am not so sure of that," I replied. "On the contrary, I should recommend you in your present state of mind to look out your old Plato as quickly as possible, and see if he and his master Socrates cannot give you, if not altogether a solution for your puzzle, at least a method whereby you may solve it yourself. But tell me first—what has all this to do with your evident sympathy for a man so unlike yourself as Professor Windrush?"

"Perhaps I feel for him principally because he has broken loose from it all in desperation, just as I have. But to tell you the truth, I have been reading more than one book of his school lately; and, as I said, I owe you no thanks for demolishing the little comfort which I seemed to find in them."

"And what was that then?"

"Why—in the first place, you can't deny that however incoherent they may be, they do say a great many clever things, and noble things too, about man, and society, and art, and nature."

"No doubt of it."

"And moreover, they seem to connect all they say with—I suppose you will laugh at me—with God, and spiritual truths, and eternal Divine laws; in short, to consecrate common matters in that very way, which I could not find in my poor mother's teaching."

"No doubt of that either. And therein is one real value of them, as protests in behalf of something nobler and more unselfish than the mere dollar-getting spirit of their country."

"Well, then, can you not see how pleasant it was to me to find some one who would give me a peep into the unseen world, without requiring as an entrance-fee any religious emotions and experiences? Here I had been for years, shut out; told that I had no business with any thing eternal, and pure, and noble, and good; that to all intents and purposes I was nothing better than a very cunning animal who could be damned; because I was still 'carnal,' and had not been through all Jane's mysterious sorrows and joys. And it was really good news to me to hear that they were not required after all, and that all I need do was to be a good man, and leave devotion to those who were inclined to it by temperament."

"Not to be a good man," said I, "but only a good specimen of some sort of man. That, I think, would be the outcome of Emerson's 'Representative Men,' or of those most tragic 'Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli.'"

"How then, hair-splitter? What is the mighty difference?"

"Would you call Dick Turpin a good man, because he was a good highwayman?"

"What now?"

"That he would be an excellent representative man of his class; and therefore, on Mr. Emerson's grounds, a fit subject for a laudatory lecture."

"I hate *reductiones ad absurdum*. Let Turpin take care of himself. I suppose I do not belong to such a very bad sort of men, but that it may be worth my while to become a good specimen of it?"

"Certainly not; only I think, contrary to Mr. Emerson's opinion, that you will not become even that, unless you first become something better still, namely, a good man."

"There you are too refined for me. But can you not understand, now, the causes of my sympathy even with Windrush and his 'spirit of truth?'"

"I can, and those of many more. It seems that you thought you found in that school a wider creed than the one to which you had been accustomed?"

"There was a more comprehensive view of humanity about them, and that pleased me."

"Doubtless, one can be easily comprehensive, if one comprehends good and bad, true and false, under one category, by denying the absolute existence of either goodness or badness, truth or falsehood. But let the view be as comprehensive as it

will, I am afraid that the creed founded thereon will not be very comprehensive."

"Why then?"

"Because it will comprehend so few people; fewer, even, than the sect of those who will believe with Mr. Emerson, that Bacon, like The Lord, is one of the 'heroes who have become bores at last' by being too much obeyed, and that Harvey and Newton made their discoveries by the 'Aristotelian method.' The sect of those who believe that there is no absolute right and wrong, no absolute truth external to himself, discoverable by man, will, it seems to me, be a very narrow one to the end of time; owing to a certain primeval superstition of our race, who, even in barbarous countries, have always been Platonists enough to have some sort of instinct and hope that there was a right and a wrong, and truths independent of their own sentiments and faculties. So that, though this school may enable you to fancy that you understand Lady Jane somewhat more, by the simple expedient of putting on her religious experiences an arbitrary interpretation of your own, which she would indignantly and justly deny, it will enable her to understand you all the less, and widen the gulf between you immeasurably."

"You are severe."

"I only wish you to face one result of a theory, which while it pretends to offer the most comprehensive liberality, will be found to lead in practice to the most narrow and sectarian Epicurism for a cultivated few. But for the many, struggling with the innate consciousness of evil, in them and around them,—an instinctive consciousness which no argumentation about 'evil being a lower form of good,' will ever explain away to those who 'grind among the iron facts of life, and have no time for self-deception'—what good news for them is there in Mr. Emerson's cosy and tolerant Epicurism? They cry for deliverance from their natures; they know that they are not that which they were intended to be, because they follow their natures; and he answers them with, 'Follow your natures, and be that which you were intended to be.' You began this argument by stipulating that I should argue with you simply as a man. Does Mr. Emerson's argument look like doing that, or only arguing as with an individual of that kind of man, or rather animal, to which some iron Fate has compelled you to belong?"

"But, I say, these books have made me a better man."

"I do not doubt it. An earnest cultivated man, speaking his whole mind to an earnest cultivated man, will hardly fail of telling him something he did not know before. But if you had not been a cultivated man, Templeton, a man with few sorrows,

and trials, and few unsatisfied desires—if you had been the village shopkeeper, with his bad debts, and his temptations to make those who can, pay for those who cannot,—if you had been one of your own labourers, environed with the struggle for daily bread, and the alehouse, and hungry children, and a sick wife, and a dull taste, and a duller head,—in short, if you had been a man such as nine out of ten are,—what would his school have taught you then? You want some truths which are common to men as men, which will help and teach them, let their temperament or their circumstances be what they will—do you not? If you do not, your complaint of Lady Jane's exclusive creed is a mere selfish competition on your part, between a creed which will fit her peculiarities, and a creed which will fit your peculiarities. Do you not see that?"

"I do—go on."

"Then I say you will not find that in Professor Windrush's school. I say you will find it Lady Jane's Creed."

"What? In the very creed which excludes me?"

"Whether that creed excludes you or not is a question of the true meaning of its words. And that again is a question of Dialectics. I say it includes you and all mankind."

"You must mistake her doctrines, then."

"I do not, I assure you. I know what they are; and I know, also, the misreading of them to which your dear mother's school has accustomed her, and which has taught her that these creeds only belong to the few who have discovered their own share in them. But whether the creeds really do that or not,—whether Lady Jane does not implicitly confess that they do not by her own words and deeds of every day, that I say, is a question of Dialectics, in the Platonic sense of that word, as the science which discovers the true and false in thought, by discovering the true and false concerning the meanings of words, which represent thought."

"Be it so. I should be glad to hold what Jane holds, for the sake of the marvellous practical effect on her character—sweet creature that she is!—which it has produced in the last seven years."

"And which effect, I presume, was not increased by her denying to you any share in the same?"

"Alas, no! It is only when she falls on that—when she begins denouncing and excluding—that all the old faults, few and light as they are, seem to leap into ugly life again for the moment."

"Few and light, indeed! Ah, my dear Templeton, the gulf between you and happiness looks wide; but only because it is magnified in mist."



“Which you would have me disperse by lightning-flashes of Dialectics, eh? Well, every man his nostrum.”

“I have not. My method is not my own, but Plato’s.”

“But, my good fellow, the Windrush School admire Plato as much as you do, and yet certainly arrive at somewhat different conclusions.”

“They do Plato the honour of patronizing him, as a Representative Man; but their real text-book, you will find, is Proclus. That hapless Philosophaster’s *à priori* method, even his very verbiage, is dear to their souls; for they copy it through wet and dry, through sense and nonsense. But as for Plato,—when I find them using Plato’s weapons, I shall believe in their understanding and love of him.”

“And in the meanwhile, claim him as a new verger for the Reformed Church Catholic?”

“Not a new verger, Templeton. Augustine said, fourteen hundred years ago, that Socrates was the philosopher of the Catholic Faith. If he has not seemed so of late years, it is, I suspect, because we do not understand quite the same thing as Augustine did, when we talk of the Catholic Faith and Christianity.”

“But you forget, in your hurry of clerical confidence, that the question still remains, whether these Creeds are true.”

“That, too, as I take it, is a question of Dialectics, unless you choose to reduce the whole to a balance-of-probabilities-argument,—rather too narrow a basis for a World-faith to stand upon. Try all ‘mythic’ theories, Straussite and others, by honest Dialectics. Try your own thoughts and experiences, and the accredited thoughts and experiences of wise men, by the same method. Mesmerism and ‘The Development of Species’ may wait till they have settled themselves somewhat more into sciences; at present it does not much matter what agrees or disagrees with them. But using this weapon fearlessly and honestly, you will, unless Socrates and Plato were fools, arrive at absolute eternal truths, which are equally true for all men, good or bad, conscious or unconscious; and I tell you—of course you need not believe me till you have made trial—that those truths will coincide with the plain, honest meaning of the Catholic Creeds, as determined by the same method,—the only one, indeed, by which they or anything else can be determined.”

“You forget Baconian induction, of which you are so fond.”

“And pray what are Dialectics, but strict Baconian induction applied to words, as the phenomena of mind, instead of to things, the phenomena of——”

“What?”

"I can't tell you; or, rather, I will not. I have my own opinion about what those trees and stones are; but it will require a few years more verification before I tell."

"Really, you and your Dialectics seem in a hopeful and valiant state of mind."

"Why not? Can truth do any thing but conquer?"

"Of course—assuming, as every one does, that the truth is with you."

"My dear fellow, I have seldom met a man who could not be a far better dialectician than I shall ever be, if he would but use his Common Sense."

"Common Sense? That really sounds something like a bathos, after the great big Greek word which you have been propounding to me as the cure for all my doubts."

"What? Are you about to 'gib' after all, just as I was flattering myself that I had broken you in to go quietly in harness?"

"I am very much minded to do so. The truth is, I cannot bring myself to believe that the universal panacea lies in an obscure and ancient scientific method."

"Obscure and ancient? Did I not just say that any man might be a dialectician? Did Socrates ever appeal to any faculty but the Common Sense of man as man, which exists just as much in England now, I presume, as it did in Athens in his day? Does he not, in pursuance of that method of his, draw his arguments and illustrations, to the horror of the big-worded Sophists, from dogs, kettles, fish-wives, and what not which is vulgar and common-place? Or did I, in my clumsy attempt to imitate him, make use of a single argument which does not lie, developed or undeveloped, in the Common Sense of every clown; in that human reason of his, which is part of God's image in him, and in every man? And has not my complaint against Mr. Windrush's school been, that they will not do this; that they will not accept the ground which is common to men as men, but disregard that part of the 'Vox Populi' which is truly 'Vox Dei,' for that which is 'Vox Diaboli'—for private sentiments, fancies, and aspirations; and so casting away the common sense of mankind, build up each man on the pin's point of his own private judgment, his own inverted pyramid?"

"But are you not asking me to do just the same, when you propose to me to start as a Scientific Dialectician?"

"Why, what are Dialectics, or any other scientific method, but conscious Common Sense? And what is common sense, but unconscious scientific method? Every man is a dialectician, be he scholar or boor, in as far as he tries to use no words which he does not understand, and to sift his own thoughts, and his expres-

sions of them, by that reason which is at once common to men, and independent of them."

"As M. Jourdain talked prose all his life without knowing it. Well . . . I prefer the unconscious method. I have as little faith as Mr. Carlyle would have in saying, 'Go to, let us make'—an induction about words, or any thing else. It seems to me no very hopeful method of finding out facts as they are."

"Certainly; provided you mean any particular induction, and not a general inductive and severely-inquiring habit of mind; that very 'Go to' being a fair sign that you have settled beforehand what the induction shall be; in plain English, that you have come to your conclusion already, and are now looking about for facts to prove it. But is it any wiser to say, 'Go to, I will be conscious of being unconscious of being conscious of my own forms of thought?' For that is what you do say, when, having read Plato, and knowing his method, and its coincidence with Common Sense, you determine to ignore it on common-sense questions."

"But why not ignore it, if mother-wit does as well?"

"Because you cannot ignore it. You have learnt it more or less, and cannot forget it, try as you will, and must either follow it, or break it and talk nonsense. And moreover, you ought not to ignore it. For it seems to me, that you were sent to Cambridge by One greater than your parents, in order that you might learn it, and bring it home hither for the use of the M. Jourdain round you here, who have no doubt been talking prose all their life, but may have been also talking it very badly."

"You speak riddles."

"My dear fellow, may not a man employ Reason, or any other common human faculty, all his life, and yet employ them very clumsily and defectively?"

"I should say so, from the gross amount of human unwisdom."

"And that, in the case of uneducated persons, happens because they are not conscious of those faculties, or of their right laws, but use them blindly and capriciously, by fits and starts, talking sense on one point, and nonsense on another?"

"Too true, Heaven knows."

"But the educated man, if education mean any thing, is the man who has become conscious of those common human faculties and their laws, and has learnt to use them continuously and accurately, on all matters alike."

"True, O Socraticule!"

"Then is it not his especial business to teach the right use of them to the less educated?—unless you agree with the old Sophists, that the purpose of education is to enable us to deceive or coerce the uneducated for our own aggrandizement."

"I am therefore, it seems, to get up Platonic Dialectics simply in order to teach my ploughmen to use their Common Sense?"

"Exactly so. Teach yourself first, and every one around you afterwards, not the doctrines, nor the formulæ—though he had none—but the habit of mind which Socrates tried in vain to teach the Athenian youth. Teach them to face all questions patiently and fearlessly; to begin always by asking every word, great or small, from 'Predestination' to 'Protection,' what it really means. Teach them that 'By your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned,' is no barren pulpit-text, but a tremendous practical law for every day, and for every matter. Teach them to be sure that man can find out truth, because God his Father and Archetype will show it to those who hunger after it. Try to make them see clearly the Divine truths which are implied, not only in their creeds, but in their simplest household words; and——"

"And fail as Socrates failed, or rather worse; for he did teach himself; but I shall not even do that."

"Do not despair in haste. In the first place, I deny that Socrates taught himself, for I believe that One taught him, who has promised to teach every man who desires wisdom; and in the next place, I have no fear but that the sound practical intellect which That Same One has bestowed on the Englishman, will give you a far better auditory in any harvest field, than Socrates could find among the mercurial Athenians of a fallen age."

"Well, that is, at all events, a comfort for poor me. I will really take to my Plato again, till the hunting begins."

"And even then, you know, you don't keep two packs; so you will have three days out of the six wherein to study him."

"Four, you mean,—for I have long given up reading Sunday books on Sunday."

"Then read your Bible and Prayer-book; or even borrow some of Lady Jane's devotional treatises; and try, after you have translated the latter into plain English, to make out what they one and all really do mean, by the light which old Socrates has given you during the week. You will find them wiser than you fancy, and simpler also."

"So be it, my dear Soul-doctor. Here come Lewis and the luncheon."

And so ended our conversation.

## ALEXANDRIA AND HER SCHOOLS.\*

## FOUR LECTURES

DELIVERED AT THE PHILOSOPHICAL INSTITUTION, EDINBURGH.

“ Our little systems have their day;  
 They have their day and cease to be;  
 They are but broken lights of Thee,  
 And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.”  
*Tennyson.*

## PREFACE.

I SHOULD not have presumed to choose for any lectures of mine such a subject as that which I have tried to treat here. The subject was chosen for me by the Institution where the Lectures were delivered. Still less should I have presumed to print them of my own accord, knowing how fragmentary and crude they are. They were printed at the special request of my audience. Least of all, perhaps, ought I to have presumed to publish them, as I have done, at Cambridge, where any inaccuracy or sciolism (and that such defects exist in these pages, I cannot but fear) would be instantly detected, and severely censured: but nevertheless, it seems to me that Cambridge was the fittest place in which they could see the light, because to Cambridge I mainly owe what little right method or sound thought may be found in them, or indeed, in anything which I have ever written. In the hey-day of youthful greediness and ambition, when the mind, dazzled by the vastness and variety of the universe, must needs know everything, or rather know about everything, at once and on the spot, too many are apt, as I have been in past years, to complain of Cambridge studies as too dry and narrow: but as time teaches the student, year by year, what is really required for an understanding of the objects with which

\* Originally published in Cambridge, England.

he meets, he begins to find that his University, in as far as he has really received her teaching into himself, has given him, in her criticism, her mathematics, above all, in Plato, something which all the popular knowledge, the lectures and institutions of the day, and even good books themselves, cannot give, a boon more precious than learning; namely, the art of learning. That instead of casting into his lazy lap treasures which he would not have known how to use, she has taught him to mine for them himself; and has by her wise refusal to gratify his intellectual greediness, excited his hunger, only that he may be the stronger to hunt and till for his own subsistence; and thus the deeper he drinks, in after years, at fountains wisely forbidden to him while he was a Cambridge student, and sees his old companions growing up into sound-headed and sound-hearted practical men, liberal and expansive, and yet with a firm standing ground for thought and action, he learns to complain less and less of Cambridge studies, and more and more of that conceit and haste of his own, which kept him from reaping the full advantage of her training.

These Lectures, as I have said, are altogether crude and fragmentary,—how, indeed, could they be otherwise, dealing with so vast a subject, and so long a period of time? They are meant neither as Essays nor as Orations, but simply as a collection of hints to those who may wish to work out the subject for themselves; and, I trust, as giving some glimpses of a central idea, in the light of which the spiritual history of Alexandria, and perhaps of other countries also, may be seen to have in itself a coherence and organic method.

I was of course compelled, by the circumstances under which these Lectures were delivered, to keep clear of all points which are commonly called “controversial.” I cannot but feel that this was a gain, rather than a loss; because it forced me, if I wished to give any interpretation at all of Alexandrian thought, any Theodicy at all of her fate, to refer to laws which I cannot but believe to be deeper, wider, more truly eternal than the points which cause most of our modern controversies, either theological or political; laws which will, I cannot but believe also, reassert themselves, and have to be reasserted by all wise teachers, very soon indeed, and it may be under most novel embodiments, but without any change in their eternal spirit.

For I may say, I hope, now, (what if said ten years ago would have only excited laughter,) that I cannot but subscribe to the opinion of the many wise men who believe that Europe, and England as an integral part thereof, is on the eve of a revolution, spiritual, and political as vast and awful as that which took place

at the Reformation; and that, beneficial as that revolution will doubtless be to the destinies of mankind in general, it depends upon the wisdom and courage of each nation individually, whether that great deluge shall issue, as the Reformation did, in a fresh outgrowth of European nobleness and strength, or usher in, after pitiable confusions and sorrows, a second Byzantine age of stereotyped effeminacy and imbecility. For I have as little sympathy with those who prate so loudly of the progress of the species, and the advent of I know-not-what Cockaigne of universal peace and plenty, as I have with those who believe, on the strength of "unfulfilled prophecy," the downfall of Christianity, and the end of the human race to be at hand. Nevertheless, one may well believe that prophecy will be fulfilled in this great crisis, as it is in every great crisis, although one be unable to conceive by what method of symbolism the drying up of the Euphrates can be twisted to signify the fall of Constantinople: and one can well believe that a day of judgment is at hand, in which for every nation and institution, the wheat will be sifted out and gathered into God's garner, for the use of future generations, and the chaff burnt up with that fire unquenchable which will try every man's work, without being of opinion that after a few more years are over, the great majority of the human race will be consigned hopelessly to never-ending torments.

If prophecy be indeed a divine message to man; if it be anything but a cabbala, useless either to the simple-minded or to the logical, intended only for the plaything of a few devout fancies, it must declare the unchangeable laws by which The unchangeable God is governing, and has always governed, the human race; and therefore only by understanding what has happened; can we understand what will happen; only by understanding history, can we understand prophecy; and that not merely by picking out—too often arbitrarily and unfairly—a few names and dates from the records of all the ages, but by trying to discover its organic laws, and the causes which produce in nations, creeds, and systems health and disease, growth, change, decay, and death. If, in one small corner of this vast field, I shall have thrown a single ray of light upon these subjects,—if I shall have done anything in these pages towards illustrating the pathology of a single people, I shall believe that I have done better service to the Catholic Faith and the Scriptures, than if I did really "know the times and the seasons, which the Father has kept in his own hand." For by the former act I may have helped to make some one man more prudent and brave to see and to do what God requires of him: by the latter I could only add to that paralysis of superstitious fear, which is already

but too common among us, and but too likely to hinder us from doing our duty manfully against our real foes, whether it be pestilence at home or tyranny abroad.

These last words lead me to another subject, on which I am bound to say a few words. I have, at the end of these Lectures, made some allusion to the present war. To have entered further into political questions would have been improper in the place where those Lectures were delivered: but I cannot refrain from saying here something more on this matter; and that, first, because all political questions have their real root in moral and spiritual ones, and not (as too many fancy) in questions merely relating to the balance of power or commercial economy, and are (the world being under the guidance of a spiritual, and not a physical Being) finally decided on those spiritual grounds, and according to the just laws of the kingdom of God; and, therefore, the future political horoscope of the East depends entirely on the present spiritual state of its inhabitants, and of us who have (and rightly) taken up their cause; in short, on many of those questions on which I have touched in these Lectures: and next, because I feel bound, in justice to myself, to guard against any mistake about my meaning, or supposition that I consider the Turkish empire a righteous thing, or one likely to stand much longer on the face of God's earth.

The Turkish empire, as it now exists, seems to me an altogether unrighteous and worthless thing. It stands no longer upon the assertion of the great truth of Islam, but on the merest brute force and oppression. It has long since lost the only excuse which one race can have for holding another in subjection; that which we have for taking on ourselves the tutelage of the Hindoos, and which Rome had for its tutelage of the Syrians and Egyptians; namely, the governing with tolerable justice those who cannot govern themselves, and making them better and more prosperous people, by compelling them to submit to law. I do not know when this excuse is a sufficient one. God showed that it was so for several centuries in the case of the Romans; God will show whether it is in the case of our Indian empire: but this I say, that the Turkish empire has not even that excuse to plead; as is proved by the patent fact that the whole East, the very garden of the old world, has become a desert and a ruin under the upas-blight of their government.

As for the regeneration of Turkey, it is a question whether the regeneration of any nation which has sunk, not into mere valiant savagery, but into effete and profligate luxury, is possible. Still more is it a question whether a regeneration can be effected, not by the rise of a new spiritual idea (as in the case of the



Koreish), but simply by more perfect material appliances, and commercial prudence. History gives no instance, it seems to me, of either case; and if our attempt to regenerate Greece by freeing it has been an utter failure, much more, it seems to me, would any such attempt fail in the case of the Turkish race. For what can be done with a people which has lost the one great quality which was the tenure of its existence, its military skill? Let any one read the accounts of the Turkish armies in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, when they were the tutors and models of all Europe in the art of war, and then consider the fact that those very armies require now to be officered by foreign adventurers, in order to make them capable of even keeping together, and let him ask himself seriously, whether such a fall can ever be recovered. When, in the age of Theodosius, and again in that of Justinian, the Roman armies had fallen into the same state; when the Italian legions required to be led by Stilicho the Vandal, and the Byzantine by Belisar the Slav and Narses the Persian, the end of all things was at hand, and came; as it will come soon to Turkey.

But if Turkey deserves to fall, and must fall, it must not fall by our treachery. Its sins will surely be avenged upon it: but wrong must not avenge wrong, or the penalty is only passed on from one sinner to another. Whatsoever element of good is left in the Turk, to that we must appeal as our only means, if not of saving him, still of helping him to a quiet euthanasia, and absorption into a worthier race of successors. He is said (I know not how truly) to have one virtue left; that of faithfulness to his word. Only by showing him that we too abhor treachery and bad faith, can we either do him good, or take a safe standing-ground in our own peril. And this we have done; and for this we shall be rewarded. But this is surely not all our duty. Even if we should be able to make the civil and religious freedom of the Eastern Christians the price of our assistance to the Mussulman, the struggle will not be over; for Russia will still be what she has always been, and the northern Anarch will be checked, only to return to the contest with fiercer lust of aggrandizement, to enact the part of a new Macedon, against a new Greece, divided, not united, by the treacherous bond of that balance of power, which is but war under the guise of peace. Europe needs a holier and more spiritual, and therefore a stronger union, than can be given by armed neutralities, and the so-called cause of order. She needs such a bond as in the Elizabethan age united the free states of Europe against the Anarch of Spain, and delivered the western nations from a rising world-tyranny, which promised to be even more hideous than that elder one of

Rome. If, as then, England shall proclaim herself the champion of freedom by acts, and not by words and paper, she may, as she did then, defy the rulers of the darkness of this world, for the God of Light will be with her. But, as yet, it is impossible to look without sad forebodings upon the destiny of a war, begun upon the express understanding that evil shall be left triumphant throughout Europe, wheresoever that evil does not seem, to our own selfish shortsightedness, to threaten us with immediate danger; with promises, that under the hollow name of the Cause of Order—and that promise made by a revolutionary Anarch—the wrongs of Italy, Hungary, Poland, Sweden, shall remain undressed, and that Prussia and Austria, two tyrannies, the one far more false and hypocritical, the other even more rotten than that of Turkey, shall, if they will but observe a hollow and uncertain neutrality, (for who can trust the liar and the oppressor?)—be allowed not only to keep their ill-gotten spoils, but even now to play into the hands of our foe, by guarding his Polish frontier for him, and keeping down the victims of his cruelty, under pretence of keeping down those of their own.

It is true, the alternative is an awful one; one from which statesmen and nations may well shrink: but it is a question, whether that alternative may not be forced upon us sooner or later, whether we must not from the first look it boldly in the face, as that which must be some day, and for which we must prepare, not cowardly, and with cries about God's wrath and judgments against us,—which would be abject, were they not expressed in such second-hand stock-phrases as to make one altogether doubt their sincerity, but chivalrously, and with awful joy, as a noble calling, an honour put upon us by the God of Nations, who demands of us, as some small return for all his free bounties, that we should be, in this great crisis, the champions of Freedom and of Justice, which are the cause of God. At all events, we shall not escape our duty by being afraid of it; we shall not escape our duty by inventing to ourselves some other duty, and calling it "Order." Elizabeth did so at first. She tried to keep the peace with Spain; she shrank from injuring the cause of Order (then a nobler one than now, because it was the cause of Loyalty, and not merely of Mammon) by assisting the Scotch and the Netherlanders: but her duty was forced upon her; and she did it at last, cheerfully, boldly, utterly, like a hero; she put herself at the head of the battle for the freedom of the world, and she conquered, for God was with her; and so that seemingly most fearful of all England's perils, when the real meaning of it was seen, and God's will in it obeyed manfully, became the foundation of England's naval and colonial empire.

and laid the foundation of all her future glories. So it was then, so it is now ; so it will be for ever : he who seeks to save his life will lose it : he who willingly throws away his life for the cause of mankind, which is the cause of God, the Father of mankind, he shall save it, and be rewarded a hundred-fold. That God may grant us, the children of the Elizabethan heroes, all wisdom to see our duty, and courage to do it, even to the death, should be our earnest prayer. Our statesmen have done wisely and well in refusing, in spite of hot-headed clamours, to appeal to the sword as long as there was any chance of a peaceful settlement even of a single evil. They are doing wisely and well now in declining to throw away the scabbard as long as there is hope that a determined front will awe the offender into submission : but the day may come when the scabbard must be thrown away ; and God grant that they may have the courage to do it.

It is reported that our rulers have said, that English diplomacy can no longer recognize "nationalities," but only existing "governments." God grant that they may see in time that the assertion of national life, as a spiritual and indefeasible existence, was for centuries the central idea of English policy ; the idea by faith in which she delivered first herself, and then the Protestant nations of the Continent, successively from the yokes of Rome, of Spain, of France ; and that they may reassert that most English of all truths again, let the apparent cost be what it may.

It is true, that this end will not be attained without what is called nowadays "a destruction of human life." But we have yet to learn (at least if the doctrines which I have tried to illustrate in this little book have any truth in them,) whether shot or shell has the power of taking away human life ; and to believe, if we believe our Bibles, that human life can only be destroyed by sin, and that all which is lost in battle is that animal life of which it is written, "Fear not those who can kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do : but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear ; him who, after he has killed, has power to destroy both body and soul in hell." Let a man fear him, the destroying devil, and fear therefore cowardice, disloyalty, selfishness, sluggishness, which are his works, and to be utterly afraid of which is to be truly brave. God grant that we of the clergy may remember this during the coming war, and instead of weakening the righteous courage and honour of our countrymen by instilling into them selfish and superstitious fears, and a theory of the future state which represents God, not as a saviour, but a tormentor, may boldly tell them that "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living ; for all live unto him ;" and that he who renders up his animal life as a worthless

thing, in the cause of duty, commits his real and human life, his very soul and self, into the hands of a just and merciful Father, who has promised to leave no good deed unrewarded, and least of all that most noble deed, the dying like a man for the sake not merely of this land of England, but of the freedom and national life of half the world.

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## LECTURE I.

### THE PTOLEMAIC ERA.

BEFORE I begin to lecture upon the Physical and Metaphysical schools of Alexandria, it may be better, perhaps, to define the meaning of those two epithets. Physical, we shall all agree, means that which belongs to *φύσις*; *natura*; nature; that which *φύεται*, *nascitur*, grows, by an organic life, and therefore decays again; which has a beginning, and therefore, I presume, an end. And Metaphysical means that which we learn to think of after we think of nature; that which is, supernatural, in fact, having neither beginning nor end, imperishable, immovable, and eternal, which does not become, but always is. These, at least, are the wisest definitions of these two terms for us just now; for they are those which were received by the whole Alexandrian school, even by those commentators who say that Aristotle, the inventor of the term Metaphysics, named his treatise so only on account of its following in philosophic sequence his book on Physics.

But, according to these definitions, the whole history of Alexandria might be to us, from one point of view, a physical school; for Alexandria, its society and its philosophy, were born, and grew, and fed, and reached their vigour, and had their old age, their decay, their death, even as a plant or an animal has; and after they were dead and dissolved, the atoms of them formed food for new creations, entered into new organizations, just as the atoms of a dead plant or animal might do. Was Alexandria then, from beginning to end, merely a natural and physical phenomenon?

It may have been. And yet we cannot deny that Alexandria was also a metaphysical phenomenon, vast and deep enough; seeing that it held for some eighteen hundred years a population of several hundred thousand souls; each of whom, at least according to the Alexandrian philosophy, stood in a very intimate rela-

tion to those metaphysic things which are imperishable and immovable and eternal, and indeed, contained them more or less, each man, woman, and child of them in themselves; having wills, reasons, consciences, affections, relations to each other; being parents, children, helpmates, bound together by laws concerning right and wrong, and numberless other unseen and spiritual relations.

Surely such a body was not merely natural: any more than any other nation, society, or scientific school, made up of men and of the spirits, thoughts, affections of men. It, like them, was surely spiritual; and could be only living and healthy, in as far as it was in harmony with certain spiritual, unseen, and everlasting laws of God; perhaps, as certain Alexandrian philosophers would have held, in as far as it was a pattern of that ideal constitution and polity after which man was created, the city of God which is eternal in the heavens. If so, may we not suspect of this Alexandria that it was its own fault if it became a merely physical phenomenon; and that it stooped to become a part of nature, and took its place among the things which are born to die, only by breaking the law which God had appointed for it; so fulfilling, in its own case, St. Paul's great words, that death entered into the world by sin, and that sin is the transgression of the law?

Be that as it may, there must have been metaphysic enough to be learnt in that, or any city of three hundred thousand inhabitants, even though it had never contained lecture-room or philosopher's chair, and had never heard the names of Aristotle and Plato. Metaphysic enough, indeed, to be learnt there, could we but enter into the heart of even the most brutish negro slave who ever was brought down the Nile out of the desert by Nubian merchants, to build piers and docks in whose commerce he did not share, temples whose worship he did not comprehend, libraries and theatres whose learning and civilization were to him as much a sealed book as they were to his countryman, and fellow-slave, and only friend, the ape. There was metaphysic enough in him truly, and things eternal and immutable: though his dark-skinned descendants were three hundred years in discovering the fact, and proving it satisfactorily to all mankind for ever. You must pardon me if I seem obscure; I cannot help looking at the question with a somewhat Alexandrian eye, and talking of the poor negro dock-worker as certain Alexandrian philosophers would have talked, of whom I shall have to speak hereafter.

I should have been glad, therefore, had time permitted me, instead of confining myself strictly to what are now called "the

physic and metaphysic schools" of Alexandria, to have tried as well as I could to make you understand how the whole vast phenomenon grew up, and supported a peculiar life of its own, for fifteen hundred years and more, and was felt to be the third, perhaps the second city of the known world, and one so important to the great world-tyrant, the Cæsar of Rome, that no Roman of distinction was ever sent there as perfect, but the Alexandrian national vanity and pride of race was allowed to the last to pet itself by having its tyrant chosen from its own people.

But, though this cannot be, we may find human elements enough in the schools of Alexandria, strictly so called, to interest us for a few evenings; for these schools were schools of men; what was discovered and taught was discovered and taught by men, and not by thinking-machines; and whether they would have been inclined to confess it or not, their own personal characters, likes and dislikes, hopes and fears, strength and weakness, beliefs and disbeliefs, determined their metaphysics and their physics for them, quite enough to enable us to feel for them as men of like passions with ourselves; and for that reason only, men whose thoughts and speculations are worthy of a moment's attention from us. For what is really interesting to man, save men, and God the Father of men?

In the year 331 B. C. one of the greatest intellects whose influence the world has ever felt, saw, with his eagle glance, the unrivalled advantages of the spot which is now Alexandria; and conceived the mighty project of making it the point of union of two, or rather of three worlds. In a new city, named after himself, Europe, Asia, and Africa were to meet and to hold communion. A glance at the map will show you what an *ὀμφαλὸς γῆς*, a centre of the world, this Alexandria is, and perhaps arouse in your minds, as it has often done in mine, the suspicion that it has not yet fulfilled its whole destiny, but may become at any time a prize for contending nations, or the centre of some world-wide empire to come. Communicating with Europe and the Levant by the Mediterranean, with India by the Red Sea, certain of boundless supplies of food from the desert-guarded valley of the Nile, to which it formed the only key, thus keeping all Egypt, as it were, for its own private farm, it was weak only on one side, that of Judæa. That small strip of fertile mountain land, containing innumerable military positions from which an enemy might annoy Egypt, being, in fact, one natural chain of fortresses, was the key to Phœnicia and Syria. It was an eagle's eyrie by the side of a pen of fowls. It must not be left defenceless for a single year. Tyre and Gaza had been taken; so no danger was to be apprehended from the seaboard: but to subdue the Judæan mountaineers, a race

whose past sufferings had hardened them into a dogged fanaticism of courage and endurance, would be a long and sanguinary task. It was better to make terms with them; to employ them as friendly warders of their own mountain walls. Their very fanaticism and isolation made them sure allies. There was no fear of their fraternizing with Eastern invaders. If the country was left in their hands, they would hold it against all comers. Terms were made with them; and, for several centuries, they fulfilled their trust.

This I apprehend to be the explanation of that conciliatory policy of Alexander's toward the Jews, which was pursued steadily by the Ptolemies, by Pompey, and by the Romans, as long as these same Jews continued to be endurable upon the face of the land. At least, we shall find the history of Alexandria and that of Judæa inextricably united for more than three hundred years.

So arose, at the command of the great conqueror, a mighty city, around those two harbours, of which the western one only is now in use. The Pharos was then an island. It was connected with the mainland by a great mole, furnished with forts and drawbridges. On the ruins of that mole now stands the greater part of the modern city; the vast site of the ancient one is a wilderness.

But Alexander was not destined to carry out his own magnificent project. That was left for the general whom he most esteemed, and to whose personal prowess he had once owed his life; a man than whom history knows few greater, Ptolemy, the son of Lagus. He was an adventurer, the son of an adventurer, his mother a cast-off concubine of Philip of Macedon. There were those who said that he was in reality a son of Philip himself. However, he rose at court, became a private friend of young Alexander, and at last his Somatophylax, some sort of Colonel of the Life Guards. And from thence he rose rapidly, till after his great master's death he found himself despot of Egypt.

His face, as it appears on his coins, is of the loftiest and most Jove-like type of Greek beauty. There is a possibility about it, as about most old Greek faces, of boundless cunning; a lofty irony too, and a contemptuousness, especially about the mouth, which puts one in mind of Goethe's expression: the face, altogether, of one who knew men too well to respect them. At least, he was a man of clear enough vision. He saw what was needed in those strange times, and he went straight to the thing which he saw. It was his wisdom which perceived that the huge amorphous empire of Alexander could not be kept together, and advised its partition among the generals, taking care to obtain

himself the lion's share; not in size, indeed, but in capability. He saw, too, (what every man does not see,) that the only way to keep what he had got was to make it better, and not worse, than he found it. His first Egyptian act was to put to death Cleomenes, Alexander's lieutenant, who had amassed vast treasures by extortion; and who was, moreover, (for Ptolemy was a prudent man,) a dangerous partisan of his great enemy, Perdicas. We do not read that he refunded the treasures: but the Egyptians surnamed him Soter, the Saviour; and on the whole he deserved the title. Instead of the wretched misrule and slavery of the conquering Persian dynasty, they had at least law and order, reviving commerce, and a system of administration, we are told (I confess to speaking here quite at second hand,) especially adapted to the peculiar caste-society, and the religious prejudices of Egypt. But Ptolemy's political genius went beyond such merely material and Warburtonian care for the conservation of body and goods of his subjects. He effected with complete success a feat which has been attempted, before and since, by very many princes, and potentates, but has always, except in Ptolemy's case proved somewhat of a failure, namely, the making a new deity. Mythology in general was in a rusty state. The old Egyptian gods had grown in his dominions very unfashionable, under the summary iconoclasm to which they had been subjected by the Monotheist Persians,—the Puritans of the old world, as they have been well called. Indeed, all the dolls—and the treasure of the dolls' temples too, had been carried off by Cambyses to Babylon. And as for the Greek gods, philosophers had sublimed them away sadly during the last century: not to mention that Alexander's Macedonians, during their wanderings over the world, had probably become rather remiss in their religious exercises, and had probably given up mentioning the Unseen world, except for those hortatory purposes for which it used to be employed by Nelson's veterans. But, as Ptolemy felt, people (women especially) must have something wherein to believe. The "Religious Sentiment" in man must be satisfied. But, how to do it? How to find a deity who would meet the aspirations of conquerors as well as conquered,—of his most irreligious Macedonians, as well as of his most religious Egyptians? It was a great problem: but Ptolemy solved it. He seems to have taken the same method which Brindley the Engineer used in his perplexities: for he went to bed. And there he had a dream:—How the foreign god Serapis, of Pontus, (somewhere near this present hapless Sinope,) appeared to him, and expressed his wish to come to Alexandria, and there try his influence on the Religious Sentiment. So Serapis was sent for,



and came,—at least, the idol of him, and, accommodating personage!—he actually fitted. After he had been there awhile, he was found to be quite an old acquaintance—to be, in fact, the Greek Jove, and two or three other Greek gods, and also two or three Egyptian gods beside—indeed, to be no other than the bull Apis, after his death and deification. I can tell you no more. I never could find that anything more was known. You may see him among Greek and Roman statues as a young man, with a sort of high basket-shaped Persian turban on his head. But, at least, he was found so pleasant and accommodating a conscience-keeper, that he spread, with Isis, his newly-found mother, or wife, over the whole East, and even to Rome. The Consuls there [50 years B. C.] found the pair not too respectable, and pulled down their temples. But, so popular were they, in spite of their bad fame, that seven years after, the Triumvirs had to build the temples up again elsewhere; and from that time forth, Isis and Serapis, in spite, poor things, of much persecution, were the fashionable deities of the Roman world. Surely this Ptolemy was a man of genius!

But Ptolemy had even more important work to do than making gods. He had to make men; for he had few or none ready made among his old veterans from Issus and Arbela. He had no hereditary aristocracy: and he wanted none. No aristocracy of wealth; that might grow of itself, only too fast for his despotic power. But as a despot, he must have a knot of men round him who would do his work. And here came out his deep insight into fact. It had not escaped that man, what was the secret of Greek supremacy. How had he come there? How had his great master conquered half the world? How had the little semibarbarous mountain tribe up there in Pella; risen under Philip to be the master-race of the globe? How, indeed, had Xenophon and his Ten Thousand, how had the handfuls of Salamis and Marathon, held out triumphantly century after century, against the vast weight of the barbarian? The simple answer was,—Because the Greek has mind, the barbarian mere brute force. Because mind is the lord of matter: because the Greek being the cultivated man, is the only true man; the rest are *βάρβαροι*, mere things, clods, tools for the wise Greeks' use, in spite of all their material phantom-strength of elephants, and treasures, and tributaries by the million. Mind was the secret of Greek power; and for that Ptolemy would work. He would have an aristocracy of intellect; he would gather round him the wise men of the world (glad enough most of them to leave that miserable Greece, where every man's life was in his hand from hour to hour,) and he would develop to its highest, the conception of

Philip, when he made Aristotle the tutor of his son Alexander. The consequences of that attempt were written in letters of blood, over half the world; Ptolemy would attempt it once more, with gentler results. For though he fought long, and often, and well, as Despot of Egypt, no less than as general of Alexander, he was not at heart a man of blood, and made peace the end of all his wars.

So he begins. Aristotle is gone: but in Aristotle's place Philetas the sweet singer of Cos, and Zenodotus the grammarian of Ephesus, shall educate his favourite son, and he will have a literary court, and a literary age. Demetrius Phalereus, the Admirable Crichton of his time, the last of Attic orators, statesman, philosopher, poet, warrior, and each of them in the most graceful, insinuating, courtly way, migrates to Alexandria, after having had the three hundred and sixty statues, which the Athenians had too hastily erected to his honour, as hastily pulled down again. Here was a prize for Ptolemy! The charming man became his bosom friend and fellow, even revised the laws of his kingdom, and fired him, if report says true, with a mighty thought—no less a one than the great public Library of Alexandria; the first such institution, it is said, which the world had ever seen.

So a library is begun by Soter, and organized and completed by Philadelphus; or rather two libraries, for while one part was kept at the Serapeium, that vast temple on the inland rising ground, of which, as far as we can discover, Pompey's Pillar alone remains, one column out of four hundred, the rest was in the Brucheion adjoining the Palace and the Museum. Philadelphus buys Aristotle's collection to add to the stock, and Euergetes cheats the Athenians out of the original MSS. of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, and adds largely to it by more honest methods. Eumenes, King of Pergamus in Asia Minor, fired with emulation, commences a similar collection, and is so successful, that the reigning Ptolemy has to cut off his rival's supplies by prohibiting the exportation of papyrus; and the Pergamenian books are henceforth transcribed on parchment, parchemin, Pergamene, which thus has its name to this day, from Pergamus. That collection, too, found its way at last to Alexandria. For Anthony having become possessor of it by right of the stronger, gave it to Cleopatra; and it remained at Alexandria for seven hundred years. But we must not anticipate events.

Then there must be besides a Mouseion, a Temple of the Muses, with all due appliances, in a vast building adjoining the palace itself, under the very wing of royalty; and it must have

porticoes, wherein sages may converse ; lecture-rooms, where they may display themselves at their will to their rapt scholars, each like a turkey-cock before his brood ; and a large dining-hall, where they may enjoy themselves in moderation, as befits sages, not without puns and repartees, epigrams, anagrams, and Attic salt, to be fatal, alas, to poor Diodorus the dialectician. For Stilpo, prince of sophists, having silenced him by some quibbling puzzle of logic, Ptolemy surnamed him Chronos, the Slow. Poor Diodorus went home, took pen and ink, wrote a treatise on the awful nothing, and died in despair, leaving five " dialectical daughters " behind him, to be thorns in the sides of some five hapless men of Macedonia, as " emancipated women ; " a class but too common in the later days of Greece, as they will always be, perhaps, in civilizations which are decaying and crumbling to pieces, leaving their members to seek in bewilderment what they are, and what bonds connect them with their fellow-beings. But to return ; funds shall be provided for the Museum from the treasury ; a priest of rank appointed by royalty, shall be curator ; botanical and zoological gardens shall be attached ; collections of wonders made. In all things the presiding genius of Aristotle shall be worshipped ; for these, like Alexander, were his pupils. Had he not mapped out all heaven and earth, things seen and unseen, with his entelechies, and energies, and dunameis, and put every created and uncreated thing henceforth into its proper place, from the ascidians and polypes of the sea to the virtues and the vices,—yea, to that Great Deity and Prime Cause, (which indeed was all things,) *Noesis Noeseon*, " the Thought of Thoughts," whom he discovered by irrefragable processes of logic, and in whom the philosophers believe privately, leaving Serapis to the women and the sailors ? All they had to do was to follow in his steps ; to take each of them a branch of science or literature, or as many branches as one man conveniently can ; and working them out on the approved methods, end in a few years, as Alexander did, by weeping on the utmost shore of creation that there are no more worlds left to conquer.

Alas ! the Muses are shy and wild ; and though they will haunt, like skylarks, on the bleakest northern moor as cheerfully as on the sunny hills of Greece, and rise thence singing into the heaven of heavens, yet they are hard to tempt into a gilded cage, however amusingly made and plentifully stored with comforts. Royal societies, associations of savans, and the like, are good for many things, but not for the breeding of art and genius : for they are things which cannot be bred. Such institutions are excellent for physical science, when, as among us now, physical science is going on the right method : but where, as in Alexandria, it was

going on an utterly wrong method, they stereotype the errors of the age, and invest them with the prestige of authority, and produce mere Sorbonnes, and schools of pedants. To literature, too, they do some good, that is, in a literary age,—an age of reflection rather than of production, of antiquarian research, criticism, imitation, when book-making has become an easy and respectable pursuit for the many who cannot dig, and are ashamed to beg. And yet, by adding that same prestige of authority, not to mention of good society and Court favour, to the popular mania for literature, they help on the growing evil, and increase the multitude of prophets who prophesy out of their own heart and have seen nothing.

And this was, it must be said, the outcome of all the Ptolemæan appliances.

In Physics they did little. In Art nothing. In Metaphysics less than nothing.

We will first examine, as the more pleasant spectacle of the two, that branch of thought in which some progress was really made, and in which the Ptolemaic schools helped forward the development of men who have become world-famous, and will remain so, I suppose, until the end of time.

Four names at once attract us: Euclid, Aristarchus, Eratosthenes, Hipparchus. Archimedes, also, should be included in the list, for he was a pupil of the Alexandrian school, having studied (if Proclus is to be trusted) in Egypt, under Conon the Samian, during the reigns of two Ptolemies, Philadelphus and Euergetes.

Of Euclid, as the founder (according to Proclus) of the Alexandrian Mathematical school, I must of course speak first. Those who wish to attain to a juster conception of the man and his work than they can do from any other source, will do well to read Professor De Morgan's admirable article on him in Smith's Classical Dictionary; which includes, also, a valuable little sketch of the rise of Geometric science, from Pythagoras and Plato, of whose school Euclid was, to the great master himself.

I shall confine myself to one observation on Euclid's genius, and on the immense influence which it exerted on after generations. It seems to me, speaking under correction, that it exerted this, because it was so complete a type of the general tendency of the Greek mind, deductive, rather than inductive; of unrivalled subtlety in obtaining results from principles, and results again from them, *ad infinitum*: deficient in that sturdy moral patience which is required for the examination of facts, and which has made Britain at once a land of practical craftsmen, and of earnest scientific discoverers.

Volatile, restless, "always children longing for something new," as the Egyptian priest said of them, they were too ready to believe that they had attained laws, and then tired with their toy, throw away those hastily assumed laws, and wander off in search of others. Gifted, beyond all the sons of men, with the most exquisite perception of form, both physical and metaphysical, they could become geometers and logicians, as they became sculptors and artists; beyond that they could hardly rise. They were conscious of their power to build; and it made them ashamed to dig.

Four men only among them seem, as far as I can judge, to have had a great inductive power. Socrates and Plato in Metaphysics; Archimedes and Hipparchus in Physics. But these men ran so far counter to the national genius, that their examples were not followed. As you will hear presently, the discoveries of Archimedes and Hipparchus were allowed to remain where they were for centuries. The Dialectic of Plato and Socrates was degraded into a mere art for making any thing appear alternately true and false, and among the Megaric school, for undermining the ground of all science, and paving the way for skepticism, by denying the natural world to be the object of certain knowledge. The only element of Plato's thought to which they clung was, as we shall find from the Neoplatonists, his physical speculations; in which, deserting his inductive method, he has fallen below himself into the popular cacoethes, and Pythagorean deductive dreams about the mysterious powers of number, and of the regular solids.

Such a people, when they took to studying physical science, would be, and in fact were, incapable of Chemistry, Geognosy, Comparative Anatomy, or any of that noble choir of sister sciences, which are now building up the material as well as the intellectual glory of Britain.

To Astronomy, on the other hand, the pupils of Euclid turned naturally, as to the science which required the greatest amount of their favourite geometry: but even that they were content to let pass from its inductive to its deductive stage,—not as we have done now, after two centuries of inductive search for the true laws, and their final discovery by Kepler and Newton: but as soon as Hipparchus had propounded any theory which would do instead of the true laws, content there to stop their experiments, and return to their favourite work of commenting, deducing, spinning notion out of notion, *ad infinitum*.

Still, they were not all of this temper. Had they been, they would have discovered, not merely a little, but absolutely nothing. For after all, if we will consider, induction being the right

path to knowledge, every man, whether he knows it or not, uses induction, more or less, by the mere fact of his having a human reason, and knowing any thing at all; as M. Jourdain talked prose all his life without being aware of it.

Aristarchus is principally famous for his attempt to discover the distance of the sun as compared with that of the moon. His method was ingenious enough, but too rough for success, as it depended principally on the belief that the line bounding the bright part of the moon was an exact straight line. The result was of course erroneous. He concluded that the sun was eighteen times as far as the moon, and not, as we now know, four hundred; but his conclusion, like his conception of the vast extent of the sphere of the fixed stars, was far enough in advance of the popular doctrine to subject him, according to Plutarch, to a charge of impiety.

Eratosthenes, again, contributed his mite to the treasure of human science,—his one mite; and yet by that he is better known than by all the volumes which he seems to have poured out, on Ethics, Chronology, Criticism on the old Attic Comedy, and what not, spun out of his weary brain during a long life of research and meditation. They have all perished,—like ninety-nine hundredths of the labours of that great literary age; and perhaps the world is no poorer for the loss. But one thing, which he attempted on a sound and practical philosophic method, stands, and will stand for ever. And after all, is not that enough to have lived for? to have found out one true thing, and, therefore, one imperishable thing, in one's life. If each one of us could but say when he died, "This one thing I have found out; this one thing I have proved to be possible; this one eternal fact I have rescued from Hela, the realm of the formless and unknown." How rich one such generation might make the world for ever!

But such is not the appointed method. The finders are few and far between: because the true seekers are few and far between; and a whole generation has often nothing to show for its existence but one solitary gem, which some one man,—often unnoticed in his time,—has picked up for them, and so given them "a local habitation and a name."

Eratosthenes had heard that in Syene, in Upper Egypt, deep wells were enlightened to the bottom on the day of the summer solstice, and that vertical objects cast no shadows.

He had before suggested, as is supposed, to Ptolemy Euergetes, to make him the two great copper armillæ, or circles for determining the equinox, which stood for centuries in "that which is called the Square Porch,"—probably somewhere in the

Museum. By these he had calculated the obliquity of the ecliptic, closely enough to serve for a thousand years after. That was one work done. But what had the Syene shadows to do with that? Syene must be under that ecliptic. On the edge of it. In short, just under the tropic. Now he had ascertained exactly the latitude of one place on the earth's surface. He had his known point from whence to start on a world-journey, and he would use it; he would calculate the circumference of the earth,—and he did it. By observations made at Alexandria, he ascertained its latitude compared with that of Syene; and so ascertained what proportion to the whole circumference was borne by the five thousand stadia between Alexandria and Syene. He fell into an error, by supposing Alexandria and Syene to be under the same meridians of longitude: but that did not prevent his arriving at a fair rough result of two hundred and fifty-two thousand stadia,—thirty-one thousand five hundred Roman miles; considerably too much; but still, before him, I suppose, none knew whether it was ten thousand or ten millions. The right method having once been found, nothing remained but to employ it more accurately.

One other great merit of Eratosthenes is, that he first raised Geography to the rank of a science. His *Geographica* were an organic collection, the first the world had ever seen, of all the travels and books of earth-description heaped together in the Great Library, of which he was for many years the keeper. He began with a geognostic book, touched on the traces of Cataclysms and Change, visible on the earth's surface; followed by two books, one a mathematic book, the other on political geography, and completed by a map—which one would like to see: but—not a trace of all remains, but a few quoted fragments—

“ We are such stuff  
As dreams are made of.”

But if Eratosthenes had hold of eternal fact and law on one point, there was a contemporary who had hold of it in more than one. I mean Archimedes; of whom, as I have said, we must speak as of an Alexandrian. It was as a mechanician, rather than as an astronomer, that he gained his reputation. The stories of his Hydraulic Screw, the Great Ship which he built for Hiero, and launched by means of machinery, his crane, his war-engines, above all his somewhat mythical arrangement of mirrors, by which he set fire to ships in the harbour—all these, like the story of his detecting the alloy in Hiero's crown, while he himself was in the bath, and running home undressed shouting *εὕρηκα*—all these are schoolboy's tales. To the thoughtful

person it is the method of the man which constitutes his real greatness, that power of insight by which he solved the two great problems of the nature of the lever and of hydrostatic pressure, which form the basis of all static and hydrostatic science to this day. And yet on that very question of the lever the great mind of Aristotle babbles—neither sees the thing itself, nor the way towards seeing it. And since Archimedes spoke, the thing seems self-evident to every schoolboy. There is something to me very solemn in such a fact as this. It brings us down to some of the very deepest questions of metaphysic. This mental insight of which we boast so much, what is it? Is it altogether a process of our own brain and will? If it be, why have so few the power, even among men of power, and they so seldom? If brain alone were what was wanted, what could not Aristotle have discovered? Or is it that no man can see a thing unless God shows it him? Is it that in each separate act of induction, that mysterious and transcendental process which cannot, let logicians try as they will, be expressed by any merely logical formula, Aristotelian or other—is it, I say, that in each separate act of induction we do not find the law, but the law is shown to us, by Him who made the law? Bacon thought so. Of that you may find clear proof in his writings. May not Bacon be right? May it not be true that God does in science, as well as in ethics, hide things from the wise and prudent, from the proud, complete, self-contained systematizer like Aristotle, who must needs explain all things in heaven and earth by his own formulæ, and his entelechies and energies, and the rest of the notions which he has made for himself out of his own brain, and then pack each thing away in its proper niche in his great cloud-universe of conceptions? Is it that God hides things from such men many a time, and reveals them to babes, to gentle, affectionate, simple-hearted men, such as we know Archimedes to have been, who do not try to give an explanation for a fact, but feel how awful and divine it is, and wrestle reverently and steadfastly with it, as Jacob with the Angel, and will not let it go, until it bless them? Sure I am, from what I have seen of scientific men, that there is an intimate connection between the health of the moral faculties and the health of the inductive ones; and that the proud, self-conceited, and passionate man will see nothing: perhaps because nothing will be shown him.

But we must leave Archimedes for a man not perhaps so well known, but to whom we owe as much as to the great Syracusan;—Hipparchus the astronomer. To his case much which I have just said applies. In him astronomic science seemed to awaken suddenly to a true inductive method, and after him to



fall into its old slumber for three hundred years. In the meantime Timocharis, Aristyllus, and Conon had each added their mites to the discoveries of Eratosthenes : but to Hipparchus we owe that theory of the heavens, commonly called the Ptolemaic system, which starting from the assumption that the earth was the centre of the universe, attempted to explain the motions of the heavenly bodies by a complex system of supposed eccentrics and epicycles. This has of course now vanished before modern discoveries. But its value as a scientific attempt lies in this : that the method being a correct one, correct results were obtained, though starting from a false assumption ; and Hipparchus and his successors were enabled by it to calculate and predict the changes of the heavens, in spite of their clumsy instruments, with almost as much accuracy as we do now.

For the purpose of working out this theory he required a science of trigonometry, plane and spherical : and this he accordingly seems to have invented. To him also we owe the discovery of that vast gradual change in the position of the fixed stars, in fact, of the whole celestial system, now known by the name of the precession of the equinoxes ; the first great catalogue of fixed stars, to the number of 1080 ; attempts to ascertain whether the length of years and days were constant ; with which, with his characteristic love of truth, he seems to have been hardly satisfied. He too invented the planisphere, or mode of representing the starry heavens upon a plane, and is the father of true geography, having formed the happy notion of mapping out the earth, as well as the heavens, by degrees of latitude and longitude.

Strange it is, and somewhat sad, that we should know nothing of this great man, should be hardly able to distinguish him from others of the same name, but through the works of a commentator, who wrote and observed in Alexandria 300 years after, during the age of the Antonines. I mean, of course, the famous Ptolemy, whose name so long bore the honour of that system which really belonged to Hipparchus.

This single fact speaks volumes for the real weakness of the great artificial school of literature and science founded by the kings of Egypt. From the father of Astronomy, as Delambre calls him, to Ptolemy, the first man who seems really to have appreciated him, we have not a discovery, hardly an observation or a name to fill the gap. Physical sages there were ; but they were geometers and mathematicians, rather than astronomic observers and inquirers. And in spite of all the huge appliances and advantages of that great Museum, its inhabitants were content, in physical science, as in all other branches of thought, to comment,

to expound, to do every thing but open their eyes and observe facts, and learn from them, as the predecessors whom they pretended to honour had done. But so it is always. A genius, an original man appears. He puts himself boldly in contact with facts, asks them what they mean, and writes down their answer for the world's use. And then his disciples must needs form a school, and a system; and fancy that they do honour to their master, by refusing to follow in his steps; by making his book a fixed dogmatic canon; attaching to it some magical infallibility; declaring the very lie which he disproved by his whole existence, that discovery is henceforth impossible, and the sum of knowledge complete: instead of going on to discover as he discovered before them, and by following his method, show that they honour him, not in the letter, but in spirit and in truth.

For this, if you will consider, is the true meaning of that great command, "Honour thy father and mother, that thy days may be long in the land." On reverence for the authority of by-gone generations, depends the permanence of every form of thought or belief, as much as of all social, national, and family life: but on reverence of the spirit, not merely of the letter; of the methods of our ancestors, not merely of their conclusions. Ay, and we shall not be able to preserve their conclusions, not even to understand them; they will die away on our lips into skeleton notions, and soulless phrases, unless we see that the greatness of the mighty dead has always consisted in this, that they were seekers, improvers, inventors, endued with that divine power and right of discovery which has been bestowed on us, even as on them; unless we become such men as they were, and go on to cultivate and develop the precious heritage which they have bequeathed to us, instead of hiding their talent in a napkin and burying it in the earth; making their greatness an excuse for our own littleness, their industry for our laziness, their faith for our despair; and prating about the old paths, while we forget that paths were made that men might walk in them, and not stand still, and try in vain to stop the way.

It may be said certainly, as an excuse for these Alexandrian Greeks, that they were a people in a state of old age and decay; and that they only exhibited the common and natural faults of old age. For as with individuals, so with races, nations, societies, schools of thought; youth is the time of free fancy and poetry; manhood of calm and strong induction: old age of deduction, when men settle down upon their lees, and content themselves with reaffirming and verifying the conclusions of their earlier years, and too often, alas! with denying and anathematizing all

conclusions which have been arrived at since their own meridian. It is sad : but it is patent and common. It is sad to think that the day may come to each of us, when we shall have ceased to hope for discovery and for progress ; when a thing will seem *a priori* false to us, simply because it is new ; and we shall be saying querulously to the Divine Light which lightens every man who comes into the world, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further. Thou hast taught men enough ; yea, rather, thou hast exhausted thine own infinitude, and hast no more to teach them."—Surely such a temper is to be fought against, prayed against, both in ourselves, and in the generation in which we live. Surely there is no reason why such a temper should overtake old age. There may be reason enough, "in the nature of things." For that which is of nature is born only to decay and die. But in man there is more than dying nature ; there is spirit, and a capability of spiritual and everlasting life, which renews its youth like the eagle's, and goes on from strength to strength, and which if it have its autumns and its winters, has no less its ever-recurring springs and summers ; if it has its Sabbaths, finds in them only rest and refreshment for coming labour. And why not in nations, societies, scientific schools ? These too are not merely natural : they are spiritual, and are only living and healthy in as far as they are in harmony with spiritual, unseen, and everlasting laws of God. May not they, too, have a capability of everlasting life, as long as they obey those laws in faith, and patience, and humility ? We cannot deny the analogy between the individual man, and these societies of men. We cannot, at least, deny the analogy between them in growth, decay, and death. May we not have hope that it holds good also for that which can never die ; and that if they do die, as this old Greek society did, it is by no brute natural necessity, but by their own unfaithfulness to that which they knew, to that which they ought to have known ? It is always more hopeful, always, as I think, more philosophic, to throw the blame of failure on man, on ourselves, rather than on God, and the perfect law of his universe. At least let us be sure for ourselves, that such an old age as befell this Greek society, as befalls many a man nowadays, need not be our lot. Let us be sure that earth shows no fairer sight than the old man, whose worn-out brain and nerves make it painful, and perhaps impossible to produce fresh thought himself : but who can yet welcome smilingly and joyfully the fresh thoughts of others ; who keeps unwearied his faith in God's government of the universe, in God's continual education of the human race ; who draws around him the young and the sanguine, not merely to check their rashness by his wise cautions, but to inspirit their

sloth by the memories of his own past victories ; who hands over, without envy or repining, the lamp of truth to younger runners than himself, and sits contented by, bidding the new generation God speed along the paths untrodden by him, but seen afar off by faith. A few such old persons have I seen, both men and women ; in whom the young heart beat pure and fresh, beneath the cautious and practised brain of age, and gray hairs which were indeed a crown of glory. A few such have I seen ; and from them I seemed to learn what was the likeness of our Father who is in heaven. To such an old age may he bring you and me, and all for whom we are bound to pray.

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## LECTURE II.

### THE PTOLEMAIC ERA.

[*Continued.*]

I SAID in my first Lecture, that even if royal influence be profitable for the prosecution of physical science, it cannot be profitable for art. It can only produce a literary age, as it did in the Ptolemaic era ; a generation of innumerable court-poets, artificial epigrammatists, artificial idyllists, artificial dramatists and epicists ; above all, a generation of critics. Or rather shall we say, that the dynasty was not the cause of a literary age, but only its correlative ? That when the old Greeks lost the power of being free, of being anything but the slaves of oriental despots, as the Ptolemies in reality were, they lost also the power of producing true works of art ; because they had lost that youthful vigour of mind, from which both art and freedom sprang ? Let the case be as it will, Alexandrian literature need not detain us long—though, alas ! it has detained every boy who ever trembled over his Greek grammar, for many a weary year ; and I cannot help suspecting, has been the main cause that so many young men who have spent seven years in learning Greek, know nothing about it at the end of the seven. For I must say, that as far as we can see, these Alexandrian pedants were thorough pedants ; very polished and learned gentlemen, no doubt, and, like Callimachus the pets of princes : but after all, men who thought that they could make up for not writing great works themselves, by showing, with careful analysis and commentation, how men used to write them of old ; or rather how

they fancied men used to write them ; for, consider, if they had really known how the thing was done, they must needs have been able to do it themselves. Thus Callimachus, the favourite of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and librarian of his Museum, is the most distinguished grammarian, critic, and poet of his day, and has for pupils Eratosthenes, Apollonius Rhodius, Aristophanes of Byzantium, and a goodly list more. He is an Encyclopædia in himself. There is nothing the man does not know, or probably, if we spoke more correctly, nothing he does not know about. He writes on history, on the museum, on barbarous names, on the wonders of the world, on public games, on colonization, on winds, on birds, on the rivers of the world, and—ominous subject—a sort of comprehensive history of Greek literature, with a careful classification of all authors, each under his own heading. Greek literature was rather in the sere and yellow leaf, be sure, when men thought of writing that sort of thing about it. But still, he is an encyclopædic man, and moreover, a poet. He writes an epic, “*Aitia*,” in four books, on the causes of the myths, religious ceremonies, and so forth—an ominous sign, for the myths, also, and the belief in them ; also a *Hecate*, *Galatæa*, *Glaucus*—four epics, besides comedies, tragedies, iambics, choriambics, elegies, hymns, epigrams seventy-three—and of these last alone can we say that they are in any degree readable ; and they are courtly, far-fetched, neat, and that is all. Six hymns remain, and a few fragments of the elegies : but the most famous elegy, on *Berenice’s* hair is preserved to us only in a Latin paraphrase of *Catullus*. It is curious, as the earliest instance we have of genuinely ungenue Court poetry, and of the complimentary lie which does not even pretend to be true ; the flattery which will not take the trouble to prevent your seeing that it is laughing in your face.

*Berenice* the queen, on *Ptolemy’s* departure to the wars, vows her beautiful tresses to her favourite goddess, as the price of her husband’s safe return ; and duly pays her vow. The hair is hung up in the temple : in a day or two after it has vanished. Dire is the wrath of *Ptolemy*, the consternation of the priests, the scandal to religion : when *Conon* the court-astronomer, luckily searching the heavens, finds the missing tresses in an utterly unexpected place,—as a new constellation of stars, which to this day bears the title of *Coma Berenices*. It is so convenient to believe the fact, that everybody believes it accordingly ; and *Callimachus* writes an elegy thereon in which the constellified, or indeed deified tresses, address in most melodious and highly finished Greek, bedizened with *conchetto* on *conchetto*, that fair and sacred head whereon they grew, to be shorn from which is

so dire a sorrow, that apotheosis itself can hardly reconcile them to the parting.

Worthy—was not all this, of the descendants of the men who fought at Marathon and Thermopylæ? The old Greek civilization was rotting swiftly down; while a fire of God was preparing, slowly and dimly, in that unnoticed Italian town of Rome, which was destined to burn up that dead world, and all its works.

Callimachus's hymns, those may read who list. They are highly finished enough; the work of a man who knew thoroughly what sort of article he intended to make, and what were the most approved methods of making it. Curious and cumbrous mythological lore comes out in every other line. The smartness, the fine epithets, the recondite conceits, the bits of effect, are beyond all praise; but as for one spark of life, of poetry, of real belief, you will find none; not even in that famous *Lavacrum Palladis* which Angelo Poliziano thought worth translating into Latin elegiacs, about the same time that the learned Florentine, Antonio Maria Salviano, found Berenice's hair worthy to be paraphrased back from Catullus's Latin into Greek, to give the world some faint notion of the inestimable and incomparable original. They must have had much time on their hands. But at the Revival of Letters, as was to be expected, all works of the ancients, good and bad, were devoured alike with youthful eagerness by the Medicis and the Popes; and it was not, we shall see, for more than one century after, that men's tastes got sufficiently matured to distinguish between Callimachus and the Homeric hymns, or between Plato and Proclus. Yet Callimachus and his fellows had an effect on the world. His writings, as well as those of Philetas, were the model on which Ovid, Propertius, Tibullus, formed themselves.

And so I leave him, with two hints. If any one wishes to see the justice of my censure, let him read one of the Alexandrian hymns, and immediately after it, one of those glorious old Homeric hymns to the very same deities; let him contrast the insincere and fulsome idolatry of Callimachus, with the reverent, simple and maniful anthropomorphism of the Homerist,—and let him form his own judgment.

The other hint is this. If Callimachus, the founder of Alexandrian literature, be such as he is, what are his pupils likely to become, at least without some infusion of healthier blood, such as in the case of his Roman imitators produced a new and not altogether ignoble school?

Of Lycophron, the fellow-grammarian and Poet of Callimachus, we have nothing left but the *Cassandra*, a long iambic poem, stuffed with traditionary learning, and so obscure, that it obtained

for him the surname of *σκοτεινός*, the dark one. I have tried in vain to read it: you, if you will, may do the same.

Philetas, the remaining member of the Alexandrian Triad, seems to have been a more simple, genial, and graceful spirit than the other two, to whom he was accordingly esteemed inferior. Only a few fragments are left: but he was not altogether without his influence, for he was, as I just said, one of the models on which Propertius and Ovid formed themselves; and some, indeed, call him the Father of the Latin elegy, with its terseness, grace, and clear epigrammatic form of thought, and, therefore, in a great degree, of our modern eighteenth century poets; not a useless excellence, seeing that it is, on the whole, good for him who writes to see clearly what he wants to say, and to be able to make his readers see it clearly also. And yet one natural strain is heard amid all this artificial jingle; that of Theocritus. It is not altogether Alexandrian. Its sweetest notes were learnt amid the chestnut groves and orchards, the volcanic glens and sunny pastures of Sicily; but the intercourse between the courts of Hiero and the Ptolemies seems to have been continual. Poets and philosophers moved freely from one to the other, and found a like atmosphere in both; and in one of Theocritus's idyls, two Sicilian gentlemen crossed in love, agree to sail for Alexandria, and volunteer into the army of the great and good King Ptolemy, of whom a sketch is given worth reading; as a man noble, generous, and stately, "knowing well who loves him, and still better who loves him not." He has another encomium on Ptolemy, more laboured, but not less interesting: but the real value of Theocritus lies in his powers of landscape-painting.

One can well conceive the delight which his idyls must have given to those dusty Alexandrins, pent up for ever between sea and sand-hills, drinking the tank-water, and never hearing the sound of a running stream,—whirling, too, for ever, in all the bustle and intrigue of a great commercial and literary city. Refreshing indeed it must have been to them to hear of those simple joys and simple sorrows of the Sicilian shepherd, in a land where toil was but exercise, and mere existence was enjoyment. To them, and to us also. I believe Theocritus is one of the poets who will never die. He sees men and things, in his own light way, truly; and he describes them simply, honestly, with little careless touches of pathos and humour, while he floods his whole scene with that gorgeous Sicilian air, like one of Titian's pictures; with still sunshine, whispering pines, the lizard sleeping on the wall, and the sunburnt cicala shrieking on the spray, the pears and apples dropping from the orchard bough, the goats clambering from crag to crag after the cistus and the thyme, the

brown youths and wanton lasses singing under the dark chestnut boughs, or by the leafy arch of some—

“Grot nymph-haunted,  
Garlanded over with vine, and acanthus, and clambering roses,  
Cool in the fierce still noon, where the streams glance clear in the moss-beds;”

and here and there, beyond the braes and meads, blue glimpses of the far-off summer sea; and all this told in a language and a metre which shapes itself almost unconsciously, wave after wave, into the most luscious song. Doubt not that many a soul then, was the simpler, and purer, and better, for reading the sweet singer of Syracuse. He has his immoralities; but they are the immoralities of his age: his naturalness, his sunny calm and cheerfulness, are all his own.

And now, to leave the poets, and speak of those grammarians to whose corrections we owe, I suppose, the texts of the Greek poets as they now stand. They seem to have set to work at their task methodically enough, under the direction of their most literary monarch, Ptolemy Philadelphus. Alexander the Ætolian collected and revised the tragedies, Lycophron the comedies, Zenodotus the poems of Homer, and the other poets of the Epic cycle, now lost to us. Whether Homer prospered under all his expungings, alterations, and transpositions—whether, in fact, he did not treat Homer very much as Bentley wanted to treat Milton, is a suspicion which one has a right to entertain, though it is long past the possibility of proof. Let that be as it may, the critical business grew and prospered. Aristophanes of Byzantium wrote glossaries and grammars, collected editions of Plato and Aristotle, æsthetic disquisitions on Homer,—one wishes they were preserved, for the sake of the jest, that one might have seen an Alexandrian cockney's views of Achilles and Ulysses! Moreover, in a hapless moment, at least for us moderns, he invented Greek accents; thereby, I fear, so complicating and confusing our notions of Greek rythm, that we shall never, to the end of time, be able to guess what any Greek verse, saving the old Homeric Hexameter, sounded like. After a while, too, the pedants, according to their wont, began quarrelling about their accents and their recensions. Moreover, there was a rival school at Pergamus, where the fame of Crates all but equalled the Egyptian fame of Aristarchus. Insolent! What right had an Asiatic to know anything? So Aristarchus flew furiously on Crates, being a man of plain common sense, who felt a correct reading a far more important thing than any of Crates's illustrations, æsthetic, historical, or mythological; a preference not yet quite extinct, in one, at least, of our Universities. “Sir,” said a clever Cambridge Tutor to a philosophically inclined freshman,



“remember, that our business is to translate Plato correctly, not to discover his meaning.” And, paradoxical as it may seem, he was right. Let us first have accuracy, the merest mechanical accuracy, in every branch of knowledge. Let us know what the thing is which we are looking at. Let us know the exact words an author uses. Let us get at the exact value of each word by that severe induction of which Buttman and the great Germans have set such noble examples; and then, and not till then, we may begin to talk about philosophy, and æsthetics, and the rest. Very probably Aristarchus was right in his dislike of Crates’s preference of what he called criticism, to grammar. Very probably he connected it with the other object of his especial hatred, that fashion of interpreting Homer allegorically, which was springing up in his time, and which afterwards under the Neoplatonists rose to a frantic height, and helped to destroy in them, not only their power of sound judgment, and of asking each thing patiently what it was, but also any real reverence for, or understanding of, the very authors over whom they declaimed and sentimentalized.

Yes—the Cambridge Tutor was right. Before you can tell what a man means, you must have patience to find out what he says. So far from wishing our grammatical and philological education to be less severe than it is, I think it is not severe enough. In an age like this—an age of lectures, and of popular literature, and of self-culture, too often random and capricious, however earnest, we cannot be too careful in asking ourselves, in compelling others to ask themselves, the meaning of every word which they use, of every word which they read; in assuring them, whether they will believe us or not, that the moral, as well as the intellectual culture, acquired by translating accurately one dialogue of Plato, by making out thoroughly the sense of one chapter of a standard author, is greater than they will get from skimming whole folios of Schlegelian æsthetics, resumés, histories of philosophy, and the like second-hand information, or attending seven lectures a-week till their lives’ end. *It is better to know one thing, than to know about ten thousand things.* I cannot help feeling painfully, after reading those most interesting *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli*, that the especial danger of this time is intellectual sciolism, vagueness, sentimental eclecticism—and feeling, too, that, as Socrates of old believed, that intellectual vagueness and shallowness, however glib, and grand, and eloquent it may seem, is inevitably the parent of a moral vagueness and shallowness which may leave our age as it left the later Greeks, without an absolute standard of right or of truth, till it tries to escape from its own skepticism, as the later

Neoplatonists did, by plunging desperately into any fetish-worshipping superstition which holds out to its wearied, and yet impatient intellect, the bait of decisions already made for it, of objects of admiration already formed, and systematized.

Therefore let us honour the grammarian in his place; and, among others, these old grammarians of Alexandria; only being sure that as soon as any man begins, as they did, displaying himself peacock-fashion, boasting of his science as the great pursuit of humanity, and insulting his fellow-craftsmen, he becomes, *ipso facto*, unable to discover any more truth for us, having put on a habit of mind to which induction is impossible; and is thenceforth to be passed by with a kindly, but a pitying smile. And so, indeed, it happened with these quarrelsome Alexandrian grammarians; as it did with the Casaubons, and Scaligers and Daciers of the last two centuries. As soon as they began quarrelling, they lost the power of discovering. The want of the inductive faculty in their attempts at philology, is utterly ludicrous. Most of their derivations of words are about on a par with Jacob Böhm's etymology of sulphur; wherein he makes *sul*, if I recollect right, signify some active principle of combustion, and *phur* the passive one. It was left for more patient and less noisy men, like Grimm, Bopp, and Buttmann, to found a science of philology, to discover for us those great laws which connect modern philology with history, ethnology, physiology, and with the very deepest questions of theology itself. And, in the meanwhile, these Alexandrians' worthless criticism has been utterly swept away; while their real work, their accurate editions of the classics, remain to us as a precious heritage. So it is throughout history: nothing dies which is worthy to live. The wheat is surely gathered into the garner; the chaff is burnt up by that eternal fire, which, happily for this universe, cannot be quenched by any art of man, but goes on for ever, devouring without indulgence all the folly and the falsehood of the world.

As yet you have heard nothing of the metaphysical schools of Alexandria; for as yet none have existed, in the modern acceptance of that word. Indeed, I am not sure that I must not tell you frankly, that none ever existed at all in Alexandria, in that same modern acceptance. Ritter, I think, it is who complains, naïvely enough, that the Alexandrian Neoplatonists had a bad habit, which grew on them more and more as the years rolled on, of mixing up philosophy with theology, and so defiling, or at all events colouring, its pure transparency. There is no denying the imputation, as I shall show at greater length in my next Lecture. But one would have thought, looking back through history, that the Alexandrians were not the only philosophers guilty

of this shameful act of syncretism. Plato, one would have thought, was as great a sinner as they. So were the Hindoos. In spite of all their logical and metaphysical acuteness, they were, you will find, unable to get rid of the notion that theological inquires concerning Brahma, Atma, Creeshna, were indissolubly mixed up with that same logic and metaphysic. The Parsees could not separate questions about Ahriman and Ormuzd, from Kant's three great philosophic problems: What is Man?—What may be known?—What should be done? Neither, indeed, could the earlier Greek sages. Not one of them, of any school whatever,—from the semi-mythic Seven Sages to Plato and Aristotle,—but finds it necessary to consider not in passing, but as the great object of research, questions concerning the gods:—whether they are real or not; one or many; personal or impersonal; cosmic, and parts of the universe, or organizers and rulers of it; in relation to man, or without relation to him. Even in those who flatly deny the existence of the gods, even in Lucretius himself, these questions have to be considered, before the question, What is man? can get any solution at all. On the answer given to them is found to depend intimately the answer to the question, What is the immaterial part of man? Is it a part of nature, or of something above nature? Has he an immaterial part at all?—in one word, Is a human metaphysic possible at all? So it was with the Greek philosophers of old, even, as Asclepius and Ammonius say, with Aristotle himself. “The object of Aristotle's metaphysic,” one of them says, “is theological. Herein Aristotle theologizes.” And there is no denying the assertion. We must not then be hard on the Neoplatonists, as if they were the first to mix things separate from the foundation of the world. I do not say, that theology and metaphysic are separate studies. That is to be ascertained only by seeing some one separate them. And when I see them separated, I shall believe them separable. Only the separation must not be produced by the simple expedient of denying the existence of either one of them, or at least of ignoring the existence of one steadily during the study of the other. If they can be parted without injury to each other, let them be parted; and till then let us suspend hard judgments on the Alexandrian school of metaphysic, and also on the schools of that curious people the Jews, who had at this period a steadily increasing influence on the thought, as well as on the commercial prosperity, of Alexandria.

You must not suppose, in the meanwhile, that the philosophers whom the Ptolemies collected (as they would have any other marketable article) by liberal offers of pay and patronage, were such men as the old Seven Sages of Greece, or as Socrates,

Plato, and Aristotle. In these last three indeed, Greek thought reached not merely its greatest height, but the edge of a precipice, down which it rolled headlong after their decease. The intellectual defects of the Greek mind, of which I have already spoken, were doubtless one great cause of this decay: but, to my mind, moral causes had still more to do with it. The more cultivated Greek states, to judge from the writings of Plato, had not been an over-righteous people during the generation in which he lived. And in the generations which followed, they became an altogether wicked people; immoral, unbelieving, hating good, and delighting in all which was evil. And it was in consequence of these very sins of theirs, as I think, that the old Hellenic race began to die out physically, and population throughout Greece to decrease with frightful rapidity, after the time of the Achæan league. The facts are well known; and foul enough they are. When the Romans destroyed Greece, God was just and merciful. The eagles were gathered together only because the carrion needed to be removed from the face of God's earth. And at the time of which I now speak, the signs of approaching death were fearfully apparent. Hapless and hopeless enough were the clique of men out of whom the first two Ptolemies hoped to form a school of philosophy; men certainly clever enough, and amusing withal, who might give the kings of Egypt many a shrewd lesson in king-craft, and the ways of this world, and the art of profiting by the folly of fools, and the selfishness of the selfish; or who might amuse them, in default of fighting-cocks, by puns and repartees, and battles of logic; "how one thing cannot be predicated of another," or "how the wise man is not only to overcome every misfortune, but not even to feel it," and other such mighty questions, which in those days hid that deep unbelief in any truth whatsoever, which was spreading fast over the minds of men. Such word-splitters were Stilpo and Diodorus, the slayer and the slain. They were of the Megaran school, and were named Dialectics; and also, with more truth, Eristics, or quarrelers. Their clique had professed to follow Zeno and Socrates in declaring the instability of sensible presumptions and conclusions, in preaching an absolute and eternal Being. But there was this deep gulf between them and Socrates; that while Socrates professed to be seeking for the Absolute and Eternal, for that which is, they were content with affirming that it exists. With him, as with the older sages, philosophy was a search for truth. With them it was a scheme of doctrines to be defended. And the dialectic on which they prided themselves so much, differed from his accordingly. He used it inductively, to seek out, under the notions and conceptions of the mind, certain abso-

lute truths and laws of which they were only the embodiment. Words and thoughts were to him a field for careful and reverent induction, as the phenomena of nature are to us the disciples of Bacon. But with these hapless Megarans, who thought that they had found that for which Socrates professed only to seek dimly and afar off, and had got it safe in a dogma, preserved as it were in spirits and put by in a museum, the great use of dialectic was to confute opponents. Delight in their own subtlety grew on them, the worship not of objective truth, but of the forms of the intellect whereby it may be demonstrated; till they became the veriest word-splitters, rivals of the old sophists whom their master had attacked, and justified too often Aristophanes' calumny, which confounded Socrates with his opponents, as a man whose aim was to make the worse appear the better reason.

We have here, in both parties, all the marks of an age of exhaustion, of skepticism; of despair about finding any real truth. No wonder that they were superseded by the Pyrrhonists, who doubted all things, and by the Academy, which prided itself on setting up each thing to knock it down again; and so by prudent and well-bred and tolerant qualifying of every assertion, neither affirming too much, nor denying too much, keep their minds in a wholesome—or unwholesome—state of equilibrium, as stagnant pools are kept, that everything may have free toleration to rot undisturbed.

These hapless caricaturists of the dialectic of Plato, and the logic of Aristotle, careless of any vital principles or real results, ready enough to use fallacies each for their own party, and openly proud of their success in doing so, were assisted by worthy compeers of an outwardly opposite tone of thought, the Cyrenaics, Theodorus, and Hegesias. With their clique, as with their master Aristippus, the senses were the only avenues to knowledge; man was the measure of all things; and "happiness, our being's end and aim." Theodorus was surnamed the Atheist; and, it seems, not without good reason; for he taught that there was no absolute or eternal difference between good and evil; nothing really disgraceful in crimes; no divine ground for laws, which according to him had been invented by men to prevent fools from making themselves disagreeable; on which theory, laws must be confessed to have been in all ages somewhat of a failure. He seems to have been, like his master, an impudent, light-hearted fellow, who took life easily enough, laughed at patriotism, and all other high-flown notions, boasted that the world was his country, and was no doubt excellent after-dinner company for the great king. Hegesias, his fellow Cyrenaic, was a man of a darker and more melancholic temperament; and while Theo-

dorus contented himself with preaching a comfortable selfishness, and obtaining pleasure, made it rather his study to avoid pain. Doubtless both their theories were popular enough at Alexandria, as they were in France during the analogous period, the Siècle Louis Quinze. The *Contract Social*, and the rest of their doctrines, moral and metaphysical, will always have their admirers on earth, as long as that variety of the human species exists, for whose especial behoof Theodorus held that laws were made; and the whole form of thought met with great approbation in after years at Rome, where Epicurus carried it to its highest perfection. After that, under the pressure of a train of rather severe lessons, which Gibbon has detailed in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, little or nothing was heard of it, save *sotto voce*, perhaps, at the Papal courts of the sixteenth century. To revive it publicly, or at least as much of it as could be borne by a world now for seventeen centuries Christian, was the glory of the eighteenth century. The moral scheme of Theodorus has now nearly vanished among us, at least as a confessed creed: and, in spite of the authority of Mr. Locke's great and good name, his metaphysical scheme is showing signs of a like approaching disappearance. Let us hope that it may be a speedy one; for if the senses be the only avenues to knowledge; if man be the measure of all things; and if law have not, as Hooker says, her fount and home in the very bosom of God himself, then was Homer's *Zeus* right in declaring man to be "the most wretched of all the beasts of the field."

And yet one cannot help looking with a sort of awe (I dare not call it respect) at that melancholic, faithless Hegesias. Doubtless he, like his compeers, and indeed all Alexandria for three hundred years, cultivated philosophy with no more real purpose than it was cultivated by the graceless beaux-esprits of Louis the Fifteenth's court, and with as little practical effect on morality: but of this Hegesias alone it stands written, that his teaching actually made men do something; and moreover, do the most solemn and important thing which any man can do, excepting always doing Right. I must confess, however, that the result of his teaching took so unexpected a form, that the reigning Ptolemy, apparently Philadelphus, had to interfere with the sacred right of every man to talk as much nonsense as he likes, and forbade Hegesias to teach at Alexandria. For Hegesias, a Cyrenaic like Theodorus, but a rather more morose pedant than that saucy and happy scoffer, having discovered that the great end of man was to avoid pain, also discovered (his digestion being probably in a disordered state) that there was so much more pain than pleasure in the world, as to make it a thoroughly

disagreeable place, of which man was well rid at any price. Whereon he wrote a book called *'Αποκατερώων*, in which a man who had determined to starve himself preached the miseries of human life, and the blessings of death, with such overpowering force, that the book actually drove many persons to commit suicide, and escape from a world which was not fit to dwell in.—A fearful proof of how rotten the state of society was becoming, how desperate the minds of men, during those frightful centuries which immediately preceded the Christian era, and how fast was approaching that dark chaos of unbelief and unrighteousness, which Paul of Tarsus so analyses and describes in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans;—when the old light was lost, the old faiths extinct, the old reverence for the laws of family, and national life, destroyed, yea even the natural instincts themselves perverted; that chaos whose darkness Juvenal, and Petronius, and Tacitus have proved, in their fearful pages, not to have been exaggerated by the more compassionate, though more righteous Jew.

And now observe, that this selfishness—this wholesome state of equilibrium—this philosophic calm, which is really only a lazy pride, was, as far as we can tell, the main object of all the schools from the time of Alexander to the Christian era. We know very little of those Sceptics, Cynics, Epicureans, Academics, Peripatetics, Stoics, of whom there has been so much talk; except at second hand, through the Romans, from whom Stoicism in after ages received a new and not ignoble life. But this we do know of the later sects, that they gradually gave up the search for truth, and propounded to themselves as the great type for a philosopher, How shall a man save his own soul from this evil world? They may have been right; it may have been the best thing to think about in those exhausted and decaying times: but it was a question of ethics, not of philosophy, in the sense which the old Greek sages put on that latter word. Their object was, not to get at the laws of all things, but to fortify themselves against all things, each according to his scheme, and so to be self-sufficient and alone. Even in the Stoics, who boldly and righteously asserted an immutable morality, this was the leading conception. As has been well said of them:—

“If we reflect how deeply the feeling of an intercourse between men and a divine race superior to themselves had worked itself into the Greek character,—what a number of fables, some beautiful, some impure, it had impregnated and procured credence for,—how it sustained every form of polity and every system of laws, we may imagine what the effects must have been of its disappearance. If it is possible for any man, it was not, certainly,

possible for a Greek, to feel himself connected by any real bonds with his fellow-creatures around him, while he felt himself utterly separated from any being above his fellow-creatures. But the sense of that isolation would affect different minds very differently. It drove the Epicurean to consider how he might make a world in which he should live comfortably, without distracting visions of the past and future, and the dread of those upper powers who no longer awakened in him any feelings of sympathy. It drove Zeno the Stoic to consider whether a man may not find enough in himself to satisfy him, though what is beyond him be ever so unfriendly. . . . We may trace in the productions which are attributed to Zeno a very clear indication of the feeling which was at work in his mind. He undertook, for instance, among other tasks, to answer Plato's *Republic*. The truth that a man is a political being, which informs and pervades that book, was one which must have been particularly harassing to his mind, and which he felt must be got rid of, before he could hope to assert his doctrine of a man's solitary dignity." . . . .

Woe to the nation or the society in which this individualizing and separating process is going on in the human mind! Whether it take the form of a religion or of a philosophy, it is at once the sign and the cause of senility, decay, and death. If man begins to forget that he is a social being, a member of a body, and that the only truths which can avail him anything, the only truths which are worthy objects of his philosophical search, are those which are equally true for every man, which will equally avail every man, which he must proclaim, as far as he can, to every man, from the proudest sage to the meanest outcast, he enters, I believe, into a lie, and helps forward the dissolution of that society of which he is a member. I care little whether what he holds be true or not. If it be true, he has made it a lie by appropriating it proudly and selfishly to himself, and by excluding others from it. He has darkened his own power of vision by that act of self-appropriation, so that even if he sees a truth, he can only see it refractedly, discoloured by the medium of his own private likes and dislikes, and fulfils that great and truly philosophic law, that he who loveth not his brother is in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth. And so it befell those old Greek schools. It is out of our path to follow them to Italy, where sturdy old Roman patriots cursed them, and with good reason, as corrupting the morals of the young. Our business is with Alexandria; and there, certainly, they did nothing for the elevation of humanity. What culture they may have given, probably helped to make the Alexandrians, what Cæsar calls them, the most ingenious of all nations: but righteous or valiant men it



did not make them. When, after the three great reigns of Soter, Philadelphus, and Euergetes, the race of the Ptolemies began to wear itself out, Alexandria fell morally, as its sovereigns fell: and during a miserable and shameful decline of a hundred and eighty years, sophists wrangled, pedants fought over accents and readings with the true *odium grammaticum*, and kings plunged deeper and deeper into the abysses of luxury and incest, laziness and cruelty, till the flood came, and swept them all away. Cleopatra, the Helen of Egypt, betrayed her country to the Roman; and thenceforth the Alexandrians became slaves in all but name.

And now that Alexandria has become a tributary province, is it to share the usual lot of enslaved countries, and lose all originality and vigour of thought? Not so. From this point, strangely enough, it begins to have a philosophy of its own. Hitherto it has been importing Greek thought into Egypt and Syria, even to the furthest boundaries of Persia; and the whole East has become Greek: but it has received little in return. The Indian Gymnosophists, or Brahmins, had little or no effect on Greek philosophy, except in the case of Pyrrho: the Persian Dualism still less. The Egyptian symbolic nature worship had been too gross to be regarded by the cultivated Alexandrian as anything but a barbaric superstition. One eastern nation had intermingled closely with the Macedonian race, and from it Alexandrian thought received a new impulse.

I mentioned in my first lecture the conciliatory policy which the Ptolemies had pursued toward the Jews. Soter had not only allowed, but encouraged them to settle in Alexandria and Egypt, granting them the same political privileges with the Macedonians, and other Greeks. Soon they built themselves a temple there, in obedience to some supposed prophecy in their sacred writings, which seems most probably to have been a wilful interpolation. Whatsoever value we may attach to the various myths concerning the translation of their Scriptures into Greek, there can be no doubt that they were translated in the reign of Soter, and that the exceedingly valuable Septuagint version is the work of that period. Moreover, their numbers in Alexandria were very great. When Amrou took Constantinople in A. D. 640, there were 40,000 Jews in it; and their numbers during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, before their temporary expulsion by Cyril about 412, were probably greater; and Egypt altogether is said to have contained 200,000 Jews. They had schools there, which were so esteemed by their whole nation throughout the East, that the Alexandrian Rabbis, the Light of Israel, as they were called, may be fairly considered as the centre of Jewish thought and learning for several centuries.

We are accustomed, and not without reason, to think with some contempt of these old Rabbis. Rabbinism, Cabbalism, are become by-words in the mouths of men. It may be instructive for us—it is certainly necessary for us, if we wish to understand Alexandria—to examine a little how they became so fallen.

Their philosophy took its stand, as you all know, on certain ancient books of their people; histories, laws, poems, philosophical treatises, which all have one element peculiar to themselves, namely, the assertion of a living personal Ruler and Teacher, not merely of the Jewish race, but of all the nations of the earth. After the return of their race from Babylon, their own records give abundant evidence that this strange people became the most exclusive and sectarian which the world ever saw. Into the causes of that exclusiveness I will not now enter; suffice it to say, that it was pardonable enough in a people asserting Monotheism in the midst of idolatrous nations, and who knew, from experience even more bitter than that which taught Plato and Socrates, how directly all those popular idolatries led to every form of baseness and immorality. But we may trace in them, from the date of their return from Babylon, especially from their settlement in Alexandria, a singular change of opinion. In proportion as they began to deny that their unseen personal Ruler had anything to do with the Gentiles,—the nations of the earth, as they called them; in proportion as they considered themselves as his only subjects—or rather, him and his guidance as their own private property,—exactly in that proportion they began to lose all living or practical belief that he did guide them. He became a being of the past; one who had taught and governed their forefathers in old times: not one who was teaching and governing them now. I beg you to pay attention to this curious result; because you will see, I think, the very same thing occurring in two other Alexandrian schools, of which I shall speak hereafter.

The result to these Rabbis was, that the inspired books which spoke of this Divine guidance and government became objects of superstitious reverence, just in proportion as they lost all understanding of their real value and meaning. Nevertheless, this, too, produced good results; for the greatest possible care was taken to fix the Canon of these books; to settle, as far as possible, the exact time at which the Divine guidance was supposed to have ceased; after which it was impious to claim a Divine teaching; when their sages were left to themselves, as they fancied, with a complete body of knowledge, on which they were henceforth only to comment. Thus, whether or not they were right in supposing that the Divine Teacher had ceased to teach and inspire them, they

did infinite service by marking out for us certain writers whom he had certainly taught and inspired. No doubt they were right in their sense of the awful change which had passed over their nation. There was an infinite difference between them and the old Hebrew writers. They had lost something which those old prophets possessed. I invite you to ponder, each for himself, on the causes of this strange loss: bearing in mind that they lost their forefathers' heir-loom, exactly in proportion as they began to believe it to be their exclusive possession, and to deny other human beings any right to, or share in it. It may have been that the light given to their forefathers had, as they thought, really departed. It may have been, also, that the light was there all around them still, as bright as ever: but that they would not open their eyes and behold it; or rather, could not open them, because selfishness and pride had sealed them. It may have been, that inspiration was still very near *them*, too, if their spirits had been willing to receive it. But of the fact of the change there was no doubt. For the old Hebrew seers were men dealing with the loftiest and deepest laws: the Rabbis were shallow pedants. The old Hebrew seers were righteous and virtuous men: the Rabbis became, in due time, some of the worst and wickedest men who ever trod this earth.

Thus they, too, had their share in that downward career of pedantry which we have seen characterize the whole past Alexandrine age. They, like Zenodotus and Aristarchus, were commentators, grammarians, sectarian disputers: they were not thinkers or actors. Their inspired books were to them no more the words of living human beings who had sought for the Absolute Wisdom, and found it after many sins and doubts and sorrows. The human writers became in their eyes the puppets and mouth-pieces of some magical influence, not the disciples of a living and loving person. The book itself was, in their belief, not in any true sense inspired, but magically dictated—by what power they cared not to define. His character was unimportant to them, provided he had inspired no nation but their own. But, thought they, if the words were dictated, each of them must have some mysterious value. And if each word had a mysterious value, why not each letter? And how could they set limits to that mysterious value? Might not these words, even rearrangements of the letters of them, be useful in protecting them against the sorceries of the heathen, in driving away those evil spirits, or evoking those good spirits, who though seldom mentioned in their early records, had after their return from Babylon begun to form an important part of their unseen world? For as they had lost faith in the One Preserver of their race, they had filled up the

void by a ponderous demonology of innumerable preservers. This process of thought was not confined to Alexandria. Dr. Layard, in his last book on Nineveh, gives some curious instances of its prevalence among them at an earlier period, well worth your careful study. But it was at Alexandria that the Jewish Cabalism formed itself into a system. It was there that the Jews learnt to become the jugglers and magic-mongers of the whole Roman world, till Claudius had to expel them from Rome, as pests to rational and moral society.

And yet, among these hapless pedants there lingered nobler thoughts and hopes. They could not read the glorious heirlooms of their race without finding in them records of antique greatness and virtue, of old deliverances worked for their forefathers; and what seemed promises, too, that that greatness should return. The notion that those promises were conditional; that they expressed eternal moral laws, and declared the consequences of obeying those laws, they had lost long ago. By looking on themselves as exclusively and arbitrarily favoured by Heaven, they were ruining their own moral sense. Things were not right or wrong to them because Right was eternal and divine, and Wrong the transgression of that eternal right. How could that be? For then the right things the Gentiles seemed to do would be right and divine;—and that supposition in their eyes was all but impious. None could do right but themselves, for they only knew the law of God. So, right with them had no absolute or universal ground, but was reduced in their minds to the performance of certain acts commanded exclusively to them,—a form of ethics which rapidly sank into the most petty and frivolous casuistry as to the outward performance of those acts. The sequel of those ethics is known to all the world, in the spectacle of the most unrivalled religiosity, and scrupulous respectability, combined with a more utter absence of moral sense, in their most cultivated and learned men, than the world has ever beheld before or since.

In such a state of mind it was impossible for them to look on their old prophets as true seers, beholding and applying eternal moral laws, and, therefore, seeing the future in the present and in the past. They must be the mere utterers of an irreversible arbitrary fate; and that fate must, of course, be favourable to their nation. So, now arose a school who picked out from their old prophets every passage which could be made to predict their future glory, and a science which settled when that glory was to return. By the arbitrary rules of criticism a prophetic day was defined to mean a year; a week, seven years. The most simple and human utterances were found to have recondite meanings

relative to their future triumph over the heathens whom they cursed and hated.—If any of you ever come across the popular Jewish interpretations of *The Song of Solomon*, you will there see the folly in which acute and learned men can indulge themselves when they have lost hold of the belief in anything really absolute and eternal and moral, and have made Fate, and Time, and Self, their real deities. But this dream of a future restoration was in no wise ennobled, as far as we can see, with any desire for a moral restoration. They believed that a person would appear some day or other to deliver them. Even they were happily preserved by their sacred books from the notion that deliverance was to be found for them, or for any man, in an abstraction or notion ending in -ation or -ality. In justice to them it must be said, that they were too wise to believe that personal qualities, such as power, will, love, righteousness, could reside in any but in a person, or be manifested except by a person. And among the earlier of them the belief may have been, that the ancient unseen Teacher of their race would be their deliverer: but as they lost the thought of him, the expected Deliverer became a mere human being: or rather, not a human being; for as they lost their moral sense, they lost in the very deepest meaning their humanity, and forgot what man was like, till they learned to look only for a conqueror; a manifestation of power, and not of goodness; a destroyer of the hated heathen, who was to establish them as the tyrant race of the whole earth. On that fearful day, on which, for a moment, they cast away even that last dream, and cried, "We have no king but Cæsar," they spoke the secret of their hearts. It was a Cæsar, a Jewish Cæsar, whom they had been longing for for centuries. And if they could not have such a deliverer, they would have none: they would take up with the best embodiment of brute Titanic power which they could find, and crucify the embodiment of Righteousness and Love.—Amid all the metaphysical schools of Alexandria, I know none so deeply instructive as that school of the Rabbis, "the glory of Israel."

But you will say, "This does not look like a school likely to regenerate Alexandrian thought." True: and yet it did regenerate it, both for good and for evil; for these men had among them, and preserved faithfully enough for all practical purposes, the old literature of their race; a literature which I firmly believe, if I am to trust the experience of 1900 years, is destined to explain all other literatures; because it has firm hold of the one eternal root-idea which gives life, meaning, Divine sanction, to every germ or fragment of human truth which is in any of them. It did so, at least, in Alexandria for the Greek literature.

About the Christian era, a cultivated Alexandrian Jew, a disciple of Plato and of Aristotle, did seem to himself to find in the sacred books of his nation that which agreed with the deepest discoveries of Greek philosophy; which explained and corroborated them. And his announcement of this fact, weak and defective as it was, had the most enormous and unexpected results.—The father of New Platonism was Philo the Jew.

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### LECTURE III.

#### NEO-PLATONISM.

WE now approach the period in which Alexandria began to have a philosophy of its own—to be, indeed, the leader of human thought for several centuries.

I shall enter on this branch of my subject with some fear and trembling; not only on account of my own ignorance, but on account of the great difficulty of handling it without trenching on certain controversial subjects which are rightly and wisely forbidden here. For there was not one school of Metaphysic at Alexandria: there were two; which, during the whole period of their existence, were in internecine struggle with each other, and yet mutually borrowing from each other; the Heathen, namely, and the Christian. And you cannot contemplate, still less can you understand, the one without the other. Some of late years have become all but unaware of the existence of that Christian school: and the word Philosophy, on the authority of Gibbon, who, however excellent an authority for facts, knew nothing about Philosophy, and cared less, has been used exclusively to express heathen thought; a misnomer which in Alexandria would have astonished Plotinus or Hypatia as much as it would Clement or Origen. I do not say that there is, or ought to be, a Christian Metaphysic. I am speaking, as you know, merely as a historian, dealing with facts; and I say that there was one; as profound, as scientific, as severe, as that of the Pagan Neoplatonists; starting indeed, as I shall show hereafter, on many points from common ground with theirs. One can hardly doubt, I should fancy, that many parts of St. John's Gospel and Epistles, whatever view we may take of them, if they are to be called anything, are to be called metaphysic and philosophic. And one can no more doubt that before writing them he had studied Philo, and was expanding Philo's

thought in the direction which seemed fit to him, than we can doubt it of the earlier Neoplatonists. The technical language is often identical; so are the primary ideas from which he starts, howsoever widely the conclusions may differ. If Plotinus considered himself an intellectual disciple of Plato, so did Origen and Clemens. And I must, as I said before, speak of both, or of neither. My only hope of escaping delicate ground lies in the curious fact, that rightly or wrongly, the form in which Christianity presented itself to the old Alexandrian thinkers was so utterly different from the popular conception of it in modern England, that one may very likely be able to tell what little one knows about it, almost without mentioning a single doctrine which now influences the religious world.

But far greater is my fear, that to a modern British auditory, trained in the school of Locke, much of ancient thought, heathen as well as Christian, may seem so utterly the product of the imagination, so utterly without any corresponding reality in the universe, as to look like mere unintelligible madness. Still, I must try; only entreating my hearers to consider, that how much soever we may honour Locke and his great Scotch followers, we are not bound to believe them either infallible, or altogether world-embracing; that there have been other methods than theirs of conceiving the Unseen; that the common ground from which both Christian and heathen Alexandrians start, is not merely a private vagary of their own; but one which has been accepted undoubtingly, under so many various forms, by so many different races, as to give something of an inductive probability that it is not a mere dream, but may be a right and true instinct of the human mind. I mean the belief that the things which we see—nature and all her phænomena—are temporal, and born only to die; mere shadows of some unseen realities, from whom their laws and life are derived; while the eternal things which subsist without growth, decay or change, the only real, only truly existing things, in short, are certain things which are not seen; inappreciable by sense, or understanding, or imagination, perceived only by the conscience and the reason. And that again, the problem of philosophy, the highest good for man, that for the sake of which death were a gain, without which life is worthless, a drudgery, a degradation, a failure, and a ruin, is to discover what those unseen eternal things are, to know them, possess them, be in harmony with them, and thereby alone to rise to any real and solid power, or safety, or nobleness. It is a strange dream. But you will see that it is one which does not bear much upon “points of controversy,” any more than on “Locke’s philosophy:” nevertheless, when we find this same

strange dream arising, apparently without inter-communion of thought, among the old Hindoos, among the Greeks, among the Jews; and lastly, when we see it springing again in the middle age, in the mind of the almost forgotten author of the *Deutsche Theologie*, and so becoming the parent, not merely of Luther's deepest belief, or of the German mystic schools of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but of the great German Philosophy itself as developed by Kant, and Fichte, and Schelling, and Hegel, we must at least confess it to be a popular delusion, if nothing better, vast enough and common enough to be worth a little patient investigation, wheresoever we may find it stirring the human mind.

But I have hope, still, that I may find sympathy and comprehension among some, at least, of my audience, as I proceed to examine the ancient realist schools of Alexandria, on account of their knowledge of the modern realist schools of Germany. For I cannot but see, that a revulsion is taking place in the thoughts of our nation upon metaphysic subjects, and that Scotland, as usual, is taking the lead therein. That most illustrious Scotchman, Mr. Thomas Carlyle, first vindicated the great German Realists from the vulgar misconceptions about them which were so common at the beginning of this century, and brought the minds of studious men to a more just appreciation of the philosophic severity, the moral grandeur, of such thinkers as Emanuel Kant, and Gottlieb Fichte. To another Scotch gentleman, who, I believe, has honoured me by his presence here to night, we owe most valuable translations of some of Fichte's works; to be followed, I trust, by more. And though, as a humble disciple of Bacon, I cannot but think that the method both of Kant and Fichte possesses somewhat of the same inherent defect as the method of the Neoplatonist school, yet I should be most unfair did I not express my deep obligations to them, and advise all those to study them carefully, who wish to gain a clear conception either of the old Alexandrian schools, or of those intellectual movements which are agitating the modern mind, and which will, I doubt not, issue in a clearer light, and in a nobler life, if not for us, yet still for our children's children for ever.

The name of Philo the Jew is now all but forgotten among us. He was laughed out of sight during the last century, as a dreamer and an allegorist, who tried eclectically to patch together Plato and Moses. The present age, however, is rapidly beginning to suspect that all who thought before the eighteenth century were not altogether either fools or imposters; old wisdom is obtaining a fairer hearing day by day, and is found not to be so contradictory to new wisdom as was supposed. We are begin-



ning, too, to be more inclined to justify Providence, by believing that lies are by their very nature impotent and doomed to die; that everything which has had any great or permanent influence on the human mind, must have in it some germ of eternal truth; and setting ourselves to separate that germ of truth from the mistakes which may have distorted and overlaid it. Let us believe, or at least hope the same, for a few minutes, of Philo, and try to find out what was the secret of his power, what the secret of his weakness.

First. I cannot think that he had to treat his own sacred books unfairly, to make them agree with the root-idea of Socrates and Plato. Socrates and Plato acknowledged a Divine teacher of the human spirit; that was the ground of their philosophy. So did the literature of the Jews. Socrates and Plato, with all the Greek sages till the Sophistic era, held that the object of philosophy was the search after that which truly exists: that he who found that, found wisdom: Philo's books taught him the same truth: but they taught him also, that the search for wisdom was not merely the search for that which is, but for Him who is; not for a thing, but for a person. I do not mean that Plato and the elder Greeks had not that object also in view; for I have said already that Theology was with them the ultimate object of all metaphysic science: but I do think that they saw it infinitely less clearly than the old Jewish sages. Those sages were utterly unable to conceive of an absolute truth, except as residing in an absolutely true person; of absolute wisdom, except in an absolutely wise person; of an absolute order and law, except in a lawgiver; of an absolute good, except in an absolutely good person; any more than either they or we can conceive of an absolute love, except in an absolutely loving person. I say boldly, that I think them right, on all grounds of Baconian induction. For all these qualities are only known to us as exhibited in persons; and if we believe them to have any absolute and eternal existence at all, to be objective, and independent of us, and the momentary moods and sentiments of our own mind, they must exist in some absolute and eternal person, or they are mere notions, abstractions, words, which have no counterparts.

But here arose a puzzle in the mind of Philo, as it in reality had, we may see, in the minds of Socrates and Plato. How could he reconcile the idea of that absolute and eternal one Being, that Zeus, Father of Gods and men, self-perfect, self-contained, without change or motion, in whom, as a Jew, he believed even more firmly than the Platonists, with the Dæmon of Socrates, the Divine Teacher whom both Plato and Solomon con-

fessed? Or how, again, could he reconcile the idea of Him with the creative and providential energy, working in space and time, working on matter, and apparently affected and limited, if not baffled, by the imperfection of the minds which he taught, by the imperfection of the matter which he moulded? This, as all students of philosophy must know, was one of the great puzzles of old Greek philosophy, as long as it was earnest and cared to have any puzzles at all; it has been, since the days of Spinoza, the great puzzle of all earnest modern philosophers. Philo offered a solution in that idea of a Logos, or Word of God, Divinity articulate, speaking and acting in time and space, and therefore by successive acts; and so doing, in time and space, the will of the timeless and spaceless Father, the Abyssal and Eternal Being, of whom He was the perfect likeness. In calling this person the Logos, and making Him the source of all human reason, and knowledge of eternal laws, he only translated from Hebrew into Greek the name which he found in his sacred books, "The Word of God." As yet we have found no unfair allegorizing of Moses, or twisting of Plato. How then has he incurred this accusation?

I cannot think, again, that he was unfair in supposing that he might hold at the same time the Jewish belief concerning Creation, and the Platonic doctrine of the real existence of Archetypal ideas, both of moral and of physical phenomena. I do not mean that such a conception was present consciously to the mind of the old Jews, as it was most certainly to the mind of Saint Paul, a practised Platonic dialectician; but it seems to me, as to Philo, to be a fair, perhaps a necessary corollary from the Genetic Philosophy, both of Moses and of Solomon.

But in one thing he was unfair; namely, in his allegorizing. But unfair to whom? To Socrates and Plato, I believe, as much as to Moses and to Samuel. For what is the part of the old Jewish books which he evaporates away into mere mystic symbols of the private experiences of the devout philosopher? Its practical, every-day histories, which deal with the common human facts of family and national life, of man's outward and physical labour and craft. These to him have no meaning, except an allegoric one. But has he thrown them away for the sake of getting a step nearer to Socrates, or Plato, or Aristotle? Surely not. To them, as to the old Jewish sages, man is most important when regarded not merely as a soul, but as a man, a social being of flesh and blood. Aristotle declares politics to be the architectonical science, the family and social relations to be the eternal master-facts of humanity. Plato, in his Republic, sets before himself the Constitution of a State, as the crowning

problem of his philosophy. Every work of his, like every saying of his master Socrates, deals with the common, outward, vulgar facts of human life, and asserts that there is a divine meaning in them, and that reverent induction from them is the way to obtain the deepest truths. Socrates and Plato were as little inclined to separate the man and the philosopher as Moses, Solomon, or Isaiah were. When Philo, by allegorizing away the simple, human parts of his books, is untrue to Moses' teaching, he becomes untrue to Plato's. He becomes untrue, I believe, to a higher teaching than Plato's. He loses sight of an eternal truth, which even old Homer might have taught him, when he treats Moses as one section of his disciples in after years treated Homer.

For what is the secret of the eternal freshness, the eternal beauty, ay, I may say boldly, in spite of all their absurdities and immoralities, the eternal righteousness of those old Greek myths? What is it which made Socrates and Plato cling lovingly and reverently to them, they scarce knew why, while they deplored the immoralities to which they had given rise? What is it which made those myths, alone of all old mythologies, the parents of truly beautiful sculpture, painting, poetry? What is it which makes us love them still; find, even at times against our consciences, new meaning, new beauty in them; and brings home the story of Perseus or of Hercules, alike to the practised reason of Niebuhr, and the untutored instincts of Niebuhr's little child, for whom he threw them into simplest forms? Why is it that in spite of our disagreeing with their creed and their morality, we still persist—and long may we persist, or rather be compelled—as it were by blind instinct, to train our boys upon those old Greek dreams; and confess, whenever we try to find a substitute for them in our educational schemes, that we have as yet none? Because those old Greek stories do represent the Deities as the archetypes, the kinsmen, the teachers, the friends, the inspirers of men. Because while the school-boy reads how the Gods were like to men, only better, wiser, greater; how the Heroes are the children of the Gods, and the slayers of the monsters which devour the earth; how Athene taught men weaving, and Phœbus music, and Vulcan the cunning of the stithy; how the Gods took pity on the noble-hearted son of Danae, and lent him celestial arms, and guided him over desert and ocean to fulfil his vow;—that boy is learning deep lessons of metaphysic, more in accordance with the *reine vernunft*, the pure reason whereby man perceives that which is moral, and spiritual, and eternal, than he would from all disquisitions about being and becoming, about actualities and potentialities, which ever tormented the weary brain of man.

Let us not despise the gem, because it has been broken to fragments, obscured by silt and mud. Still less let us fancy that one least fragment of it is not more precious than the most brilliant paste jewel of our own compounding, though it be polished and facetted never so completely. For what are all these myths but fragments of that great metaphysic idea, which, I boldly say, I believe to be at once the justifier and the harmonizer of all philosophic truth which man has ever discovered, or will discover; which Philo saw partially, and yet clearly; which the Hebrew sages perceived far more deeply, because more humanly and practically; which Saint Paul the Platonist, and yet the Apostle, raised to its highest power, when he declared that the immutable and self-existent Being, for whom the Greek sages sought, and did not altogether seek in vain, has gathered together all things both in heaven and in earth in one inspiring and creating Logos, who is both God and Man?

Be this as it may, we find that from the time of Philo, the deepest thought of the heathen world began to flow in a theologic channel. All the great heathen thinkers henceforth are theologians. In the times of Nero, for instance, Epictetus the slave, the regenerator of Stoicism, is no mere speculator concerning entities and quiddities, correct or incorrect. He is a slave searching for the secret of freedom, and finding that it consists in escaping not from a master, but from self: not to wealth and power, but to Jove. He discovers that Jove is, in some most mysterious, but most real sense, the Father of men; he learns to look up to that Father as his guide and friend.

Numenius, again, in the second century, was a man who had evidently studied Philo. He perceived so deeply, I may say so exaggeratedly, the analogy between the Jewish and the Platonic assertions of an Absolute and Eternal Being, side by side with the assertion of a Divine Teacher of man, that he is said to have uttered the startling saying, "What is Plato but Moses talking Attic?" Doubtless Plato is not that: but the expression is remarkable, as showing the tendency of the age. He too looks up to God with prayers for the guidance of his reason. He too enters into speculation concerning God in his absoluteness, and in his connection with the universe. "The Primary God," he says, "must be free from works, and a King; but the Demiurgus must exercise government, going through the heavens. Through Him comes this our condition; through Him Reason being sent down in efflux, holds communion with all who are prepared for it; God then looking down, and turning Himself to each of us, it comes to pass that our bodies live and are nourished, receiving strength from the outer rays which come from Him. But when

God turns us to the contemplation of Himself, it comes to pass that these things are worn out and consumed, but that the reason lives, being partaker of a blessed life."

This passage is exceedingly interesting, as containing both the marrow of old Hebrew metaphysic, and also certain notional elements, of which we find no trace in the Scripture, and which may lead—as we shall find they afterwards did lead—to confusing the moral with the notional, and finally the notional with the material; in plain words, to Pantheism.

You find this tendency, in short, in all the philosophers who flourished between the age of Augustus and the rise of Alexandrian Neoplatonism. Gibbon, while he gives an approving pat on the back to his pet "Philosophic Emperor," Marcus Aurelius, blinks the fact that Marcus's philosophy, like that of Plutarch, contains as an integral element, a belief which to him would have been, I fear, simply ludicrous, from its strange analogy with the belief of John, the Christian Apostle. What is Marcus Aurelius's cardinal doctrine? That there is a God within him, a Word, a Logos, which "has hold of him," and who is his teacher and guardian; that over and above his body and his soul, he has a Reason which is capable of "hearing that Divine Word, and obeying the monitions of that God." What is Plutarch's cardinal doctrine? That the same Word, the Dæmon who spoke to the heart of Socrates, is speaking to him, and to every philosopher; "coming into contact," he says, "with him in some wonderful manner; addressing the reason of those, who like Socrates keep their reason pure, not under the dominion of passion, nor mixing itself greatly with the body, and therefore quick and sensitive in responding to that which encountered it."

You see from these two extracts what questions were arising in the minds of men, and how they touched on ethical and theological questions. I say arising in their minds: I believe that I ought to say rather, stirred up in their minds by One greater than they. At all events there they appeared, utterly independent of any Christian teaching. The belief in this Logos or Dæmon speaking to the Reason of man, was one which neither Plutarch nor Marcus, neither Numenius nor Ammonius, as far as we can see, learnt from the Christians; it was the common ground which they held with them; the common battle-field which they disputed with them.

Neither have we any reason to suppose that they learnt it from the Hindoos. That much Hindoo thought mixed with Neoplatonist speculation, we cannot doubt: but there is not a jot more evidence to prove that Alexandrians borrowed this conception from the Mahabharavata, than that George Fox the Quaker, or the author of

the *Deutsche Theologie*, did so. They may have gone to Hindoo philosophy, or rather to second and third hand traditions thereof, for corroborations of the belief: but be sure, it must have existed in their own hearts first, or they would never have gone thither. Believe it; be sure of it. No earnest thinker is a plagiarist pure and simple. He will never borrow from others that, which he has not already, more or less, thought out for himself. When once a great idea, instinctive, inductive, (for the two expressions are nearer akin than most fancy,) has dawned on his soul, he will welcome lovingly, awfully, any corroboration from foreign schools, and cry with joy: "Behold, this is not altogether a dream; for others have found it also. Surely it must be real, universal, eternal." No; be sure there is far more originality (in the common sense of the word) and far less (in the true sense of the word) than we fancy; and that it is a paltry and shallow doctrine which represents each succeeding school as merely the puppets and dupes of the preceding. More originality, because each earnest man seems to think out for himself the deepest grounds of his creed. Less originality, because, as I believe, one common Logos, Word, Reason, reveals and unveils the same eternal truth to all who seek and hunger for it.

Therefore we can, as the Christian philosophers of Alexandria did, rejoice over every truth which their heathen adversaries beheld, and attribute them, as Clement does, to the highest source, to the inspiration of the one and universal Logos. With Clement, Philosophy is only hurtful when it is untrue to itself, and philosophy falsely so called; true philosophy is an image of the truth, a divine gift bestowed on the Greeks. The Bible, in his eyes, asserts that all forms of art and wisdom are from God. The wise in mind have no doubt some peculiar endowment of nature, but when they have offered themselves for their work, they receive a spirit of perception from the Highest Wisdom, giving them a new fitness for it. All severe study, all cultivation of sympathy, are exercises of this spiritual endowment. The whole intellectual discipline of the Greeks, with their philosophy, came down from God to men. Philosophy, he concludes in one place, carries on "an inquiry concerning Truth and the nature of Being: and this Truth is that concerning which the Lord himself said, — 'I am the Truth.' And when the initiated find, or rather receive, the true philosophy, they have it from the Truth itself; that is, from Him who is true."

While, then, these two schools had so many grounds in common, where was their point of divergence? We shall find it, I believe, fairly expressed in the dying words of Plotinus, the great

father of Neoplatonism. "I am striving to bring the God which is in us, into harmony with the God which is in the universe." Whether or not Plotinus actually so spoke, that was what his disciples not only said that he spoke, but what they would have wished him to speak. That one sentence expresses the whole object of their philosophy.

But to that Pantæus, Origen, Clement, and Augustine would have answered,—“And we, on the other hand, assert that the God which is in the universe, is the same as the God which is in you, and is striving to bring you into harmony with himself.” There is the *experimentum crucis*. There is the vast gulf between the Christian and the Heathen schools, which when any man had overleaped, the whole problem of the universe was from that moment inverted. With Plotinus and his school man is seeking for God; with Clemens and his, God is seeking for man. With the former, God is passive, and man active; with the latter, God is active, man is passive,—passive, that is, in so far as his business is to listen when he is spoken to, to look at the light which is unveiled to him, to submit himself to the inward laws which he feels reproving and checking him at every turn, as Socrates was reproved and checked by his inward dæmon.

Whether of these two theorems gives the higher conception either of the Divine Being, or of man, I leave it for you to judge. To those old Alexandrian Christians, a being who was not seeking after every single creature, and trying to raise him, could not be a Being of absolute Righteousness, Power, Love; could not be a Being worthy of respect or admiration, even of philosophic speculation. Human righteousness and love flows forth disinterestedly to all around it, however unconscious, however unworthy they may be; human power associated with goodness, seeks for objects which it may raise and benefit by that power. We must confess this, with the Christian schools, or, with the Heathen schools, we must allow another theory, which brought them into awful depths; which may bring any generation which holds it into the same depths.

If Clement had asked the Neoplatonists: “You believe, Plotinus, in an absolutely Good Being. Do you believe that it desires to shed forth its goodness on all?” “Of course,” they would have answered, “on those who seek for it, on the philosopher.”

“But not, it seems, Plotinus, on the herd, the brutal, ignorant mass, wallowing in those foul crimes above which you have risen?” And at that question there would have been not a little hesitation. These brutes in human form, these souls wallowing in earthly mire, could hardly, in the Neoplatonists’ eyes, be objects of the Divine desire.

“Then this Absolute Good, you say, Plotinus, has no relation with them, no care to raise them. In fact, it cannot raise them, because they have nothing in common with it. Is that your notion?” And the Neoplatonist would have, on the whole, allowed that argument. And if Clement had answered, that such was not his notion of Goodness, or of a Good Being, and that therefore the goodness of their Absolute Good, careless of the degradation and misery around it, must be something very different from his notions of human goodness; the Neoplatonists would have answered—indeed they did answer—“After all, why not? Why should the Absolute Goodness be like our human goodness?” This is Plotinus’s own belief. It is a question with him, it was still more a question with those who came after him, whether virtues could be predicated of the Divine nature; courage, for instance, of one who had nothing to fear; self-restraint, of one who had nothing to desire? And thus, by setting up a different standard of morality for the divine and for the human, Plotinus gradually arrives at the conclusion, that virtue is not the end, but the means; not the Divine nature itself, as the Christian schools held, but only the purgative process by which man was to ascend into heaven, and which was necessary to arrive at that nature—that nature itself being—what?

And how to answer that last question, was the abysmal problem of the whole of Neoplatonic philosophy, in searching for which it wearied itself out, generation after generation, till tired equally of seeking and of speaking, it fairly laid down and died. In proportion as it refused to acknowledge a common divine nature with the degraded mass, it deserted its first healthy instinct, which told it that the spiritual world is identical with the moral world, with right, love, justice; it tried to find new definitions for the spiritual; it conceived it to be identical with the intellectual. That did not satisfy its heart. It had to repeople the spiritual world, which it had emptied of its proper denizens, with ghosts; to reinvent the old dæmonologies and polytheisms,—from thence to descend into lower depths, of which we will speak hereafter.

But in the meanwhile we must look at another quarrel which arose between the two twin schools of Alexandria. The Neoplatonists said, that there is a divine element in man. The Christian philosophers assented fervently, and raised the old disagreeable question: “Is it in every man? In the publicans and harlots as well as in the philosophers? We say that it is.” And there again the Neoplatonist finds it over hard to assent to a doctrine, equally contrary to outward appearance, and galling to Pharisaic pride; and enters into a hundred honest self-puz-



zles and self-contradictions, which seem to justify him at last in saying, "No." It is in the philosopher, who is ready by nature, as Plotinus has it, and as it were, furnished with wings, and not needing to sever himself from matter like the rest, but disposed already to ascend to that which is above. And in a degree too, it is in the "lover," who, according to Plotinus, has a certain innate recollection of beauty, and hovers round it, and desires it, wherever he sees it. Him you may raise to the apprehension of the one incorporeal Beauty, by teaching him to separate beauty from the various objects in which it appears scattered and divided. And it is even in the third class, the lowest of whom there is hope, namely the musical man, capable of being passively affected by beauty, without having any active appetite for it; the sentimentalist, in short, as we should call him nowadays.

But for the herd, Plotinus cannot say that there is any thing divine in them. And thus it gradually comes out in all Neoplatonist writings which I have yet examined, that the Divine only exists in a man, in proportion as he is conscious of its existence in him. From which spring two conceptions of the Divine in man. First, is it a part of him, if it is dependent for its existence on his consciousness of it? Or is it, as Philo, Plutarch, Marcus Aurelius would have held, as the Christians held, something independent of him, without him, a Logos or Word speaking to his reason and conscience? With this question Plotinus grapples, earnestly, shrewdly, fairly. If you wish to see how he does it, you should read the fourth and fifth books of the sixth *Ennead*, especially if you be lucky enough to light on a copy of that rare book, Taylor's faithful though crabbed translation.

Not that the result of his search is altogether satisfactory. He enters into subtle and severe disquisitions concerning soul. Whether it is one, or many. How it can be both one and many. He has the strongest perception that, to use the noble saying of the Germans, "Time and Space are no gods." He sees clearly that the soul, and the whole unseen world of truly existing being, is independent of time and space: and yet, after he has wrestled with the two Titans, through page after page, and apparently conquered them, they slip in again unawares into the battle-field, the moment his back is turned. He denies that the one Reason has parts—it must exist as a whole wheresoever it exists: and yet he cannot express the relation of the individual soul to it, but by saying that we are parts of it; or that each thing, down to the lowest, receives as much soul as it is capable of possessing. Ritter has worked out at length, though in a somewhat dry and lifeless way, the hundred contradictions of this kind which you meet in Plotinus; contradictions which I suspect to be insepara-

ble from any philosophy starting from his grounds. Is he not looking for the spiritual in a region where it does not exist; in the region of logical conceptions, and abstractions, which are not realities, but only, after all, symbols of our own, whereby we express to ourselves the processes of our own brain? May not his Christian contemporaries have been nearer scientific truth, as well as nearer the common sense, and practical belief of mankind, in holding that that which is spiritual is personal, and can only be seen or conceived of as residing in persons; and that that which is personal is moral, and has to do, not with abstractions of the intellect, but with right and wrong, love and hate, and all which, in the common instincts of men, involves a free will, a free judgment, a free responsibility and desert? And that, therefore, if there were a Spirit, a Dæmonic Element, an universal Reason, a Logos, a Divine Element, closely connected with man, that our Reason, that one Divine Element, must be a person also? At least, so strong was the instinct of even the Heathen schools in this direction, that the followers of Plotinus had to fill up the void which yawned between man and the invisible things after which he yearned, by reviving the whole old Pagan Polytheism, and adding to it a Dæmonology borrowed partly from the Chaldees, and partly from the Jewish rabbis, which formed a descending chain of persons, downward from the highest Deities to heroes, and to the guardian angel of each man; the meed of the philosopher being, that by self-culture and self-restraint he could rise above the tutelage of some lower and more earthly dæmon, and become the pupil of a God, and finally, a God himself.

These contradictions need not lower the great Father of Neoplatonism in our eyes as a moral being. All accounts of him seem to prove him to have been what Apollo, in a lengthy oracle, declared him to have been, "good and gentle, and benignant exceedingly, and pleasant in all his conversation." He gave good advice about earthly matters, was a faithful steward of moneys deposited with him, a guardian of widows and orphans, a righteous and loving man. In his practical life, the ascetic and gnostic element comes out strongly enough. The body, with him, was not evil, neither was it good; it was simply nothing—why care about it? He would have no portrait taken of his person; "It was humiliating enough to be obliged to carry a shadow about with him, without having a shadow made of that shadow." He refused animal food, abstained from baths, declined medicine in his last illness, and so died, about 200 A. D.

It is in his followers, as one generally sees in such cases, that the weakness of his conceptions comes out. Plotinus was an earnest thinker, slavishly enough reverencing the opinion of

Plato, whom he quotes as an infallible oracle, with a "He says," as if there were but one he in the universe: but he tried honestly to develop Plato, or what he conceived to be Plato, on the method which Plato had laid down. His dialectic is far superior, both in quantity and in quality, to that of those who come after him. He is a seeker. His followers are not. The great work which marks the second stage of his school is not an inquiry, but a justification, not only of the Egyptian, but of all possible theurgies and superstitions; perhaps the best attempt of the kind which the world has ever seen; that which marks the third is a mere cloud-castle, and inverted pyramid, not of speculation but of dogmatic assertion, patched together from all accessible rags and bones of the dead world. Some here will, perhaps, guess from my rough descriptions, that I speak of Iamblichus and Proclus.

Whether or not Iamblichus wrote the famous work usually attributed to him, which describes itself as the letter of Abamnon the Teacher to Porphyry, he became the head of that school of Neoplatonists who fell back on theurgy and magic, and utterly swallowed up the more rational, though more hopeless, school of Porphyry. Not that Porphyry, too, with all his dislike of magic and the vulgar superstitions—a dislike intimately connected with his loudly expressed dislike of the common herd, and therefore of Christianity, as a religion for the common herd—did not believe a fact or two, which looks to us, nowadays, somewhat unphilosophical. From him we learn that one Ammonius, trying to crush Plotinus by magic arts, had his weapons so completely turned against himself, that all his limbs were contracted. From him we learn that Plotinus, having summoned in the temple of Isis his familiar spirit, a god, and not a mere *dæmon*, appeared. He writes sensibly however, enough, to one Anebos, an Egyptian priest, stating his doubts as to the popular notions of the Gods, as beings subject to human passions and vices, and of theurgy and magic, as material means of compelling them to appear, or alluring them to favour man. The answer of Abamnon, Anebos, Iamblichus, or whoever the real author may have been, is worthy of perusal by every metaphysical student, as a curious phase of thought, not confined to that time, but rife, under some shape or other, in every age of the world's history, and in this as much as in any. There are many passages full of eloquence, many more full of true and noble thought: but, on the whole, it is the sewing of new cloth into an old garment; the attempt to suit the old superstition to the new one, by eclectically picking and choosing, and special pleading, on both sides; but the rent is only made worse. There is no base superstition which Abam-

non does not unconsciously justify. And yet he is rapidly losing sight of the real, eternal human germs of truth round which those superstitions clustered, and is really further from truth and reason than old Homer or Hesiod, because further from the simple, universal, every day facts, and relations, and duties of man, which are, after all, among the most mysterious, and also among the most sacred objects which man can contemplate.

It was not wonderful, however, that Neoplatonism took the course it did. Spirit, they felt rightly, was meant to rule matter; it was to be freed from matter only for that very purpose. No one could well deny that. The philosopher, as he rose, and became, according to Plotinus, a god, or at least approached toward them, must partake of some mysterious and transcendental power. No one could well deny that conclusion, granting the premiss. But of what power? What had he to show as the result of his intimate communion with an unseen Being? The Christian schools, who held that the spiritual is the moral, answered accordingly. He must show righteousness, and love, and peace in a Holy Spirit. That is the likeness of God. In proportion as a man has them, he is partaker of a Divine nature. He can rise no higher, and he needs no more. Platonists had said,—No, that is only virtue; and virtue is the means, not the end. We want proof of having something above that; something more than any man of the herd, any Christian slave, can perform; something above nature; portents and wonders. So they set to work to perform wonders; and succeeded, I suppose, more or less. For now one enters into a whole fairy land of those very phenomena which are puzzling us so nowadays—ecstasy, clairvoyance, insensibility to pain, cures produced by the effect of what we now call mesmerism. They are all there, these modern puzzles, in those old books of the long bygone seekers for wisdom. It makes us love them, while it saddens us to see that their difficulties were the same as ours, and that there is nothing new under the sun. Of course, a great deal of it all was “imagination.” But the question then, as now, is, what is this wonder-working imagination?—unless the word be used as a mere euphemism for lying, which really, in many cases, is hardly fair. We cannot wonder at the old Neoplatonists for attributing these strange phenomena to spiritual influence, when we see some who ought to know better doing the same thing now; and others, who more wisely believe them to be strictly physical and nervous, so utterly unable to give reasons for them, that they feel it expedient to ignore them for awhile, till they know more about those physical phenomena which can be put under some sort of classification, and attributed to some sort of inductive law.

But again. These ecstasies, cures, and so forth, brought them rapidly back to the old priestcrafts. The Egyptian priests, the Babylonian and Jewish sorcerers, had practised all this as a trade for ages, and reduced it to an art. It was by sleeping in the temples of the deities, after due mesmeric manipulations, that cures were even then effected. Surely the old priests were the people to whom to go for information. The old philosophers of Greece were venerable. How much more those of the East, in comparison with whom the Greeks were children? Besides, if these dæmons and deities were so near them, might it not be possible to behold them? They seemed to have given up caring much for the world and its course—

“*Effugerant adytis templisque relictis  
Dī quibus imperium steterat.*”

The old priests used to make them appear—perhaps they might do it again. And if spirit could act directly and preternaturally on matter, in spite of the laws of matter, perhaps matter might act on spirit. After all, were matter and spirit so absolutely different? Was not spirit some sort of pervading essence, some subtle ethereal fluid, differing from matter principally in being less gross and dense? This was the point to which they went down rapidly enough; the point to which all philosophies, I firmly believe, will descend, which do not keep in sight that the spiritual means the moral. In trying to make it mean exclusively the intellectual, they will degrade it to mean the merely logical and abstract; and when that is found to be a barren and lifeless phantom, a mere projection of the human brain, attributing reality to mere conceptions and names, and confusing the subject with the object, as logicians say truly the Neoplatonists did, then, in despair, the school will try to make the spiritual something real, or, at least, something conceivable, by reinvesting it with the properties of matter, and talking of it as if it were some manner of gas, or heat, or electricity, or force, pervading time and space, conditioned by the accidents of brute matter, and a part of that nature which is born to die.

The culmination of all this confusion we see in Proclus. The unfortunate Hypatia, who is the most important personage between him and Iamblichus, has left no writings to our times; we can only judge of her doctrine by that of her instructors and her pupils. Proclus was taught by the men who had heard her lecture; and the golden chain of the Platonic succession descended from her to him. His throne, however, was at Athens, not at Alexandria. After the murder of the maiden philosopher, Neoplatonism prudently retired to Greece. But Proclus is so essen-

tially the child of the Alexandrian school, that we cannot pass him over. Indeed, according to M. Cousin, as I am credibly informed, he is *the* Greek philosopher; the flower and crown of all its schools; in whom, says the learned Frenchman, "are combined, and from whom shine forth, in no irregular or uncertain rays, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus;" and who "had so comprehended all religions in his mind, and paid them such equal reverence, that he was, as it were, the priest of the whole universe!"

I have not the honour of knowing much of M. Cousin's works. I never came across them but on one small matter of fact, and on that I found him copying at second hand an anachronism which one would have conceived palpable to any reader of the original authorities. This is all I know of him, saving these his raptures over Proclus, of which I have quoted only a small portion, and of which I can only say, in Mr. Thomas Carlyle's words, "What things men will worship, in their extreme need!" Other moderns, however, have expressed their admiration of Proclus; and, no doubt, many neat sayings may be found in him (for after all he was a Greek) which will be both pleasing and useful to those who consider philosophic method to consist in putting forth strings of brilliant apophthegms, careless about either their consistency or coherence: but of the method of Plato or Aristotle, any more than of that of Kant or Mill, you will find nothing in him. He seems to my simplicity to be at once the most timid and servile of commentators, and the most cloudy of declaimers. He can rave symbolism like Jacob Böhmen; but without an atom of his originality and earnestness. He can develop an inverted pyramid of dæmonology, like Father Newman himself; but without an atom of his art, his knowledge of human cravings. He combines all schools, truly, Chaldee and Egyptian as well as Greek: but only scraps from their mummies, drops from their quintessences, which satisfy the heart and conscience as little as they do the logical faculties. His Greek gods and heroes, even his Alcibiades and Socrates, are "ideas;" that is, symbols of certain notions or qualities; their flesh and bones, their heart and brain, have been distilled away, till nothing is left but a word, a notion, which may patch a hole in his huge heaven-and-earth-embracing system. He, too, is a commentator and a deducer; all has been discovered; and he tries to discover nothing more. Those who followed him seem to have commented on his comments. With him Neoplatonism properly ends. Is its last utterance a culmination, or a fall? Have the Titans scaled heaven, or died of old age, "exhibiting," as Gibbon says of them, "a deplorable instance of the senility

of the human mind?" Read Proclus, and judge for yourselves: but first contrive to finish every thing else you have to do which can possibly be useful to any human being. Life is short, and Art—at least the art of obtaining practical guidance from the last of the Alexandrians—very long.

And yet—if Proclus and his school became gradually unfaithful to the great root idea of their philosophy, we must not imitate them. We must not believe that the last of the Alexandrians was under no divine teaching, because he had be-systemed himself into confused notions of what that teaching was like. Yes, there was good in poor old Proclus; and it too came from the only source whence all good comes. Were there no good in him, I could not laugh at him as I have done; I could only hate him. There are moments when he rises above his theories; moments when he recurs in spirit, if not in the letter, to the faith of Homer, almost to the faith of Philo. Whether these are the passages of his which his modern admirers prize most, I cannot tell. I should fancy not: nevertheless I will read you one of them.

He is about to commence his discourses on the Parmenides, that book in which we generally now consider that Plato has been most untrue to himself, and fallen from his usual inductive method to the ground of a mere *à priori* theorizer—and yet of which Proclus is reported to have said, and, I should conceive, said honestly, that if it, the Timæus, and the Orphic fragments were preserved, he did not care whether every other book on earth were destroyed. But how does he commence?—

"I pray to all the gods and goddesses to guide my reason in the speculation which lies before me, and having kindled in me the pure light of truth, to direct my mind upward to the very knowledge of the things which are, and to open the doors of my soul to receive the divine guidance of Plato, and, having directed my knowledge into the very brightness of being, to withdraw me from the various forms of opinion, from the apparent wisdom, from the wandering about things which do not exist, by that purest intellectual exercise about the things which do exist, whereby alone the eye of the soul is nourished and brightened, as Socrates says in the *Phædrus*; and that the Noetic Gods will give to me the perfect reason, and the Noeric Gods the power which leads up to this, and that the rulers of the Universe above the heaven will impart to me an energy unshaken by material notions and emancipated from them, and those to whom the world is given as their dominion a winged life, and the angelic choirs a true manifestation of divine things, and the good dæmons the fulness of the inspiration which comes from the Gods, and the heroes a

grand, and venerable, and lofty fixedness of mind, and the whole divine race together a perfect preparation for sharing in Plato's most mystical and far-seeing speculations, which he declares to us himself in the *Parmenides* with the profundity befitting such topics, but which *he* (*i. e.* his master Syrianus) completed by his most pure and luminous apprehensions, who did most truly share the Platonic feast, and was the medium for transmitting the divine truth, the guide in our speculations, and the hierophant of these divine words; who, as I think, came down as a type of philosophy, to do good to the souls that are here, in place of idols, sacrifices, and the whole mystery of purification, a leader of salvation to the men who are now and who shall be hereafter. And may the whole band of those who are above us be propitious; and may the whole force which they supply be at hand, kindling before us that light which, proceeding from them, may guide us to them."

Surely this is an interesting document. The last Pagan Greek prayer, I believe, which we have on record; the death-wail of the old world—not without a touch of melody. One cannot altogether admire the style; it is inflated, pedantic, written, I fear, with a considerable consciousness that he was saying the right thing and in the very finest way: but still it is a prayer. A cry for light—by no means, certainly, like that noble one in Tennyson's *In Memoriam*:—

So runs my dream. But what am I?  
 An infant crying in the night;  
 An infant crying for the light;  
 And with no language but a cry.

Yet he asks for light: perhaps he had settled already for himself—like too many more of us—what sort of light he chose to have: but still the eye is turned upward to the sun, not inward in conceited fancy that self is its own illumination. He asks: surely not in vain. There was light to be had for asking. That prayer certainly was not answered in the letter: it may have been ere now in the spirit. And yet it is a sad prayer enough. Poor old man, and poor old philosophy!

This he and his teachers had gained by despising the simpler and yet far profounder doctrine of the Christian schools, that the Logos, the Divine Teacher in whom both Christians and Heathens believed, was the very archetype of men, and that he had proved that fact by being made flesh, and dwelling bodily among them, that they might behold His glory, full of grace and truth, and see that it was at once the perfection of man and the perfection of God: that that which was most divine was most human, and



that which was most human, most divine. That was the outcome of *their* metaphysic, that they had found the Absolute One ; because One existed in whom the apparent antagonism between that which is eternally and that which becomes in time, between the ideal and the actual, between the spiritual and the material, in a word, between God and man, was explained and reconciled for ever.

And Proclus's prayer, on the other hand, was the outcome of the Neoplatonists' metaphysic, the end of all *their* search after the One, the Indivisible, the Absolute, this cry to all manner of innumerable phantoms, ghosts of ideas, ghosts of traditions, neither things nor persons, but thoughts, to give the philosopher each something or other, according to the nature of each. Not that he very clearly defines what each is to give him : but still, he feels himself in want of all manner of things, and it is as well to have as many friends at court as possible, Noetic Gods, Noeric Gods, rulers, angels, dæmons, heroes—to enable him to do what ? To understand Plato's most mystical and far-seeing speculations. The Eternal Nous, the Intellectual Teacher, has vanished further and further off : further off still some dim vision of a supreme Goodness. Infinite spaces above that looms through the mist of the abyss a Primæval One. But even that has a predicate, for it is one ; it is not pure essence. Must there not be something beyond that again, which is not even one, but is nameless, inconceivable, absolute ? What an abyss ! How shall the human mind find any thing whereon to rest, in the vast nowhere between it and the object of its search ? The search after the One issues in a wail to the innumerable ; and kind gods, angels, and heroes, not human indeed, but still conceivable enough to satisfy at least the imagination, step in to fill the void, as they have done since, and may do again ; and so as Mr. Carlyle has it, "the bottomless pit got roofed over," as it may be again ere long.

Are we then to say, that Neoplatonism was a failure ? That Alexandria, during four centuries of profound and earnest thought, added nothing ? Heaven forbid that we should say so of a philosophy which has exercised on European thought, at the crisis of its noblest life and action, an influence as great as did the Aristotelian system during the middle ages. We must never forget, that during the two centuries which commence with the fall of Constantinople, and end with our civil wars, not merely almost all great thinkers, but courtiers, statesmen, warriors, poets, were more or less Neoplatonists. The Greek grammarians, who migrated into Italy, brought with them the works of Plotinus, Iamblichus, and Proclus ; and their gorgeous reveries were welcomed eagerly by the European mind, just revelling in the free

thought of youthful manhood. And yet the Alexandrian impotence for any practical and social purposes was to be manifested, as utterly as it was in Alexandria, or in Athens of old. Ficinus and Picus of Mirandola worked no deliverance, either for Italian morals or polity, at a time when such deliverance was needed bitterly enough. Neoplatonism was petted by luxurious and heathen popes, as an elegant play of the cultivated fancy, which could do their real power, their practical system, neither good nor harm. And one cannot help feeling, while reading the magnificent oration on Supra-sensual Love, which Castiglione, in his admirable book *The Courtier*, puts into the mouth of the profligate Bembo, how near mysticism may lie not merely to dilettantism or to Pharisaism, but to sensuality itself. But in England, during Elizabeth's reign, the practical weakness of Neoplatonism was compensated by the noble practical life which men were compelled to live in those great times; by the strong hold which they had of the ideas of family and national life, of law and personal faith. And I cannot but believe it to have been a mighty gain to such men as Sidney, Raleigh, and Spenser, that they had drunk, however slightly, of the wells of Proclus and Plotinus. One cannot read Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, above all, his *Garden of Adonis*, and his cantos on *Mutability*, without feeling that his Neoplatonism must have kept him safe from many a dark eschatological superstition, many a narrow and bitter dogmatism, which was even then tormenting the English mind, and must have helped to give him altogether a freer and more loving conception, if not a consistent or accurate one, of the wondrous harmony of that mysterious analogy between the physical and the spiritual, which alone makes poetry (and I had almost said philosophy also) possible, and have taught him to behold alike in suns and planets, in flowers and insects, in man and in beings higher than man, one glorious order of love and wisdom, linking them all to Him from whom they all proceed, rays from his cloudless sunlight, mirrors of his eternal glory.

But as the Elizabethan age, exhausted by its own fertility, gave place to the Caroline, Neoplatonism ran through much the same changes. It was good for us, after all, that the plain strength of the puritans, unphilosophical as they were, swept it away. One feels in reading the later Neoplatonists, Henry More, Smith, even Cudworth, (valuable as he is,) that the old accursed distinction between the philosopher, the scholar, the illuminate, and the plain righteous man, was growing up again very fast. The school from which the *Religio Medici* issued, was not likely to make any bad men good, or any foolish men wise.

Besides, as long as men were continuing to quote poor old

Proclus as an irrefragable authority, and believing that he, forsooth, represented the sense of Plato, the new-born Baconian Philosophy had but little chance in the world. Bacon had been right years before in his dislike of Platonism, though he was unjust to Plato himself. It was Proclus whom he was really reviling; Proclus as Plato's commentator and representative. The lion had for once got into the ass's skin, and was treated accordingly. The true Platonic method, that dialectic which the Alexandrians gradually abandoned, remains yet to be tried, both in England and in Germany; and I am much mistaken, if, when fairly used, it be not found the ally, not the enemy, of the Baconian philosophy; in fact, the inductive method applied to words, as the expressions of Metaphysic Laws, instead of to natural phenomena, as the expressions of Physical ones. If you wish to see the highest instances of this method, read Plato himself, not Proclus. If you wish to see how the same method can be applied to Christian truth, read the dialectic passages in Augustine's Confessions. Whether or not you shall agree with their conclusions, you will not be likely, if you have a truly scientific habit of mind, to complain that they want either profundity, severity, or simplicity.

So concludes the history of one of the Alexandrian schools of Metaphysic. What was the fate of the other is a subject which I must postpone to my next Lecture.

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## LECTURE IV.

### THE CROSS AND THE CRESCENT.

I TRIED to point out, in my last Lecture, the causes which led to the decay of the Pagan metaphysic of Alexandria. We have now to consider the fate of the Christian school.

You may have remarked that I have said little or nothing about the positive dogmas of Clement, Origen, and their disciples: but have only brought out the especial points of departure between them and the Heathens. My reason for so doing was twofold: first, I could not have examined them without entering on controversial ground; next, I am very desirous to excite some of my hearers, at least, to examine these questions for themselves.

I entreat them not to listen to the hasty sneer to which many of late have given way, that the Alexandrian divines were mere

mystics, who corrupted Christianity by an admixture of Oriental and Greek thought. My own belief is that they expanded and corroborated Christianity, in spite of great errors and defects on certain points, far more than they corrupted it; that they presented it to the minds of cultivated and scientific men in the only form in which it would have satisfied their philosophic aspirations, and yet contrived, with wonderful wisdom, to ground their philosophy on the very same truths which they taught to the meanest slaves, and to appeal in the philosophers to the same inward faculty to which they appealed in the slave; namely, to that inward eye, that moral sense and reason, whereby each and every man can, if he will, "judge of himself that which is right." I boldly say that I believe the Alexandrian Christians to have made the best, perhaps the only, attempt yet made by men, to proclaim a true world-philosophy; whereby I mean a philosophy common to all races, ranks, and intellects, embracing the whole phenomena of humanity, and not an arbitrarily small portion of them, and capable of being understood and appreciated by every human being from the highest to the lowest. And when you hear of a system of reserve in teaching, a *disciplina arcani*, of an esoteric and exoteric, an inner and outer school, among these men, you must not be frightened at the words, as if they spoke of priestcraft, or an intellectual aristocracy, who kept the kernel of the nut for themselves, and gave the husks to the mob. It was not so with the Christian schools; it was so with the Heathen ones. The Heathens were content that the mob, the herd, should have the husks. Their avowed intention and wish was to leave the herd, as they called them, in the mere outward observance of the old idolatries, while they themselves, the cultivated philosophers, had the monopoly of those deeper spiritual truths which were contained under the old superstitions, and were too sacred to be profaned by the vulgar eyes. The Christian method was the exact opposite. They boldly called those vulgar eyes to enter into the very holy of holies, and there gaze on the very deepest root-ideas of their philosophy. They owned no ground for their own speculations which was not common to the harlots and the slaves around. And this was what enabled them to do this; this was what brought on them the charge of demagogism, the hatred of philosophers, the persecution of princes;—that their ground was a *moral* ground, and not a merely intellectual one; that they started, not from any notions of the understanding, but from the inward conscience, that truly pure Reason in which the intellectual and the moral spheres are united, which they believed to exist, however dimmed or crushed, in every human being, capable of being awakened, purified, and

raised up to a noble and heroic life. They concealed nothing *moral* from their disciples: only they forbade them to meddle with intellectual matters, before they had had a regular intellectual training. The witnesses of reason and conscience were sufficient guides for all men, and at them the many might well stop short. The teacher only needed to proceed further, not into a higher region, but into a lower one, namely, into the region of the logical understanding, and there make deductions from, and illustrations of, those higher truths which he held in common with every slave, and held on the same ground as they.

And the consequence of this method of philosophizing was patent. They were enabled to produce, in the lives of millions, generation after generation, a more immense moral improvement than the world had ever seen before. Their disciples did actually become righteous and good men, just in proportion as they were true to the lessons they learnt. They did, for centuries, work a distinct and palpable deliverance on the earth; while all the solemn and earnest meditation of the Neoplatonists, however good or true, worked no deliverance whatsoever. Plotinus longed at one time to make a practical attempt. He asked the Emperor Gallienus, his patron, to rebuild for him a city in Campania; to allow him to call it Platonopolis, and put it into the hands of him and his disciples, that they might there realize Plato's ideal republic. Luckily for the reputation of Neoplatonism, the scheme was swamped by the courtiers of Gallienus, and the earth was saved the sad and ludicrous sight of a realized Laputa; probably a very quarrelsome one. That was his highest practical conception: the foundation of a new society: not the regeneration of society as it existed.

That work was left for the Christian schools; and up to a certain point they performed it. They made men good. *This* was the test, which of the schools was in the right: this was the test, which of the two had hold of the eternal roots of metaphysic. Cicero says, that he had learnt more philosophy from the Laws of the Twelve Tables than from all the Greeks. Clemens and his school might have said the same of the Hebrew Ten Commandments and Jewish Law, which are so marvellously analogous to the old Roman laws founded, as they are, on the belief in a Supreme Being, a Jupiter—literally a Heavenly Father—who is the source and the sanction of law; of whose justice man's justice is the pattern; who is the avenger of crimes against marriage, property, life; on whom depends the sanctity of an oath. And so, to compare great things with small, there was a truly practical human element here in the Christian teaching; purely ethical and metaphysical, and yet palpable to the simplest and

lowest, which gave to it a regenerating force which the highest efforts of Neoplatonism could never attain.

And yet Alexandrian Christianity, notoriously enough, rotted away, and perished hideously. Most true. But what if the causes of its decay and death were owing to its being untrue to itself?

I do not say that they had no excuses for being untrue to their own faith. We are not here to judge them. That peculiar subtlety of mind, which rendered the Alexandrians the great thinkers of the then world, had with Christians, as well as Heathens, the effect of alluring them away from practice to speculation. The Christian school, as was to be expected from the moral ground of their philosophy, yielded to it far more slowly than the Heathen, but they did yield, and especially after they had conquered and expelled the Heathen school. Moreover, the long battle with the Heathen school had stirred up in them habits of exclusiveness, of denunciation; the spirit which cannot assert a fact without dogmatizing rashly and harshly on the consequences of denying that fact. Their minds assumed a permanent habit of combativeness. Having no more Heathens to fight, they began fighting each other, excommunicating each other; denying to all who differed from them any share of that light, to claim which for all men had been the very ground of their philosophy. Not that they would have refused the Logos to all men in words. They would have cursed a man for denying the existence of the Logos in every man; but they would have equally cursed him for acting on his existence in practice, and treating the heretic as one who had that within him to which a preacher might appeal. Thus they became Dogmatists; that is, men who assert a truth so fiercely, as to forget that a truth is meant to be used, and not merely asserted—if, indeed, the fierce assertion of a truth in frail man is not generally a sign of some secret doubt of it, and in inverse proportion to his practical living faith in it: just as he who is always telling you that he is a man, is not the most likely to behave like a man. And why did this befall them? Because they forgot practically that the light proceeded from a Person. They could argue over notions and dogmas deduced from the notion of his personality: but they were shut up in those notions; they had forgotten that if He was a Person, his eye was on them, his rule and kingdom within them; and that if He was a Person, He had a character, and that that character was a righteous and a loving character; and therefore they were not ashamed, in defending these notions and dogmas about Him, to commit acts abhorrent to his character, to lie, to slander, to intrigue, to hate, even to murder, for the sake of what they madly called his

glory : but which was really only their own glory,—the glory of their own dogmas ; of propositions and conclusions in their own brain, which, true or false, were equally heretical in their mouths, because they used them only as watchwords of division. Orthodox or unorthodox, they lost the knowledge of God, for they lost the knowledge of righteousness, and love, and peace. That Divine Logos, and theology as a whole, receded further and further aloft into abysmal heights, as it became a mere dreary system of dead scientific terms, having no practical bearing on their hearts and lives ; and then they, as the Neoplatonists had done before them, filled up the void by those dæmonologies, images, base Fetish worships, which made the Mohammedan invaders regard them, and I believe justly, as polytheists and idolaters, base as the pagan Arabs of the desert.

I cannot but believe them, moreover, to have been untrue to the teaching of Clement and his school, in that coarse and materialist admiration of celibacy which ruined Alexandrian society, as their dogmatic ferocity ruined Alexandrian thought. The Creed which taught them that in the person of the Incarnate Logos, that which was most divine had been proved to be most human, that which was most human had been proved to be most divine, ought surely to have given to them, as it has given to modern Europe, nobler, clearer, simpler views of the true relation of the sexes. However, on this matter they did not see their way. Perhaps, in so debased an age, so profligate a world, as that out of which Christianity had risen, it was impossible to see the true beauty and sanctity of those primary bonds of humanity. And while the relation of the sexes was looked on in a wrong light, all other social relations were necessarily also misconceived. “The very ideas of family and national life,” as it has been said, “those two divine roots of the Church, severed from which she is certain to wither away into that most cruel and most godless of spectres, a religious world, had perished in the East, from the evil influence of the universal practice of slave-holding, as well as from the degradation of that Jewish nation which had been for ages the great witness for these ideas ; and all classes, like their forefather Adam—like, indeed, the Old Adam—the selfish, cowardly, brute nature in every man and in every age—were shifting the blame of sin from their own consciences to human relationships and duties, and therein, to the God who had appointed them ; and saying, as of old, ‘The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.’”

Much as Christianity did, even in Egypt, for woman, by asserting her moral and spiritual equality with the man, there seems

to have been no suspicion that she was the true complement of the man, not merely by softening him, but by strengthening him; that true manhood can be no more developed without the influence of the woman, than true womanhood without the influence of the man. There is no trace among the Egyptian celibates of that chivalrous woman-worship which our Gothic forefathers brought with them into the West, which shed a softening and ennobling light round the mediæval convent-life, and warded off for centuries the worst effects of monasticism. Among the religious of Egypt, the monk regarded the nun, the nun the monk, with dread and aversion; while both looked on the married population of the opposite sex with a coarse contempt and disgust which is hardly credible, did not the foul records of it stand written to this day, in Rosweyde's extraordinary *Vitæ Patrum Eremiticorum*; no barren school of metaphysic, truly, for those who are philosophic enough to believe that all phenomena whatsoever of the human mind are worthy matter for scientific induction.

And thus grew up in Egypt a monastic world, of such vastness that it was said to equal in number the laity. This produced, no doubt, an enormous increase in the actual amount of moral evil. But it produced three other effects, which were the ruin of Alexandria. First, a continually growing enervation and numerical decrease of the population; next, a carelessness of, and contempt for, social and political life! and lastly, a most brutalizing effect on the lay population; who, told that they were, and believing themselves to be, beings of a lower order, and living by a lower standard, sank down more and more generation after generation. They were of the world, and the ways of the world they must follow. Political life had no inherent sanctity or nobleness; why act holily and nobly in it? Family life had no inherent sanctity or nobleness; why act holily and nobly in it, either, if there were no holy, noble, and divine principle or ground for it? And thus grew up, both in Egypt, Syria, and Byzantium, a chaos of profligacy and chicanery, in rulers and people, in the home and the market, in the theatre and the senate, such as the world has rarely seen before or since; a chaos which reached its culmination in the seventh century, the age of Justinian and Theodora, perhaps the two most hideous sovereigns, worshipped by the most hideous empire of parasites and hypocrites, cowards and wantons, that ever insulted the long-suffering of a righteous God.

But, for Alexandria at least, the cup was now full. In the year 640 the Alexandrians were tearing each other in pieces about some Jacobite and Melchite controversy, to me incompre-



hensible, to you unimportant, because the fighters on both sides seem to have lost (as all parties do in their old age) the knowledge of what they were fighting for, and to have so bewildered the question with personal intrigues, spites, and quarrels, as to make it nearly as enigmatic as that famous contemporary war between the blue and green factions at Constantinople, which began by backing in the theatre, the charioteers who drove in blue dresses, against those who drove in green; then went on to identify themselves each with one of the prevailing theological factions; gradually developed, the one into an aristocratic, the other into a democratic, religious party; and ended by a civil war in the streets of Constantinople, accompanied by the most horrible excesses, which had nearly, at one time, given up the city to the flames, and driven Justinian from his throne.

In the midst of these Jacobite and Melchite controversies and riots, appeared before the city the armies of certain wild and unlettered Arab tribes. A short and fruitless struggle followed; and, strange to say, a few months swept away from the face of the earth, not only the wealth, the commerce, the castles, and the liberty, but the philosophy and the Christianity of Alexandria; crushed to powder, by one fearful blow, all that had been built up by Alexander and the Ptolemies, by Clement and the philosophers, and made void, to all appearance, nine hundred years of human toil. The people, having no real hold on their hereditary creed, accepted, by tens of thousands, that of the Mussulman invaders. The Christian remnant became tributaries; and Alexandria dwindled from that time forth, into a petty sea-port town.

And now—can we pass over this new metaphysical school of Alexandria? Can we help inquiring, in what the strength of Islamism lay? I, at least, cannot. I cannot help feeling that I am bound to examine in what relation the creed of Omar and Amrou stands to the Alexandrian speculations of five hundred years, and how it had power to sweep those speculations utterly from the Eastern mind. It is a difficult problem; to me, as a Christian priest, a very awful problem. What more awful historic problem, than to see the lower creed destroying the higher? to see God, as it were, undoing his own work, and repenting him that he had made man? Awful indeed: but I can honestly say, that it is one from the investigation of which I have learnt—I cannot yet tell how much: and of this I am sure, that without that old Alexandrian philosophy, I should not have been able to do justice to Islam; without Islam I should not have been able to find in that Alexandrian philosophy, an ever-living and practical element.

I must, however, first entreat you to dismiss from your minds the vulgar notion that Mohammed was in anywise a bad man, or a conscious deceiver, pretending to work miracles, or to do things which he did not do. He sinned in one instance: but, as far as I can see, only in that one—I mean against what he must have known to be right. I allude to his relaxing in his own case those wise restrictions on polygamy which he had proclaimed. And yet, even in this case, the desire for a child may have been the true cause of his weakness. He did not see the whole truth, of course: but he was an infinitely better man than the men around; perhaps, all in all, one of the best men of his day. Many here may have read Mr. Carlyle's vindication of Mohammed in his *Lectures on Hero Worship*; to those who have not, I shall only say, that I entreat them to do so; and that I assure them, that though I differ in many things utterly from Mr. Carlyle's inferences and deductions in that lecture, yet that I am convinced, from my own acquaintance with the original facts and documents, that the picture there drawn of Mohammed is a true and a just description of a much calumniated man.

Now, what was the strength of Islam? The common answer is, fanaticism and enthusiasm. To such answers I can only rejoin: Such terms must be defined before they are used, and we must be told what fanaticism and enthusiasm are. Till then I have no more *à priori* respect for a long word ending in -ism or -asm than I have for one ending in -ation or -ality. But while fanaticism and enthusiasm are being defined—a work more difficult than is commonly fancied—we will go on to consider another answer. We are told that the strength of Islam lay in the hope of their sensuous Paradise and fear of their sensuous Gehenna. If so, this is the first and last time in the world's history that the strength of any large body of people—perhaps of any single man—lay in such a hope. History gives us innumerable proofs that such merely selfish motives are the parents of slavish impotence, of pedantry and conceit, of pious frauds, often of the most devilish cruelty: but, as far as my reading extends, of nothing better. Moreover, the Christian Greeks had much the same hopes on those points as the Mussulmans; and similar causes should produce similar effects: but those hopes gave them no strength. Besides, according to the Mussulmen's own account, this was *not* their great inspiring idea; and it is absurd to consider the wild battle-cries of a few imaginative youths, about black-eyed and green-kerchiefed Houris calling to them from the skies, as representing the average feelings of a generation of sober and self-restraining men, who showed themselves actuated by far higher motives.

Another answer, and one very popular now, is that the Mussulmans were strong, because they believed what they said; and the Greeks weak, because they did not believe what they said. From this notion I shall appeal to another doctrine of the very same men who put it forth, and ask them, Can any man be strong by believing a lie? Have you not told us, nobly enough, that every lie is by its nature rotten, doomed to death, certain to prove its own impotence, and be shattered to atoms the moment you try to use it, to bring it into rude actual contact with fact, and Nature, and the eternal laws? Faith, to be strong, must be faith in something which is not one's self; faith in something eternal, something objective, something true, which would exist just as much though we and all the world disbelieved it. The strength of belief comes from that which is believed in; if you separate it from that, it becomes a mere self-opinion, a sensation of positiveness; and what sort of strength that will give history will tell us in the tragedies of the Jews who opposed Titus, of the rabble who followed Walter the Penniless to the Crusades, of the Munster Anabaptists, and many another sad page of human folly. It may give the fury of idiots; not the deliberate might of valiant men. Let us pass this by, then; believing that faith can only give strength where it is faith in something true and right: and go on to another answer almost as popular as the last.

We are told that the might of Islam lay in a certain innate force and savage virtue of the Arab character. If we have discovered this in the followers of Mohammed, they certainly had not discovered it in themselves. They spoke of themselves, rightly or wrongly, as men who had received a divine light, and that light a moral light, to teach them to love that which was good, and refuse that which was evil; and to that divine light, they steadfastly and honestly attributed every right action of their lives. Most noble and affecting, in my eyes, is that answer of Saad's aged envoy to Yezdegird, King of Persia, when he reproached him with the past savagery and poverty of the Arabs. "Whatsoever thou hast said," answered the old man, "regarding the former condition of the Arabs is true. Their food *was* green lizards; they buried their infant daughters alive; nay, some of them feasted on dead carcasses, and drank blood; while others slew their kinsfolk, and thought themselves great and valiant, when by so doing, they became possessed of more property. They *were* clothed with hair garments, they knew not good from evil, and made no distinction between that which was lawful and unlawful. Such was our state; but God in his mercy has sent us, by a holy prophet, a sacred volume, which teaches us the true faith."

These words, I think, show us the secret of Islam. They are a just comment on that short and rugged chapter of the Koran which is said to have been Mohammed's first attempt either at prophecy or writing; when, after long fasting and meditation among the desert hills, under the glorious eastern stars, he came down and told his good Kadajah that he had found a great thing, and that she must help him to write it down. And what was this which seemed to the unlettered camel-driver so priceless a treasure? Not merely that God was one God—vast as that discovery was—but that he was a God “who showeth to man the thing which he knew not;” a “most merciful God;” a God, in a word, who could be trusted; a God who would teach and strengthen; a God, as he said, who would give him courage to set his face like a flint, and would put an answer in his mouth when his idolatrous countrymen cavilled and sneered at his message to them; to turn to from their idols of wood and stone, and become righteous men, as Abraham their forefather was righteous.

“A God who showeth to man the thing which he knew not.” That idea gave might to Islam, because it was a real idea, an eternal fact; the result of a true insight into the character of God. And that idea alone, believe me, will give conquering might either to creed, philosophy, or heart of man. Each will be strong, each will endure, in proportion as it believes that God is one who shows to man the thing which he knew not: as it believes, in short, in that Logos of which Saint John wrote, that He was the light who lightens every man who comes into the world.

In a word, the wild Koreish had discovered, more or less clearly, that end and object of all metaphysic whereof I have already spoken so often; that external and imperishable beauty for which Plato sought of old; and had seen that its name was righteousness, and that it dwelt absolutely in an absolutely righteous person; and moreover, that this person was no careless self-contented epicurean deity; but that he was, as they loved to call him, the most merciful God; that he cared for men; that he desired to make men righteous. Of that they could not doubt. The fact was palpable, historic, present. To them the degraded Koreish of the desert, who as they believed, and I think believed rightly, had fallen from the old Monotheism of their forefathers Abraham and Ismael, into the lowest fetishism, and with that into the lowest brutality and wretchedness; to them—while they were making idols of wood and stone; eating dead carcasses; and burying their daughters alive; careless of chastity, of justice, of property; sunk in unnatural crimes, dead in trespasses and sins; hateful and hating one another—a man, one of their own people

had come, saying, "I have a message from the one righteous God. His curse is on all this, for it is unlike Himself. He will have you righteous men, after the pattern of your forefather Abraham. Be that, and arise body, soul, and spirit, out of your savagery and brutishness. Then you shall be able to trample under foot the profligate idolaters, to sweep the Greek tyrants from the land which they have been oppressing for centuries, and to recover the East for its rightful heirs, the children of Abraham." Was this not, in every sense, a message from God? I must deny the philosophy of Clement and Augustine; I must deny my own conscience, my own reason; I must outrage my own moral sense, and confess that I have no immutable standard of right, that I know no eternal source of right, if I deny it to have been one; if I deny what seems to me the palpable historic fact, that those wild Koreish had in them a reason and a conscience, which could awaken to that message, and perceive its boundless beauty, its boundless importance, and that they did accept that message, and lived by it in proportion as they received it fully, such lives as no men in those times, and few in after times, have been able to live. If I feel, as I do feel, that Abubekr, Omar, Abu Obeidah, and Amrou, were better men than I am, I must throw away all that Philo—all that a Higher authority—has taught me: or I must attribute their lofty virtues to the one source of all in man which is not selfishness, and fancy, and fury, and blindness as of the beasts which perish.

Why, then, has Islamism become one of the most patent and complete failures upon earth, if the true test of a system's success be the gradual progress and amelioration of the human beings who are under its influence? First, I believe, from its allowing polygamy. I do not judge Mohammed for having allowed it. He found it one of the ancestral and immemorial customs of his nation. He found it throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. He found it in the case of Abraham, his ideal man; and, as he believed, the divinely inspired ancestor of his race. It seemed to him that what was right for Abraham, could not be wrong for an Arab. God shall judge him, not I. Moreover, the Christians of the East, divided into either monks or profligates, and with far lower and more brutal notions of the married state than were to be found in Arab poetry and legend, were the very last men on earth to make him feel the eternal and divine beauty of that pure wedded love which Christianity has not only proclaimed, but commanded, and thereby emancipated woman from her old slavery to the stronger sex. And I believe, from his chivalrous faithfulness to his good wife Kadijah, as long as she lived, that Mohammed was a man who could have

accepted that great truth in all its fulness, had he but been taught it. He certainly felt the evil of polygamy so strongly as to restrict it in every possible way, except the only right way—namely, the proclamation of the true ideal of marriage. But his ignorance, mistake, sin, if you will—was a deflection from the right law, from the true constitution of man, and therefore it avenged itself. That chivalrous respect for woman, which was so strong in the early Mohammedans, died out. The women themselves—who, in the first few years of Islamism, rose as the men rose, and became their helpmates, counsellors, and fellow-warriors—degenerated rapidly into mere playthings. I need not enter into the painful subject of woman's present position in the East, and the social consequences thereof. But I firmly believe, not merely as a theory, but as a fact which may be proved by abundant evidence, that to polygamy alone is owing nine tenths of the present decay and old age of every Mussulman nation; and that till it be utterly abolished, all Western civilization and capital, and all the civil and religious liberty on earth, will not avail one jot toward their revival. You must regenerate the family before you can regenerate the nation, and the relation of husband and wife before the family; because, as long as the root is corrupt, the fruit will be corrupt also.

But there is another cause of the failure of Islamism, more intimately connected with those metaphysical questions which we have been hitherto principally considering.

Among the first Mussulmen, as I have said, there was generally the most intense belief in each man that he was personally under a divine guide and teacher. But their creed contained nothing which could keep up that belief in the minds of succeeding generations. They had destroyed the good with the evil, and they paid the penalty of their undistinguishing wrath. In sweeping away the idolatries and fetish worships of the Syrian Catholics, the Mussulmans had swept away also that doctrine which alone can deliver men from idolatry and fetish worships—if not outward and material ones, yet the still more subtle, and therefore more dangerous idolatries of the intellect. For they had swept away the belief in the Logos; in a divine teacher of every human soul, who was, in some mysterious way, the pattern and antitype of human virtue and wisdom. And more, they had swept away that belief in the incarnation of the Logos, which alone can make man feel that his divine teacher is one who can enter into the human duties, sorrows, doubts, of each human spirit. And, therefore, when Mohammed and his personal friends were dead, the belief in a present divine teacher, on the whole, died with them; and the Mussulmans began to put the Koran in

the place of Him of whom the Koran spoke. They began to worship the book—which after all is not a book, but only an irregular collection of Mohammed's meditations, and notes for sermons—with the most slavish and ridiculous idolatry. They fell into a cabbalism, and a superstitious reverence for the mere letters and words of the Koran, to which the cabbalism of the old Rabbis was moderate and rational. They surrounded it, and the history of Mohammed, with all ridiculous myths, and prodigies, and lying wonders, whereof the book itself contained not a word; and which Mohammed, during his existence, had denied and repudiated, saying that he worked no miracles, and that none were needed; because only reason was required to show a man the hand of a good God in all human affairs. Nevertheless, these later Mussulmans found the miracles necessary to confirm their faith: and why? Because they had lost the sense of a present God, a God of order; and therefore hankered, as men in such a mood always will, after prodigious and unnatural proofs of his having been once present with their founder Mohammed.

And in the meanwhile that absolute and omnipotent Being whom Mohammed, arising out of his great darkness, had so nobly preached to the Koreish, receded in the minds of their descendants to an unapproachable and abysmal distance. For they had lost the sense of his present guidance, his personal care. They had lost all which could connect him with the working of their own souls, with their human duties and struggles, with the belief that his mercy and love were counterparts of human mercy and human love; in plain English, that he was loving and merciful at all. The change came very gradually, thank God; you may read of noble sayings and deeds here and there, for many centuries after Mohammed; but it came; and then their belief in God's omnipotence and absoluteness dwindled into the most dark, and slavish, and benumbing fatalism. His unchangeableness became in their minds not an unchangeable purpose to teach, forgive and deliver men—as it seemed to Mohammed to have been—but a mere brute necessity, an unchangeable purpose to have his own way, whatsoever that way might be. That dark fatalism, also, has helped toward the decay of the Mohammedan nations. It has made them careless of self-improvement, faithless in the possibility of progress; and has kept, and will keep, the Mohammedan nations, in all intellectual matters, whole ages behind the Christian nations of the West.

How far the story of Omar's commanding the baths of Alexandria to be heated with the books from the great library is true, we shall never know. Some have doubted the story altogether: but so many fresh corroborations of it are said to have been

lately discovered, in Arabic writers, that I can hardly doubt that it had some foundation in fact. One cannot but believe that John Philoponus, the last of the Alexandrian grammarians, when he asked his patron Amrou the gift of the library, took care to save some, at least, of its treasures; and howsoever strongly Omar may have felt or said that all books which agreed with the Koran were useless, and all which disagreed with it only fit to be destroyed, the general feeling of the Mohammedan leaders was very different. As they settled in the various countries which they conquered, education seems to have been considered by them an important object. We even find some of them, in the same generation as Mohammed, obeying strictly the Prophet's command to send all captive children to school—a fact which speaks as well for the Mussulmen's good sense, as it speaks ill for the state of education among the degraded descendants of the Greek conquerors of the East. Gradually philosophic schools arose, first at Bagdad, and then at Cordova; and the Arabs carried on the task of commenting on Aristotle's *Logic*, and Ptolemy's *Megiste*, *Syntaxis*—which last acquired from them the name of *Almagest*, by which it was so long known during the Middle Ages.

But they did little but comment, though there was no Neoplatonic or mystic element in their commentaries. It seems as if Alexandria was preordained, by its very central position, to be the city of commentators, not of originators. It is worthy of remark, that Philoponus, who may be considered as the man who first introduced the simple warriors of the Koreish to the treasures of Greek thought, seems to have been the first rebel against the Neoplatonist eclecticism. He maintained, and truly, that Porphyry, Proclus, and the rest, had entirely misunderstood Aristotle, when they attempted to reconcile him with Plato, or incorporate his philosophy into Platonism. Aristotle was henceforth the text-book of Arab savans. It was natural enough. The Mussulman mind was trained in habits of absolute obedience to the authority of fixed dogmas. All those attempts to follow out metaphysic to its highest object, theology, would be useless if not wrong in the eyes of a Mussulman, who had already his simple and sharply defined creed on all matters relating to the unseen world. With him metaphysic was a study altogether divorced from man's higher life and aspirations. So also were physics. What need had he of cosmogonies? what need to trace the relations between man and the universe, or the universe and its Maker? He had his definite material Elysium and Tartarus, as the only ultimate relation between man and the universe; his dogma of an absolute fiat, creating arbitrary and once-for all, as the only relation between the universe and its



Maker : and further it was not lawful to speculate. The idea which I believe unites both physic and metaphysic with man's highest aspirations and widest speculations,—the Alexandria idea of the Logos, of the Deity working in time and space by successive thoughts,—he had not heard of; for it was dead, as I have said, in Alexandria itself; and if he had heard of it, he would have spurned it as detracting from the absoluteness of that abysmal one Being, of whom he so nobly yet so partially bore witness. So it was to be; doubtless, it was right that it should be so. Man's eye is too narrow to see a whole truth, his brain too weak to carry a whole truth. Better for him, and better for the world, is perhaps the method on which man has been educated in every age, by which to each school, or party, or nation, is given some one great truth, which they are to work out to its highest development, to exemplify in actual life, leaving some happier age—perhaps, alas! only, some future state—to reconcile that too favoured dogma with other truths which lie beside it, and without which it is always incomplete, and sometimes altogether barren.

But such schools of science, founded on such a ground as this, on the mere instinct of curiosity, had little chance of originality or vitality. All the great schools of the world, the elder Greek philosophy, the Alexandrian, the present Baconian school of physics, have had a deeper motive for their search, a far higher object which they hope to discover. But indeed, the Mussulmans did not so much wish to discover truth, as to cultivate their own intellects. For that purpose a sharp and subtle systematist, like Aristotle, was the very man whom they required; and from the destruction of Alexandria may date the rise of the Aristotelian philosophy. Translations of his works were made into Arabic, first, it is said, from Persian and Syriac translations; the former of which had been made during the sixth and seventh centuries, by the wreck of the Neoplatonist party, during their visit to the philosophic Chozroos. A century after, they filled Alexandria. After them Almansoor, Hairoun Alraschid, and their successors, who patronized the Nestorian Christians, obtained from them translations of the philosophic, medical, and astronomical Greek works; while the last of the Omniades, Abdalrahman, had introduced the same literary taste into Spain, where, in the thirteenth century, Averroës and Maimonides rivalled the fame of Avicenna, who had flourished at Bagdad a century before.

But, as I have said already, these Arabs seem to have invented nothing; they only commented. And yet not only commented; for they preserved for us those works of whose real value they

were so little aware. Averroës, in quality of commentator on Aristotle, became his rival in the minds of the mediæval schoolmen; Avicenna, in quality of commentator on Hippocrates and Galen, was for centuries the text-book of all European physicians; while Albatani and Aboul Wefa, as astronomers, commented on Ptolemy, not however without making a few important additions to his knowledge; for Aboul Wefa discovered a third inequality of the moon's motion, in addition to the two mentioned by Ptolemy, which he did, according to Professor Whewell, in a truly philosophic manner—an apparently solitary instance, and one which, in its own day, had no effect; for the fact was forgotten, and rediscovered centuries after by Tycho Brahe. To Albatani, however, we owe two really valuable heirlooms. The one is the use of the sine, or half-chord of the double arc, instead of the chord of the arc itself, which had been employed by the Greek astronomers; the other, of even more practical benefit, was the introduction of the present decimal arithmetic, instead of the troublesome sexagesimal arithmetic of the Greeks. These ten digits, however, seem, says Professor Whewell, by the confession of the Arabians themselves, to be of Indian origin, and thus form no exception to the sterility of the Arabian genius in scientific inventions. Nevertheless we are bound, in all fairness, to set against his condemnation of the Arabs Professor De Morgan's opinion of the Moslem, in his article on Euclid: "Some writers speak slightingly of this progress, the results of which they are too apt to compare with those of our own time. They ought rather to place the Saracens by the side of their own Gothic ancestors; and, making some allowance for the more advantageous circumstances under which the first started, they should view the second systematically dispersing the remains of Greek civilization, while the first were concentrating the geometry of Alexandria, the arithmetic and algebra of India, and the astronomy of both, to form a nucleus for the present state of science."

To this article of Professor Morgan's on Euclid,\* and to Professor Whewell's excellent *History of the Inductive Sciences* from which I, being neither Arabic scholar nor astronomer, have drawn most of my facts about physical science, I must refer those who wish to know more of the early rise of physics, and of their preservation by the Arabs, till a great and unexpected event brought them back again to the quarter of the globe where they had their birth, and where alone they could be regenerated into a new and practical life.

That great event was the Crusades. We have heard little of

\* Smith's Classical Dictionary.

Alexandria lately. Its intellectual glory had departed westward and eastward, to Cordova and to Bagdad; its commercial greatness had left it for Cairo and Damietta. But Egypt was still the centre of communication between the two great stations of the Moslem power, and indeed, as Mr. Lane has shown in his most valuable translation of the *Arabian Nights*, possessed a peculiar life and character of its own.

It was the rash object of the Crusaders to extinguish that life. Palestine was first their point of attack: but the later Crusaders seem to have found, like the rest of the world, that the destinies of Palestine could not be separated from those of Egypt; and to Damietta, accordingly, was directed that last disastrous attempt of St. Louis, which all may read so graphically described in the pages of Joinville.

The Crusaders failed utterly of the object at which they aimed. They succeeded in an object of which they never dreamed; for in those Crusades the Moslem and the Christian had met face to face, and found that both were men, that they had a common humanity, a common eternal standard of nobleness and virtue. So the Christian knights went home humbler and wiser men, when they found in the Saracen emirs the same generosity, truth, mercy, chivalrous self-sacrifice, which they had fancied their own peculiar possession, and added to that, a civilization and a learning which they could only admire and imitate. And thus, from the era of the Crusades, a kindlier feeling sprung up between the Crescent and the Cross, till it was again broken by the fearful invasions of the Turks throughout eastern Europe. The learning of the Moslem, as well as their commerce, began to pour rapidly into Christendom, both from Spain, Egypt, and Syria; and thus the Crusaders were, indeed, rewarded according to their deeds. They had fancied that they were bound to vindicate the possession of the earth for him to whom they believed the earth belonged. He showed them—or rather He has shown us, their children—that He can vindicate his own dominion better far than man can do it for Him; and their cruel and unjust aim was utterly foiled. That was not the way to make men know or obey Him. They took the sword, and perished by the sword. But the truly noble element in them,—the element which our hearts and reasons recognize and love, in spite of all the loud words about the folly and fanaticism of the Crusades, whensoever we read the *Talisman* or *Ivanhoe*,—the element of loyal faith and self-sacrifice—did not go unrequited. They learnt wider, juster views of man and virtue, which I cannot help believing must have had great effect in weakening in their minds their old, exclusive, and bigoted notions, and in

paving the way for the great outburst of free thought, and the great assertion of the dignity of humanity, which the fifteenth century beheld. They opened a path for that influx of scientific knowledge which has produced, in after centuries, the most enormous effects on the welfare of Europe, and made life possible for millions who would otherwise have been pent within the narrow bounds of Europe, to devour each other in the struggle for room and bread.

But those Arabic translations of Greek authors were a fatal gift for Egypt, and scarcely less fatal gift for Bagdad. In that *Almagest* of Ptolemy, in that *Organon* of Aristotle, which the Crusaders are said to have brought home, lay, rude and embryotic, the germs of that physical science, that geographical knowledge, which has opened to the European the commerce and the colonization of the globe. Within three hundred years after his works reached Europe, Ptolemy had taught the Portuguese to sail round Africa; and from that day the stream of eastern wealth flowed no longer through the Red Sea, or the Persian Gulf, on its way to the new countries of the West; and not only Alexandria, but Damietta and Bagdad, dwindled down to their present insignificance. And yet the whirligig of time brings about its revenges. The stream of commerce is now rapidly turning back to its old channel; and British science bids fair to make Alexandria once more the inn of all the nations.

It is with a feeling of awe that one looks upon the huge possibilities of her future. Her own physical capacities, as the great mind of Napoleon saw, are what they have always been, inexhaustible; and science has learnt to set at nought the only defect of situation which has ever injured her prosperity, namely, the short land passage from the Nile to the Red Sea. The fate of Palestine is now more than ever bound up with her fate; and a British or French colony might, holding the two countries, develop itself into a nation as vast as sprang from Alexander's handful of Macedonians, and become the meeting point for the nations of the West, and those great Anglo-Saxon peoples who seem destined to spring up in the Australian ocean. Wide as the dream may appear, steam has made it a far narrower one than the old actual fact, that for centuries the Phœnician and the Arabian interchanged at Alexandria the produce of Britain for that of Ceylon and Hindostan. And as for intellectual development, though Alexandria wants, as she has always wanted, that insular and exclusive position which seems almost necessary to develop original thought and original national life, yet she may still act as the point of fusion for distinct schools and politics, and the young and buoyant vigour of the new-born nations may at

once teach, and learn from, the prudence, the experience, the traditional wisdom of the ancient Europeans.

This vision, however possible, may be a far-off one: but the first step towards it, at least, is being laid before our eyes,—and that is, a fresh reconciliation between the Crescent and the Cross. Apart from all political considerations, which would be out of place here, I hail, as a student of philosophy, the school which is now, both in Alexandria and in Constantinople, teaching to Moslem and to Christians the same lesson which the Crusaders learnt in Egypt five hundred years ago. A few years' more perseverance in the valiant and righteous course which Britain has now chosen, will reward itself by opening a vast field for capital and enterprise, for the introduction of civil and religious liberty among the down-trodden peasantry of Egypt; as the Giaour becomes an object of respect, and trust, and gratitude to the Moslem; and as the feeling that Moslem and Giaour own a common humanity, a common eternal standard of justice and mercy, a common sacred obligation to perform our promises, and to succour the oppressed, shall have taken place of the old brute wonder at our careless audacity, and awkward assertion of power, which now expresses itself in the somewhat left-handed Alexandrian compliment,—“There is one Satan, and there are many Satans: but there is no Satan like a Frank in a round hat.”

It would be both uncourteous and unfair of me to close these my hasty Lectures, without expressing my hearty thanks for the great courtesy and kindness which I have received in this my first visit to your most noble and beautiful city, and often, I am proud to say, from those who differ from me deeply on many important points; and also for the attention with which I have been listened to while trying, clumsily enough, to explain dry and repulsive subjects, and to express opinions which may be new, and perhaps startling, to many of my hearers. If my imperfect hints shall have stirred up but one hearer to investigate this obscure and yet most important subject, and to examine for himself the original documents, I shall feel that my words in this place have not been spoken in vain; for even if such a seeker should arrive at conclusions different from my own (and I pretend to no infallibility,) he will at least have learnt new facts, the parents of new thought, perhaps of new action; he will have come face to face with new human beings, in whom he will have been compelled to take a human interest; and will surely rise from his researches, let them lead him where they will, at least somewhat of a wider-minded and a wider-hearted man.

## MY WINTER-GARDEN.

BY A MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.

[*Fraser's Magazine.*]

So, my friend : you ask me to tell you how I contrive to support this monotonous country life ; how, fond as I am of excitement, adventure, society, scenery, art, literature, I go cheerfully through the daily routine of a commonplace country profession, never requiring a six-weeks' holiday ; not caring to see the Continent, hardly even to spend a day in London ; having never yet actually got to Paris.

You wonder why I do not grow dull as those round me, whose talk is of bullocks—as indeed mine is often enough ; why I am not by this time “all over blue mould ;” why I have not been tempted to bury myself in my study, and live a life of dreams among old books.

I will tell you. I am a minute philosopher. I am possibly, after all, a man of small mind, content with small pleasures. So much the better for me. Meanwhile, I can understand your surprise, though you cannot understand my content. You have played a greater game than mine ; have lived a life, perhaps, more fit for an Englishman ; certainly more in accordance with the taste of our common fathers, the Vikings, and their patron Odin “the goer,” father of all them that go ahead. You have gone ahead, and over many lands ; and I reverence you for it, though I envy you not. You have commanded a regiment—indeed an army, and “drank delight of battle with your peers ;” you have ruled provinces, and done justice and judgment, like a noble Englishman as you are, old friend, among thousands who never knew before what justice and judgment were. You have tasted (and you have deserved to taste) the joy of old David's psalms when he has hunted down the last of the robber lords of Palestine. You have seen “a people whom you have not known, serve you. As soon as they heard of you, they obeyed you ; but the strange children dissembled with you :” yet before you, too, “the strange children failed, and trembled in their hill-forts.”

Noble work that was to do, and nobly you have done it; and I do not wonder that to a man who has been set to such a task, and given power to carry it through, all smaller work must seem paltry; that such a man's very amusements, in that grand Indian land, and that free adventurous Indian life, exciting the imagination, calling out all the self-help and daring of a man, should have been on a par with your work; that when you go a-sporting, you ask for no meaner preserve than the primæval forest, no lower park wall than the snow-peaks of the Himalaya.

Yes; you have been a "burra Shikarree" as well as a burra Sahib. You have played the great game in your work, and killed the great game in your play. How many tons of mighty monsters have you done to death, since we two were school-boys together, five-and-twenty years ago? How many starving villages have you fed with the flesh of elephant or buffalo? How many have you delivered from man-eating tigers, or wary old alligators, their craws full of poor girls' bangles? Have you not been charged by rhinoceroses, all but ript up by boars? Have you not seen face to face Ovis Ammon himself, the giant mountain sheep—primæval ancestor, perhaps, of all the flocks on earth? Your memories must be like those of Theseus and Hercules, full of slain monsters. Your brains must be one fossiliferous deposit, in which buffalo and samber, hog and tiger, rhinoceros and elephant, lie heaped together, as the old ichthyosaurs and plesiosaurs are heaped in the lias rocks at Lyme. And therefore I like to think of you. I try to picture your feelings to myself. I spell over with my boy Mayne Reid's delightful books, or the *Old Forest Ranger*, or Williams's old *Tiger Book*, with Howitt's plates, and try to realize the glory of a burra Shikarree; and as I read and imagine, feel with Sir Hugh Evans, "a great disposition to cry."

For there were times, full many a year ago, when my brains were full of bison and grizzly bear, mustang and big-horn, Black-foot and Pawnee, and hopes of wild adventure in the Far West, which I shall never see; for ere I was three-and-twenty I discovered, plainly enough, that my lot was to stay at home and earn my bread in a very quiet way; that England was to be henceforth my prison or my palace, as I should choose to make it; and I have made it, by Heaven's help, the latter.

I will confess to you, though, that in those first heats of youth, this little England—or rather, this little patch of moor in which I have struck roots as firm as the wild fir-trees do—looked at moments rather like a prison than a palace; that my foolish young heart would sigh, "Oh! that I had wings"—not as a dove, to fly home to its nest and croodle there—but as an eagle, to

swoop away over land and sea, in a rampant and self-glorifying fashion, on which I now look back as altogether unwholesome and undesirable. But the thirst for adventure and excitement was strong in me, as perhaps it ought to be in all at twenty-five. Others went out to see the glorious new worlds of the West, the glorious old worlds of the East—why should not I? Others rambled over Alps and Apennines, Italian picture-galleries and palaces, filling their minds with fair memories—why should not I? Others discovered new wonders in botany and zoölogy—why should not I? Others too, like you, fulfilled to the utmost that strange lust after the burra shikar, which even now makes my pulse throb as often as I see the stags' heads in our friend A——'s hall: why should not I? It is not learnt in a day, the golden lesson of the Old Collect, to "love the thing which is commanded, and desire that which is promised." Not in a day: but in fifteen years one can spell out a little of its worth; and when one finds one's self on the wrong side of eight-and-thirty, and the first gray hairs begin to show on the temples, and one can no longer jump as high as one's third button—scarcely, alas! to any button at all; and what with innumerable sprains, bruises, soakings, and chillings, one's lower limbs feel in a cold thaw much like an old post-horse's, why, one makes a virtue of necessity; and if one still lusts after sights, takes the nearest, and looks for wonders, not in the Himalayas or Lake Ngami, but in the turf on the lawn and the brook in the park; and with good Alphonse Karr enjoys the macro-microcosm in one *Tour autour de mon jardin*.

For there it is, friend, the whole infinite miracle of nature in every tuft of grass, if we have only eyes to see it, and can disabuse our minds of that tyrannous phantom of size. Only recollect that great and small are but relative terms; that in truth nothing is great or small, save in proportion to the quantity of creative thought which has been exercised in making it; that the fly who basks upon one of the trilithons of Stonehenge, is in truth infinitely greater than all Stonehenge together, though he may measure the tenth of an inch, and the stone on which he sits five and twenty feet. You differ from me? Be it so. Even if you prove me wrong I will believe myself in the right: I cannot afford to do otherwise. If you rob me of my faith in "minute philosophy," you rob me of a continual source of content, surprise, delight.

So go your way and I mine, each working with all his might, and playing with all his might, in his own place and way. Remember only that though I never can come round to your sphere, you must some day come round to me in the day when wounds,



or weariness, or merely, as I hope, a healthy old age, will shut you out for once and for all from burra shikar, whether human or quadruped—For you surely will not take to politics in your old age? I shall not surely live to see you (as I saw many a fine fellow—woe's me!—last year) soliciting the votes, not of the people, but of the snobocracy, on the ground of your having neither policy, nor principles, nor even opinions, upon any matter in heaven or earth?—Then in that day will you be forced, my friend, to do what I have done this many a year; to refrain your soul and keep it low. You will see more and more the depth of human ignorance, the vanity of human endeavors. You will feel more and more that the world is going God's way, and not yours, or mine, or any man's; and that if you have been allowed to do good work on earth, that work is probably as different from what you fancy it as the tree is from the seed whence it springs. You will grow content, therefore, not to see the real fruit of your labours; because if you saw it you would probably be frightened at it, and what is very good in the eyes of God would not be very good in yours; and content, also, to receive your discharge, and work and fight no more, sure that God is working and fighting whether you are in hospital or in the field. And with this growing sense of the pettiness of human struggles will grow on you a respect for simple labours, a thankfulness for simple pleasures, a sympathy with simple people, and possibly, my trusty friend, with me and my little tours about that moorland which I call my winter-garden, and which is to me as full of glory and of instruction as the Himalaya or the Punjab are to you, and in which I contrive to find as much health and amusement as I have time for—and who ought to have more?

I call the said garden mine, not because I own it in any legal sense, (for only in a few acres have I a life interest,) but in that higher sense in which ten thousand people can own the same thing, and yet no man's right interfere with another's. To whom does the Apollo Belvedere belong, but to all who have eyes to see its beauty? So does my winter-garden; and therefore to me among the rest.

And therefore (which is a gain to a poor man) my pleasure in it is a very cheap one. So are all those of a minute philosopher, except his microscope. But my winter-garden, which is far larger, at all events, than that famous one at Chatsworth, costs me not one penny in keeping up. Poor, did I call myself? Is it not true wealth to have all I want without paying for it? Is it not true wealth, royal wealth, to have some twenty gentlemen and noblemen, nay, even royal personages, planting and improving for me? Is it not more than royal wealth to have sun and

frost, gulf-stream and southwesters, laws of geology, philology, physiology, and other ologies—in a word, the whole universe and the powers thereof, day and night, paving, planting, roofing, lighting, colouring my winter-garden for me, without my even having the trouble to rub a magic ring and tell the genie to go to work?

Yes. I am very rich, as every man may be who will. In the doings of our little country neighbourhood I find tragedy and comedy, too fantastic, sometimes too sad, to be written down. In the words of those whose talk is of bullocks, I find the materials of all possible metaphysic, and long weekly that I had time to work them out. In fifteen miles of moorland I find the materials of all possible physical science, and long, too, that I had time to work out one smallest segment of that great sphere. How can I be richer, if I have lying at my feet all day a thousand times more wealth than I can use?

Some people—most people—in these run-about railway days, would complain of such a life, in such a “narrow sphere,” so they call it, as monotonous. Very likely it is so. But is it to be complained of on that account? Is monotony in itself an evil? Which is better, to know many places ill, or to know one place well? Certainly—if a scientific habit of mind be a gain—it is only by exhausting as far as possible the significance of an individual phenomenon (is not that sentence a truly scientific one in its magniloquence?)—that you can discover any glimpse of the significance of the universal. Even men of boundless knowledge, like Humboldt, must have had once their specialty, their pet subject, or they would have, strictly speaking, no knowledge at all. The volcanoes of Mexico, patiently and laboriously investigated in his youth, were to Humboldt, possibly, the key of the whole Cosmos. I learn more, studying over and over again the same Bagshot sand and gravel heaps, than I should by roaming all Europe in search of new geologic wonders. Fifteen years have I been puzzling at the same questions, and have only guessed at a few of the answers. What sawed out the edges of the moors into long narrow banks of gravel? What cut them off all flat atop? What makes *Erica ciliaris* grow in one soil, and the bracken in another? How did three species of Club-moss—one of them quite an Alpine one—get down here, all the way from Wales perhaps, upon this isolated patch of gravel? Why did that one patch of *Carex arenaria* settle in the only square yard for miles and miles which bore sufficient resemblance to its native sand-hill by the sea-shore, to make it comfortable? Why did *Myosurus minimus*, which I had hunted for in vain for fourteen years, appear by dozens in the fifteenth, upon a new-made bank, which had been for at least for two hundred years a

farmyard gateway? Why does it generally rain here from the southwest, not when the barometer falls, but when it begins to rise again? Why—why is every thing, which lies under my feet all day long? I don't know; and you can't tell me. And till I have found out, I cannot complain of monotony, with still undiscovered puzzles waiting to be explained, and so to create novelty at every turn.

Besides, monotony is pleasant in itself; morally pleasant, and morally useful. Marriage is monotonous; but there is much, I trust, to be said in favour of holy wedlock. Living in the same house is monotonous: but three removes, say the wise, are as bad as a fire. Locomotion is regarded as an evil by our Litany. The Litany, as usual, is right. "Those who travel by land or sea" are to be objects of our pity and our prayers; and I do pity them. I delight in that same monotony. It saves curiosity, anxiety, excitement, disappointment, and a host of bad passions. It gives a man the blessed invigorating feeling that he is at home; that he has roots, deep and wide, struck down into all he sees; and that only the Being who will do nothing cruel or useless can tear them up. It is pleasant to look down on the same parish day after day, and say, I know all that lies beneath, and all beneath know me. If I want a friend, I know where to find him; if I want work done, I know who will do it. It is pleasant and good to see the same trees year after year; the same birds coming back in the spring to the same shrubs; the same banks covered with the same flowers, and broken (if they be stiff ones) by the same gaps. Pleasant and good it is to ride the same horse, to sit in the same chair, to wear the same old coat. That man who offered twenty pounds reward for a lost carpet bag full of old boots was a sage, and I wish I knew him. Why should one change one's place, any more than one's wife or one's children? Is a hermit-crab, slipping his tail out of one strange shell into another, in the hopes of its fitting him a little better, either a dignified, safe, or graceful animal? No; George Riddler was a true philosopher.

"Let vules go sarching vur and nigh,  
We bides at Whum, my dog and I;"

and become there, not only wiser, but more charitable; for the oftener one sees, the better one knows; and the better one knows, the more one loves.

It is an easy philosophy; especially in the case of the horse, where a man cannot afford more than one, as I cannot. To own a stud of horses, after all, is not to own horses at all, but riding-machines. Your rich man who rides Crimœa in the morning,

Sir Guy in the afternoon, and Sultan to-morrow, and something else the next day, may be a very gallant rider : but it is a question whether he enjoys the pleasure which one horse gives to the poor man who rides him day after day ; one horse who is not a slave, but a friend ; who has learnt all his tricks of voice, hand, heel, and knows what his master wants, even without being told ; who will bear with his master's infirmities, and feels secure that his master will bear with his in turn.

Possibly, after all, the grapes are sour ; and were one rich, one would do even as the rich are wont ; but still, I am a minute philosopher. And therefore, this afternoon, after I have done the same work, visited the same people, and said the same words to them, which I have done for years past, and shall, I trust, for many a year to come, I shall go wandering out into the same winter-garden on the same old mare ; and think the same thoughts, and see the same fir-trees, and meet perhaps the same good fellows hunting of their fox, as I have done with full content this many a year ; and rejoice, as I said before, in my own boundless wealth, who have the whole universe to look at, without being charged one penny for the show.

As I have said, the grapes may be sour, and I enjoy the want of luxuries only because I cannot get them ; but if my self-deception be useful to me, leave it alone.

No one is less inclined to depreciate that magnificent winter-garden at the Crystal Palace : yet let me, if I choose, prefer my own ; I argue that, in the first place, it is far larger. You may drive, I hear, through that grand one at Chatsworth for a quarter of a mile. You may ride through mine for fifteen miles on end. I prefer, too, to any glass roof which Sir Joseph Paxton ever planned, that dome above my head some three miles high, of soft dappled gray and yellow cloud, through the vast lattice-work whereof the blue sky peeps, and sheds down tender gleams on yellow bogs and softly rounded heather knolls, and pale chalk-ranges gleaming far away. But above all, I glory in my evergreens. What winter-garden can compare for them with mine ? True, I have but four kinds—the Scotch fir, the holly, furze, and the heath ; and by way of relief to them, only brows of brown fern, sheets of yellow bog-grass, and here and there a leafless birch, whose purple tresses are even more lovely to my eye than those fragrant green ones which she puts on in spring. Well : in painting as in music, what effects are more grand than those produced by the scientific combination, in endlessly new variety, of a few simple elements ? Enough for me is the one purple birch, the bright hollies round its stem sparkling with scarlet beads ; the furze-patch, rich with its lace-work of interwoven light and shade,

tipped here and there with a golden bud ; the deep soft heather carpet, which invites you to lie down and dream for hours ; and behind all, the wall of red fir-stems, and the dark fir-roof with its jagged edges a mile long, against the soft gray sky.

An ugly straight-edged, monotonous fir plantation? Well, I like it, outside and inside. I need no saw-edge of mountain peaks to stir up my imagination with the sense of the sublime, while I can watch the saw-edge of those fir peaks against the red sunset. They are my Alps ; little ones, it may be : but after all, as I asked before, what is size? A phantom of our brain ; an optical delusion. Grandeur, if you will consider wisely, consists in form, and not in size : and to the eye of the philosopher, the curve drawn on a paper two inches long, is just as magnificent, just as symbolic of divine mysteries and melodies, as when embodied in the span of some cathedral roof. Have you eyes to see? Then lie down on the grass, and look near enough to see something more of what is to be seen ; and you will find tropic jungles in every square foot of turf ; mountain cliffs and debacles at the mouth of every rabbit burrow ; dark strids, tremendous cataracts, "deep glooms and sudden glories," in every foot-broad rill which wanders through the turf. All is there for you to see, if you will but rid yourself of "that idol of space;" and Nature, as every one will tell you who has seen dissected an insect under the microscope, as grand and graceful in her smallest as in her hugest forms.

The March breeze is chilly : but I can be always warm if I like in my winter-garden. I turn my horse's head to the red wall of fir stems, and leap over the furze-grown bank into my cathedral ; (wherein, if there be no saints, there are likewise no priestcraft and no idols;)—but endless vistas of smooth red, green-veined shafts holding up the warm dark roof, lessening away into endless gloom—paved with rich brown fir-needle—a carpet at which Nature has been at work for forty years. Red shafts, green roof, and here and there a pane of blue sky—neither Owen Jones nor Willement can improve upon that ecclesiastical ornamentation,—while for incense I have the fresh healthy turpentine fragrance, far sweeter to my nostrils than the stifling narcotic odour which fills a Roman-catholic cathedral. There is not a breath of air within : but the breeze sighs over the roof above in a soft whisper. I shut my eyes, and listen. Surely that is the murmur of the summer sea upon the summer sands in Devon far away. I hear the innumerable wavelets spend themselves gently upon the shore, and die away to rise again. And with the innumerable wave-sighs come innumerable memories, and faces which I shall never see again upon this earth. I will not tell even you of that, old friend.

It has two notes, two keys rather, that Eolian-harp of fir-needles above my head; according as the wind is east or west, the needles dry or wet. This easterly key of to-day is shriller, more cheerful, warmer in sound, though the day itself be colder; but grander still, as well as softer, is the sad soughing key in which the southwest wind roars on, rain-laden, over the forest, and calls me forth—being a minute philosopher—to catch trout in the nearest chalk-stream.

The breeze is gone awhile; and I am in perfect silence, a silence which may be heard. Not a sound; and not a moving object; absolutely none. The absence of animal life is solemn, startling. That ring-dove, who was cooing half a mile away, has hushed his moan; that flock of long-tailed titmice, which were twinging and pecking about the fir-cones a few minutes since, are gone; and now there is not even a gnat to quiver in the slant sunrays. Did a spider run over those dead leaves, I almost fancy I could hear his footfall. The creaking of the saddle, the soft footfall of the mare upon the fir-needles, jar my ears. I seem alone in a dead world. A dead world; and yet so full of life, if I had eyes to see! Above my head every fir-needle is breathing, breathing, for ever, and currents unnumbered circulate in every bough, quickened by some undiscovered miracle; around me every fir-stem is distilling strange juices, which no laboratory of man can make; and where my dull eye sees only death, the eye of God sees boundless life and motion, health and use.

Slowly I wander on beneath the warm roof of the winter-garden, and meditate upon that one word—Life; and specially on all that Mr. Lewes has written so well thereon of late—for instance—

“We may consider Life itself as an ever-increasing identification with Nature. The simple cell, from which the plant or animal arises, must draw light and heat from the sun, nutriment from the surrounding world, or else it will remain quiescent, not alive, though latent with life; as the grains in the Egyptian tombs, which after lying thousands of years in those sepulchres, are placed in the earth, and smile forth as golden wheat. What we call growth, is it not a perpetual absorption of Nature, the identification of the individual with the universal? And may we not, in speculative moods, consider Death as the grand impatience of the soul to free itself from the circle of individual activity—the yearning of the creature to be united with the Creator?”

“As with Life, so with knowledge, which is intellectual Life. In the early days of man’s history, Nature and her marvellous ongoings were regarded with but a casual and careless eye, or else with the merest wonder. It was late before profound and reverent study of her laws could wean man from impatient speculations; and now, what

is our intellectual activity based on, except on the more thorough mental absorption of Nature? When that absorption is completed, the mystic drama will be sunny clear, and all Nature's processes be visible to man, as a Divine Effluence and Life."

True: yet not all the truth. But who knows all the truth?

Not I. "We see through a glass darkly," said St. Paul of old; and what is more, dazzle and weary our eyes, like clumsy microscopists, by looking too long and earnestly through the imperfect and by no means achromatic lens. Enough. I will think of something else. I will think of nothing at all—

Stay. There was a sound at last; a light footfall.

A hare races towards us through the ferns, her great bright eyes full of terror, her ears aloft to catch some sound behind. She sees us, turns short, and vanishes into the gloom. The mare pricks up her ears too, listens, and looks: but not the way the hare has gone. There is something more coming; I can trust the finer sense of the horse, to which (and no wonder) the Middle Age attributed the power of seeing ghosts and fairies impalpable to man's gross eyes. Beside, that hare was not travelling in search of food. She was not "loping" along, looking around her right and left, but galloping steadily. She has been frightened; she has been put up; but what has put her up? And there, far away among the fir-stems, rings the shriek of a startled blackbird. What has put him up?

That, old mare, at sight whereof your wise eyes widen till they are ready to burst, and your ears are first shot forward toward your nose, and then laid back with vicious intent. Stand still, old woman! Do you think still, after fifteen winters, that you can catch a fox?

A fox, it is indeed; a great dog-fox, as red as the fir-stems between which he glides. And yet his legs are black with fresh peat stains. He is a hunted fox: but he has not been up long.

The mare stands like a statue: but I can feel her trembling between my knees. Positively he does not see us. He sits down in the middle of a ride, turns his great ears right and left, and then scratches one of them with his hind foot, seemingly to make it hear the better. Now he is up again and on.

Beneath yon firs, some hundred yards away, standeth, or rather lieth, for it is on dead flat ground, the famous castle of Malepartus, which beheld the base murder of Lampe, the hare, and many a seely soul beside. I know it well; a patch of sand heaps, mingled with great holes, amid the twining fir roots; ancient home of the last of the wild beasts. And thither, unto Malepartus safe and strong, trots Reincke, where he hopes to

be snug among the labyrinthine windings, and innumerable starting holes, as the old apologue has it, of his ballium, covert-way, and donjon keep. Full blown in self-satisfaction he trots, lifting his toes delicately, and carrying his brush aloft, as full of cunning and conceit as that world-famous ancestor of his, whose deeds of unchivalry were the delight, if not the model, of knight and kaiser, lady and burgher, in the Middle Age.

Suddenly he halts at the great gate of Malepartus; examines it with his nose; goes on to a postern: examines that also, and then another and another; while I perceive afar, projecting from every cave's mouth, the red and green end of a new fir-fagot. Ah Reinecke! fallen is thy conceit, and fallen thy tail therewith. Thou hast worse foes to deal with than Bruin the bear, or Isgrim the wolf, or any foolish brute whom thy great ancestor outwitted. Man the many-counselled has been beforehand with thee; and the earths are stopped.

One moment he sits down to meditate, and scratches those trusty counsellors, his ears, as if he would tear them off, "revolving swift thoughts in a crafty mind."

He has settled it now. He is up and off—and at what a pace! Out of the way, Fauns and Hamadryads, if any be left in the forest. What a pace! And with what a grace beside!

Oh Reinecke, beautiful thou art, of a surety, in spite of thy great naughtiness. Art thou some fallen spirit, doomed to be hunted for thy sins in this life, and in some future life rewarded for thy swiftness, and grace, and cunning, by being made a very messenger of the immortals? Who knows? Not I.

I am rising fast to Pistol's vein. Shall I ejaculate? Shall I notify? Shall I waken the echoes? Shall I break the grand silence by that scream which the vulgar view-halloo call?

It is needless; for louder and louder every moment swells up a sound which makes my heart leap into my mouth, and my mare into the air.

Music? Well-beloved soul of Hullah, would that thou wert here this day, and not in St. Martin's Hall, to hear that chorus, as it pours round the fir-stems, rings against the roof above, shatters up into a hundred echoes, till the air is live with sound! You love madrigals, and whatever Weelkes, or Wilbye, or Orlando Gibbons sang of old. So do I. Theirs is music fit for men: worthy of the age of heroes, of Drake and Raleigh, Spenser and Shakspeare: but oh that you could hear this madrigal! If you must have "four parts," then there they are. Deep-mouthed bass, rolling along the ground; rich joyful tenor; wild wistful alto; and leaping up here and there above the throng of sounds, delicate treble shrieks and trills of trembling



joy. I know not whether you can fit it into your laws of music, any more than you can the song of that Ariel sprite who dwells in the Eolian harp, or the roar of the waves on the rock, or

Myriads of rivulets hurrying through the lawn,  
And murmur of innumerable bees.

But music it is. A madrigal? Rather a whole opera of *Der Freischütz*—dæmonic element and all—to judge by those red lips, fierce eyes, wild, hungry voices; and such as should make Reinecke, had he strong æsthetic sympathies, well content to be hunted from his cradle to his grave, that such sweet sounds might by him enrich the air. Heroes of old were glad to die, if but some *vates sacer* would sing their fame in worthy strains; and shalt not thou too be glad, Reinecke? Content thyself with thy fate. Music soothes care! let it soothe thine, as thou runnest for thy life; thou shalt have enough of it in the next hour. For as the Etruscans (says Athenæus) were so luxurious that they used to flog their slaves to the sound of the flute, so shall luxurious Chanter and Challenger, Sweet-lips and Melody, eat thee to the sound of rich organ-pipes, that so thou mayest,

Like that old fabled swan, in music die.

And now appear, dim at first and distant, but brightening and nearing fast, many a right good fellow and many a right good horse. I know three out of four of them, their private histories, the private histories of their horses: and could tell you many a good story of them; but shall not, being an English gentleman, and not an American *littérateur*. They are not very clever, or very learned, or very any thing, except gallant men: but they are good enough company for me, or any one; and each has his own *specialité*, for which I like him. That huntsman I have known for fifteen years, and sat many an hour beside his father's death-bed. I am godfather to that whip's child. I have seen the servants of the hunt, as I have the hounds, grow up round me for two generations, and I look on them as old friends—and like to look into their brave, honest, weather-beaten faces. That red coat there, I knew him when he was a school-boy; and now he is a captain in the Guards, and won his Victoria Cross at Inkermann: that bright green coat is the best farmer, as well as the hardest rider, for many a mile round; one who plays, as he works, with all his might, and might have made a *beau sabreur* and colonel of dragoons. So might that black coat, who now brews good beer, and stands up for the poor at the Board of Guardians, and rides, like the green coat, as well as he works.

That other black coat is a county banker; but he knows more of the fox than the fox knows of himself, and where the hounds are, there will he be this day. That red coat has hunted kangaroo in Australia; that one has—but what matter to you who each man is? Enough that each can tell me a good story, welcome me cheerfully, and give me out here, in the wild forest, the wholesome feeling of being at home among friends.

And I am going with them?

Certainly. He who falls in with hounds running, and follows them not as far as he can (business permitting, of course, in a business country,) is either more or less than man. So I, who am neither more nor less, but simply a man like my neighbours, turn my horse's head to go.

There is music, again, if you will listen, in the soft tread of these hundred horse-hoofs upon the spongy, vegetable soil. They are trotting now in "common time." You may hear the whole Croats' March (the finest trotting march in the world) played by those iron heels; the time, as it does in the Croats' March, breaking now and then, plunging, jingling, struggling through heavy ground, bursting for a moment into a jubilant canter as it reaches a sound spot. But that time does not last long. The hounds feather a moment round Malepartus, puzzled by the windings of Reinecke's footsteps. Look at Virginal, five yards ahead of the rest, as her stem flourishes, and her pace quickens. Hark to Virginal! as after one whimper, she bursts out full-mouthed, and the rest dash up and away in chorus, madder than ever, and we after them up the ride.

Listen to the hoof-tune now. The common time is changed to triple; and the heavy, steady thud—thud—thúd—tells one even blindfold that we are going. \* \* \* \*

Going, and "going to go." For a mile of ride have I galloped, tangled among men and horses, and cheered by occasional glimpses of the white-spotted backs in front; and every minute the pace quickens. Now the hounds swing off the ride, and through the fir-trees; and now it shall be seen who can ride the winter-garden.

I make no comparisons. I feel due respect for "the counties." I have tasted of old, though sparingly, the joys of grass; but this I do say, as said the gentlemen of the New Forest fifty years ago, in the days of its glory, when the forest and the court were one, that a man may be able to ride in Leicestershire, and yet not able to ride in the forest. It is one thing to race over grass, light or heavy, seeing a mile ahead of you, and coming up to a fence which, however huge is honest, and another to ride where we are going now. If you will pay money enough for

your horses ; if you will keep them in racing condition ; and having done so, simply stick on, (being, of course, a valiant man and true,) then you can ride grass, and

Drink delight of battle with your peers,

or those of the realm, in Leicestershire, Rutland, or Northampton. But here more is wanted, and yet not so much. Not so much, because the pace is seldom as great : but more, because you are in continual petty danger, requiring continual thought, promptitude, experience. There it is the best horse who wins ; but here it is the shrewdest man. Therefore, let him who is fearful and faint-hearted keep to the rides ; and not only he, but he who has a hot horse ; he who has no hand ; he who has no heel, or a horse who knows not what heel means ; for this riding is more like Australian bush-coursing, or Bombay hog-hunting, than the pursuit of the wily animal over a civilized country, as it appears in Leech's inimitable caricatures.

Therefore, of the thirty horsemen, some twenty wisely keep the ride, and no shame to them. They can go well elsewhere ; they will go well (certainly they will leave me behind) when we reach the enclosures three miles off : but here, they are wise in staying on *terra firma*.

But there are those who face *terram infirmam*. Off turns our master, riding, as usual, as if he did not know that he was riding at all, and thereby showing how well he rides. Off turns the huntsman ; the brave green coat on the mouse mare ; the brave black coat on the black mare. Mark those two last, if you do not know the country, for where the hounds are there will they be to the last. Off turns a tall Irish baronet ; the red coat who has ridden in Australia ; an old gentleman, who has just informed me that he was born close to Billesden-Coplow, and looks as if he could ride anywhere, even to the volcanoes of the moon, which must be a rough country, to look at it through a telescope. Off turns a gallant young Borderer, who has seen bogs and wolds ere now, but at present grows mustachios in a militia regiment at Aldershot : a noble youth to look at. May he prosper this day and all days, and beget brave children to hunt with Lord Elcho when he is dead and gone.

And off turn poor humble I, on the old screwed mare. I know I shall be left behind, ridden past, possibly ridden over, laughed to scorn by swells on hundred-and-fifty-guinea horses ; but I know the winter-garden, and I want a gallop. Half an hour will do for me ; but it must be a half hour of mad, thoughtless animal life, and then, if I can go no further, I will walk the mare home contentedly, and do my duty in that station of life to

which Providence has been pleased to call me. But while my hand finds aught to do, I must do it with all my might. Life is very short; and the truest philosophy is, to waste none of it, but to cram the maximum of play, as well as of work, into the minimum of time.

So away we go through a labyrinth of fir-stems and, what is worse, fir-stumps, which need both your eyes and your horse's at every moment; and woe to the "anchorite," as old Bunbury names him, who carries his nose in the air, and his fore feet well under him. Woe to the self-willed or hard-headed horse who cannot take the slightest hint of the heel, and wince hind legs or fore out of the way of those jagged points which lie in wait for him. Woe, in fact, to all who are clumsy or cowardly, or in anywise not "masters of the situation."

Pleasant riding it is, though, if you dare look anywhere but over your horse's nose, under the dark roof, between the red fir-pillars, in that rich subdued light. Now we plunge into a gloomy dell, wherein is no tinkling rivulet, ever pure; but instead a bog, hewn out into a chess-board of squares, parted by deep narrow ditches some twenty feet apart. Blundering among the stems we go, fetlock-deep in peat, and jumping at every third stride one of the said uncanny gripes, half-hidden in long hassock grass. Oh *Aira cæspitosa*, most stately and most variable of British grasses, why will you always grow where you are not wanted? Through you the mare all but left her hind legs in that last gripe. Through you the red coat ahead of me, avoiding one of your hassocks, jumped with his horse's nose full butt against a fir stem, and stopped,

As one that is struck dead  
By lightning, ere he falls.

as I shall soon, in spite of the mare's cleverness. Would we were out of this!

Out of it we shall be soon. I see daylight ahead at last, bright between the dark stems. Up a steep slope and over a bank, which is not very big, but being composed of loose gravel and peat mould, gives down with the first man who rides at it, sending him softly head over heels in the heather, and leaving us a sheer gap to gallop through, and out on the open moor.

Grand old moor! stretching your brown flats right away toward Windsor for many a mile.—Far to our right is the new Wellington College, looking stately enough here all alone in the wilderness, in spite of its two ugly towers and pinched waist.—When shall we have a decent public building. I can't stop to meditate on so very remote a chance. Close over us is the long

fir-fringed ridge of Easthampstead, ending suddenly in Caesar's camp; and we are racing up the Roman road, which the clods of these parts, unable to give a better account of it, call the Devil's Highway.

Racing indeed; for as Reinecke gallops up the narrow heather fringed pathway, he brushes off his scent upon the twigs at every stride, and the hounds race after him, showing no head indeed, and keeping for convenience, in one long line upon the track; but going, head up, stems down, at a pace which no horse can follow.—I only hope they may not overrun the scent!

They have overrun it; halt, and put their heads down a moment. But with one swift cast in full gallop they have hit it off again, fifty yards away in the heather, long ere we are up to them; for those hounds can hunt a fox because they are not hunted themselves, and so have learnt to trust themselves, and act for themselves; as boys should learn at school, even at the risk of a mistake or two. Now they are showing head indeed, down a half cleared valley, and over a few ineffectual turnips, withering in the peat, a patch of growing civilization in the heart of the wilderness; and then over the brook—woe's me! and we must follow—if we can.

Down we come to it, over a broad sheet of burnt ground, where a week ago the young firs were blazing, crackling, spitting turpentine for a mile on end. Now it lies all black and ghastly, with hard charred stumps, like ugly teeth, or caltrops of old, set to lame charging knights. Over a stiff furze-grown bank, which one has to jump on and off—if one can; and over the turnip patch, breathless.

Now we are at the brook, dyke, lode, drain, or whatever you call it. Much as I value agricultural improvements, I wish its making had been postponed for at least this one year. Shall we race at it, as at Rosy or Wissendine, and so over in one long stride? Would that we could! But racing at it is impossible; for we stagger up to it almost knee-deep in peat, and find it some fifteen feet broad and six feet deep of newly-cut yellow clay, with a foul runnel at the bottom. The brave green coat finds a practicable place, our master another; and both jump, not over, but in; and then out again, not by a leap, but by clawings as of a gigantic cat. The second whip goes in before me, and somehow vanishes headlong. I see the water shoot up from under his shoulders full ten feet high, and his horse sitting disconsolate on his tail at the bottom, like a great dog. However, they are up again and out, painted of a fair raw-ochre hue; and I have to follow, in fear and trembling, expecting to be painted in like wise.

Well, I am in, and out again, I don't know how: but this I know, that I am in a great bog. Natural bogs, red, brown, or green, I know from childhood, and never was taken in by one in my life: but this has taken me in, in all senses. Why do people pare and trim bogs before draining them?—thus destroying the light coat of tenacious stuff on the top, which Nature put there on purpose to help poor horsemen over, and the blanket of red bog-moss, which is meant as a fair warning to all who know the winter-garden. However, I am no worse off than my neighbours. Here we are, ten valiant men, all bogged together; and who knows how deep the peat may be?

I jump off and lead, considering that a horse plus a man weighs more than a horse alone; so do one or two more. The rest plunge bravely on, whether because of their hurry, or like Child Waters in the ballad, "for fying of their feet."

However, "all things do end," as Carlyle pithily remarks somewhere in his *French Revolution*; and so does this bog. I wish this gallop would end too. How long have we been going? There is no time to take out a watch: but I fancy the mare flags; I am sure my back aches with standing in my stirrups. I become desponding. I am sure I shall never see this fox killed; sure I shall not keep up five minutes longer; sure I shall have a fall soon; sure I shall ruin the mare's fetlocks in the ruts. I am bored. I wish it was all over, and I safe at home in bed.

Then why do I not stop?

I cannot tell. That thud, thud, thud, through moss and mire, has become an element of my being, a temporary necessity, and go I must. I do not ride the mare; the Wild Huntsman, invisible to me, rides her; and I, like Bürger's *Lenore*, am carried on in spite of myself, "tramp, tramp along the land, splash, splash along the sea."

By which I do not at all mean that the mare has run away with me. On the contrary, I am afraid I have been shaking her up during the last five minutes more than once. But the spirit of Odin, "the mover," "the goer," (for that is his etymology,) whom German sages connect much with the Wild Huntsman, has got hold of my midriff and marrow, and go I must, for "The Goer" has taken me.

I look round for the field. Scattered wide we are now; a red coat gleaming like a spark of fire on every knoll, in every dell, behind me and before me too; for some of the road riders have caught us up at a turn, and all are going well, though going wild.

What is this before us? A green wall of self-sown firs, which will scatter us still more.

There they stand in thousands, the sturdy Scots, colonizing the desert in spite of frost, and gales, and barrenness; and clustering together, too, as Scotsmen always do abroad, little and big, every one under his neighbour's lee, according to the good old proverb of their native land, "Caw me, and I'll caw thee."

I respect them, those Scotch firs. I delight in their forms, from James the First's gnarled giants, up in Bramshill Park—the only place in England where a painter can learn what Scotch firs are—down to the little green pyramids which stand up out of the heather, triumphant over tyranny, and the strange woes of an untoward youth. Seven years on an average have most of them spent in ineffectual efforts to become a foot high. Nibbled off by hares, trodden down by cattle, cut down by turf-parers, seeing hundreds of their brethren cut up and carried off in the turf-fuel, they are as gnarled and stubbed near the ground as an old thorn-bush in a pasture. But they have conquered at last, and are growing away, eighteen inches a year, with fair green brushes silver-tipt, reclothing the wilderness with a vegetation which it has not seen for—how many thousand years?

No man can tell. For when last the Scotch fir was indigenous to England, and mixed with the larch, stretched in one vast forest from Norfolk into Wales, England was not as it is now. Snowdon was, it may be, fifteen thousand feet in height, and from the edges of its glaciers the marmot and the musk ox, the elk and the bear, wandered down into the Lowlands, and the hyena and the tiger dwelt in those caves where fox and badger only now abide. And how did the Scotch fir die out? Did the whole land sink slowly from its sub-Alpine elevation into a warmer climate below? Or was it never raised at all? Did some change of the Atlantic sea-flow turn for the first time the warm Gulf Stream to these shores; and with its soft sea-breezes melt away the "Age of Ice," till glaciers and pines, marmots and musk oxen, perspired to death, and vanished for an *Æon*? Who knows? Not I. But of the fact there can be no doubt. Whether as we hold traditionally here, the Scotch fir was reintroduced by James the First when he built Bramshill for Raleigh's hapless pet, Henry the Prince, or whatever may have been the date of their reintroduction, here they are and no one can turn them out. In countless thousands the winged seeds float down the southwest gales from the older trees; and every seed which falls takes root in ground which, however unable to bear broad-leaved trees, is ready by long rest for the seeds of the needle-leaved ones. Thousands perish yearly; but the eastward march of the whole,

up hill and down dale, is sure and steady as that of Lynceus' Goths in Goethe's *Helena*:—

Ein lang und breites Volksgewicht,  
Der erste wusste vom letzen nicht.  
Der erste fiel, der zweite stand,  
Des dritten Lanze war zur Hand,  
Ein jeder hundertfach gestärkt;  
Erschlagene Tausend unbemerkt.

Till, as you stand upon some eminence, you see, stretching to the eastward of each tract of older trees a long cloud of younger ones, like a green comet's tail—I wish their substance was as yielding this day. Truly beautiful—grand, indeed, to me it is—to see young live Nature thus carrying on a great savage process in the heart of this old and seemingly all-artificial English land; and reproducing here, as surely as in the Australian bush, a native forest, careless of mankind. Still, I wish it were easier to ride through. Stiff are those Scotchmen, and close and stout they stand by each other, and claw at you as you twist through them, the biggest aiming at your head, or even worse, at your knees; while the middle-sized slip their brushes between your thigh and the saddle, and the little babies tickle your horse's stomach, or twine about his fore-feet. Whish—whish; I am enveloped in what seems an atmosphere of scrubbing-brushes. Fain would I shut my eyes: but dare not, or I shall ride against a tree. Whish—whish; alas for the horse which cannot wind and turn like a hare! Hounds, huntsmen, all are invisible; only by the swishing and crashing of boughs right and left do I know that there are a dozen men in the same torment as I, and calling it, after the manner of Englishmen, sport.

Plunge—stagger. What is this? A broad line of ruts; perhaps some Celtic trackway, two thousand years old, now matted over with firs; dangerous enough out on the open moor, when only masked by a line of higher and darker heath: but doubly dangerous now when masked by dark undergrowth. You must find your own way here, mare. I will positively have nothing to do with it. I disclaim all responsibility. There are the reins on your neck; do what you will, only do something—and if you can, get forward, and not back.

There is daylight at last, and fresh air. We gallop contemptuously through the advanced skirmishers of the Scotch invading army; find a practicable trackway through a long dreary yellow bog, too wet for firs to root in, and are away again "a streamer." Now a streamer is produced in this wise. There is but one possible gap in a bank, one possible ford in a brook; one possible



path in a cover; and as each man has to wait till the man before him gets through, and then gallops on, each man loses twenty yards or more on the man before him: wherefore, by all laws of known arithmetic, if ten men tail through a gap, then will the last of the ten find himself two hundred yards behind the foremost, which process several times repeated, produces the phenomenon called a streamer; viz: twenty men galloping absurdly as hard as they can, in a line half a mile long, and in humours which are celestial in the few foremost, contented in the central, and gradually becoming darker in the tailmost; till in the last man, viz: myself, they assume a hue altogether Tartarean.

Patter, patter, plunge, plunge, squash, squash. How shall I ever catch up those hounds? Catch up even the middle man of that line, of which every man is going as fast as I, and probably could go faster, as I am too sure I could not?

Pluck and luck may do it. And if not, what matter?

Luck may do it. The hounds may turn a little. And so they do; swinging round yon brown brow, alas! nearly half a mile off. Now for it! Plunge out of the trackway, over the ruts, and hold up, old lass, over the open heath. A fig for stumps, rabbit burrows, and the trackways of the extinct Celt. Five minutes more has brought me abreast of the middle man; but the hounds swing the opposite way, and I have lost rather more than I gained.

Never mind, try it once more. The last tack was to larboard, this shall be to starboard; and I see a slackening in the pace; and with good reason. Before us is the end of the winter-garden, whose boundary wall is by no means like that of Milton's Eden; but a huge brown bank, bristling with black willow; and, as is the fashion of the winter-garden, the ditch towards the moor. Now let pluck supply what luck could not.

I see the first whip make a rush. What can turn him? Over he goes; over goes Sir —; over our master; over the brave green coat; over the brave black one; over another red coat, which must be the Borderer, or the old gentleman from "the counties;" I am too far off, alas! to see which. But "the rest are scattered far and wide, by mount, by stream"—and if it were there, "by sea"—looking for that weaker place—which is not to be found.

Now for it, old woman! Old as you are, your loins are strong; and you know me, and I you. We pull bridle a little as we near the fence; it will not do to come up blown, and she likes to have a good stare at a place before passing it. . . . Well, my dear, it is very big; but practicable, in the sense in which Mr. Assheton Smith used to apply that epithet; that is to say, "If you

fall at it, you will probably fall on the right side." "Come along, mare! you know you can do it; and if you can't, you can try!" Ay, speak to your horse loudly, cheerfully, confidently, if you want to know what he can do. The magic of the human voice tells on him as well as on man. Silent himself, voice is to him a miracle, an inspiration. Think of it. Your horse can't talk; but he finds that you can. He feels that he carries a nobler, a wiser being than himself, one who can make him "above himself exalt himself," and dares and does—as she will. She is straight at it now, her feet on the ditch brink. Steady hand! and in with the spurs.

A pause, a heave, a long leap, a moment's clawing and struggling, cowbacked, upon the top of the bank, which seems half an hour long; and we plunge upon our knees into the field, pick ourselves up, and away again; rattling among swede turnips; over a hurdle into a flock of astounded sheep; and out again, a deep drop into a peaty meadow. The mare's fore feet stick deep into the turf the moment they touch it, as into tar, and the forward impulse sends her gently sprawling on her head.

Feeling both my heels touch the ground, as I sit in the saddle, I consider it time to step on shore. As I lift my leg over, she rises indignantly, chucks me head over heels, and stands looking at me with surprise and contempt. See what comes of being prudent, and thinking of one's wife and family. I had much better have sat the mare patiently, and faced the chance of her rolling on me. However, she has not (as I expected) trodden off the fore shoes with her hind ones; so there is no great harm done, certainly not to my old coat and hat which are long past harming.

The hounds, moreover, have obligingly waited for us two fields on. For the cold wet pastures which we are entering do not carry the scent as the heather did, in which Reinecke, as he galloped, brushed off his perspiration against every twig; and the hounds are now flemishing up and down by the side of the brown alder-fringed brook which parts the counties. I can hear the flap and snort of the dogs' nostrils as they canter round me; and I like it. It is exciting; but why—who can tell?

What beautiful creatures they are, too! Next to a Greek statue (I mean a real old Greek one; for I am a thoroughly anti-preraphaelite benighted pagan heathen in taste, and intend some day to get up a Cinque-Cento Club, for the total abolition of Gothic art)—next to a Greek statue, I say, I know few such combinations of grace and strength, as in a fine foxhound. It is the beauty of the Theseus—light and yet massive; and light not in spite of its masses, but on account of the perfect disposition of

them. I do not care for grace in man, woman, or animal, which is obtained (as in the old German painters) at the expense of honest flesh and blood. It may be all very pure, and unearthly, and saintly, and what not: but it is not healthy; and therefore it is not really High Art, let it call itself such as much as it likes. The highest art must be that in which the outward is the most perfect symbol of the inward; and therefore a healthy soul can be only exprest by a healthy body; and starved limbs and a hydrocephalous forehead must be either taken as incorrect symbols of spiritual excellence, or as (what they were really meant for) symbols of certain spiritual diseases which were in the Middle Age considered as ecclesiastical graces and virtues. Wherefore I like pagan and naturalist art; consider Titian and Correggio as unappreciated geniuses, whose excellences the world will in some saner mood rediscover; hold, in direct opposition to Rio, that Raffaele improved steadily all his life through, and that his noblest works are not those somewhat simpering Madonnas and somewhat impish Bambinos (very lovely though they are,) but those great, coarse, naturalist, Protestant cartoons, which (with Andrea Mantegna's *Heathen Triumph*) Cromwell saved for the British nation. I expect no one to agree with all this for the next quarter of a century; but after that I have hopes. The world will grow tired of pretending to admire Manichæan pictures in an age of natural science, and of building churches on the Popish model, to be used for Protestant worship; and art will let the dead bury their dead, and beginning again where Michael Angelo and Raffaele left off, work forward into a nobler, truer, freer, and more divine school than the world has yet seen—at least, so I hope.

And all this has grown out of those foxhounds. Why-not? Theirs is the sort of form which expresses to me what I want art to express—Nature not limited, but developed, by high civilization. The old savage ideal of beauty was the lion, type of mere massive force. That was succeeded by an over-civilized ideal, say the fawn, type of delicate grace. By cunning breeding and choosing, through long centuries, man has combined both, and has created the foxhound, lion and fawn in one. Look at that old hound, who stands doubtful, looking up at his master for advice. Look at the severity, delicacy, lightness of every curve. His head is finer than a deer's; his hind legs tense as steel springs; his fore legs straight as arrows: and yet see the depth of chest, the sweep of loin, the breadth of paw, the mass of arm and thigh; and if you have an eye for form, look at the absolute majesty of his attitude at this moment. Majesty is the only word for it. If he were six feet high, instead of twenty-three

inches, with what animal on earth could you compare him? Is it not a joy to see such a thing alive? It is to me, at least. I would like to have one in my study all day long, as I would have a statue or a picture; and when Mr. Morrell gave (as they say) two hundred guineas for Hercules alone, I believe the dog was well worth the money, only to look at. But I am a minute philosopher.

Ah! The hounds are over the brook, and one loud cheerful note after another gives promise of another burst. Over we go too, stumbling, watchful of water-rats' holes, down the rotten bank, wading the brown gravelly stream, and out again into another rushy pasture, up which the hounds are slowly picking out the scent. There, they have it now, and dash forward all together, showing a beautiful head, a "globus," as the old Romans called a pulk of irregular horse. You might cover them with a sheet, as the saying is, as they gallop up to the next fence. Oh that it may last?

It does last, through five or six fields, parted by stiff banks enough; and then the hounds vanish among brushwood. I see the gentlemen ahead of me "craning," meditative. There is something uncanny beyond.

Uncanny enough. A hollow lane it is, several feet below the soil. A hard lane, without a foot of side-turf to save your horse's feet. A nasty lane; a "naughty lane," as the Shakspearians would have called it. The green coat gallops off to a gate, and pauses. It is nailed up. He pauses, swings his horse round and back twenty yards, comes up in a quiet hand canter, and over gallantly. Whom a red-coat follows: but no more. Certainly not I; for the mare cannot do timber well; and if she could I see ugly things upon the ground on both sides of that gate, which one horse may escape, or two; but which will give some one a fall, probably me; for the agricultural intellect has here (as in most parts) a tendency to mend gate-roads with loose flints, brickbats, broken bottles, iron hoops, beef bones, and other abnormal substances, which make "bad rising and bad falling"—and—there is a third hero rolling in the road, with his horse's hind legs hung up in the gate; and when the too-valiant quadruped has at last tumbled over it on his nose, and got up again, he limps sadly on one of the said hind legs, and his master has to lead him dolefully away, and probably consign him to the stable for the next month. Hapless that we are! unless we are content to be pounded, into that lane we must leap after all. Well, the whip and one or two more have leapt down already, and what must be must; but I must wait a moment, for there is a man on his head below me, and a horse on his head also. They pick

themselves up. The man examines his horse's knees, and gives a grunt of comfort. The poor brute's head has saved his legs, and he stands yawing his chin dolefully up and down, apparently with a view to ascertaining whether or not his head is broken off. The man picks up what was his hat, and on and away again, both he and his horse, I am sorry to say, bleeding pretty freely about the face. However, he is an Englishman, and "it is all in the day's work."

Warned by my fellow's fate, I jump off, and lead down. The old mare relieved of my weight, jumps after me like a dog, and we, too, are away again, having lost a great deal of ground. But no one expects me to be in the first flight.

We are in the lane; and Tom the huntsman, by a desperate up leap which no one follows, is out again five minutes since: but we gallop up the lane—getting into it was quite enough to do. We will leave well alone, and stay in it while we can.

Out upon a village green, planted with rows of oaks and poplars, surrounded by the trim sunny cottages of retired Londoners, a pleasant oasis in the middle of the wilderness. Across the village cricket-ground (we are great cricketers in these parts, and long may the good old game live among us,) and then up another hollow lane, which leads between damp shaughs and copses toward the further moor.

Curious things to a minute philosopher are these same hollow lanes. They set him on archæological questions, more than he can solve; and he has time to think over them just now, for there is no hurry; the hounds are picking out the scent slowly enough over the adjoining fallows, and he has time to meditate how many centuries it took to saw through the warm sand-banks this dyke ten feet deep, up which he trots, with the oak boughs meeting over his head. Was it ever worth men's while to dig out the soil? Surely not. The old method must have been, to remove the softer upper spit, till they got to tolerably hard ground; and then, Macadam's metal being as yet unknown, the rains and the wheels of generations sawed gradually deeper and deeper, till this road-ditch was formed. But it must have taken centuries to do it. Many of these hollow lanes, especially those on flat ground, must be as old or older than the Conquest. In Devonshire, I am sure that they are. But there many of them, one suspects, were made, not of malice but of cowardice prepense. Your indigenous Celt was, one fears, a sneaking animal, and liked to keep when he could under cover of banks and hill-sides; while your bold Roman made his raised roads straight over hill and dale, "ridge-ways" from which, as from an eagle's eyrie, he could survey the conquered lowlands far and wide. It marks strongly the

difference between the two races, that difference between the Roman paved road, with its established common way for all passengers, its regular stations and milestones, and the Celtic track-way, winding irresolutely along in innumerable ruts, parting to meet again, as if each savage (for they were nothing better) had taken his own fresh path when he found the next line of ruts too heavy for his cattle. Around the spurs of Dartmoor I have seen many ancient roads, some of them long disused, which could have been hollowed out for no purpose but that of concealment.

But where are the hounds all this time? There, two fields on our left, at a dead stand-still. I am afraid that it would not matter much if they were ten fields off. I am beginning to fear exceedingly that we shall not kill this fox. The delay is getting serious. Some one observes "that he must be a long way ahead of us by now;" and is answered by a general grunt, or groan. However, we are on the right side of the hounds. If he has gone anywhere, he has gone to the large covers of the southern winter-garden, and has crossed our path up above. So we go slowly up the hill, till the valley lies beneath us like a long green garden between its two banks of brown moor, and through a cheerful little green, with red brick cottages scattered all round, each with its large neat garden and beehives, and pigs and geese, and turf-stack, and clipt yews and hollies before the door, and rosy dark-eyed children, and all the simple healthy comforts of a wild "heth-cropper's" home. When he can, the good man of the house works at farm labour, or cuts his own turf; and when work is scarce, he cuts copses and makes heath-brooms, and does a little poaching. True, he seldom goes to church, save to be christened, married, or buried; but he equally seldom gets drunk. For church and public stand together two miles off; so that social wants sometimes bring their own compensations with them, and there are two sides to every question.

Hark! A faint, dreary hollo off the moor above. And then another, and another. Up the lane we gallop, trusting to the cry; for the clod of these parts delights in the chase like any bare-legged Paddy, and casts away flail and fork wildly, to run, shout, assist, and interfere in all possible ways, out of pure love. The descendant of many generations of broom-squires and deer-stealers, the instinct of sport is strong within him still, though no more of the king's deer are to be shot in the winter turnip-fields, or worse, caught by an apple-baited hook hung from an orchard bough. He now limits his aspirations to hares and pheasants, and too probably once in his life "hits the keeper into the river," and reconsiders himself for awhile after over a crank in Winchester jail. Well, he has his faults; and I have mine.

But he is a thorough good fellow nevertheless ; quite as good as I ; civil, contented, industrious, and often very handsome ; and a far shrewder fellow too—owing to his dash of wild forest blood—gypsy, highwayman, and what not—than his bullet-headed, and flaxen-poll'd cousin, the pure South Saxon of the Chalk-downs. Dark-haired he is, ruddy, and tall of bone ; swaggering in his youth ; but when he grows old, a thorough gentleman, reserved, stately and courteous as a prince. Fifteen years have I lived with him hail fellow well met, and never yet had a rude word or action from him.

We canter up to the agriculturist who stands roaring on the top of a gate-post, and steadying himself by a tree.

“ He is just gone on there. Not a quarter of an hour since. Along that hedge-row.”

So ? Then, when the hounds are thrown into the field, why do they not hit him off ? Why does the next field only give a hint of his having past ; and the next none at all ? Why are we doomed to wander shivering for the next half hour, up and down this lane-end, discussing the solemn question as to where Reinecke may, can, will, shall, might, could, would, and should have gone ; and watching those two sorrowful red coats and that sorrowful line of hounds trotting in a great ring below us through the fallow fields, while the huntsman's notes of encouragement come up the breeze, fainter, sadder, more hopeless every minute ?

Because the scent has failed. And why scent fails, or does not fail, and what scent is—and, in short, any thing about the matter, man knows—no more than he knows why his own pulse beats. It depends on the weather ? Probably. It is best with a steady or rising glass ? Possibly. It is best in a southerly wind and a cloudy sky ? In some countries. On clays and grass, they say. And yet what sings the poet of the immortal Billesden Coplów fox, who ran seventy miles on end ?—(there were three foxes up though that day :)—

The wind was northeast, and most bitterly keen ;  
'Twas the worst hunting morning that ever was seen.

And yet the best scenting day I ever saw on grass was a sunny April southwester, when it was so hot the horses could hardly breathe or go ; and the best days for the heather are howling black northeasters. There is reason to believe that scent lies best when the air is colder than the ground ; and I have a scientific theory, that

Scent varies inversely as evaporation ;

which sounds very fine, and seems to come true—as often as other theories do, namely, about once in three times; quite often enough to prove the correctness of any theory, whether zoological or theological. So it may stand, though it wont help us to recover this fox; and I am going home.

Going home. The fox will be hit off probably, for a few yards up on the moor to the left; heard of, probably, to-morrow, from some keeper five miles off: but Reinecke will not die this day. He will lie safe at a friend's house till nightfall, and trot home to Malepartus during the small hours, to brag and crow to his admiring spouse over his mighty feats, and how he outwitted that dull thing called man; carefully "remembering to forget," as Peter Pindar has it, that his life was saved, neither by courage nor cunning, but by base panic fear of a gaunt sheep-dog, who turned and coursed him exactly whither he did not want to go, at the top of this very lane.

Be it so: or be it otherwise;—what care I? I have had my exercise and pleasure, and shall not have any more such for full a week to come; I have sent more oxygen through my lungs in the last hour than I have in the previous eight-and-forty. I have given a wholesome stir to that Thumos (translate as you will—wrath, spirit, pluck, or otherwise,) which Plato says is the root of all virtues. I have indulged for awhile that savage element which ought to be in the heart of every man; for it alone gives him the energy by which he civilizes himself. I have overcome obstacles and endured dangers; by doing which alone man becometh strong, great, useful, or otherwise worth one brass farthing. I have felt myself for half an hour a free man, with a right to as much of Noman's Land, which is the whole universe, as I could take and hold with four horse-hoofs. I have cast off the trammels of society, in as far as they are represented by banks, ditches, and hurdles, and have returned awhile to that state of nature out of which all civilization came, and to which perfect civilization ought in some way to return. In short, I have done and seen and thought, things unspeakable—at least so I hold. And if I have ridden neither very long nor very well—so much the better for me, who can get so much out of so little. Here again comes in the advantage of being a minute philosopher. On the other side of the account, my hat has one more dent in it; but what is one among so many? I feel, too, a little chilly about the small of the back, and shall indulge in a warm salt-bath the minute I get home. But my heart is lightened and my brain cleared; and I can go home to the cheerful study and write off this epistle to you, old friend, without foul copy or correction, so sharpened are my wits by the simple expedient of air



and exercise, idleness and excitement—the only method by which the *mens sana* can be kept inside the *corpus sanum*. It has been a short pleasure, truly, but all the more easily obtained; and a frivolous one, perhaps, in wise folks' eyes; but then, you know, nothing is frivolous to a Minute Philosopher.

## ENGLAND FROM WOLSEY TO ELIZABETH.

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THERE appeared, a few years since, a "*Comic History of England*," duly caricaturing and falsifying all our great national events, and representing the English people, for many centuries back, as a mob of fools and knaves, led by the nose in each generation by a few arch-fools and arch-knaves. Some thoughtful persons regarded the book with utter contempt and indignation; it seemed to them a crime to have written it; a proof of "banausia," as Aristotle would have called it, only to be outdone by the writing a "*Comic Bible*." After a while, however, their indignation began to subside; their second thoughts, as usual, were more charitable than their first; they were not surprised to hear that the author was an honest, just, and able magistrate; they saw that the publication of such a book involved no moral turpitude; that it was merely meant as a jest on a subject on which jesting was permissible, and as a money speculation in a field of which men had a right to make money; while all which seemed offensive in it, was merely the outcome, and as it were apotheosis, of that method of writing English history which has been popular for nearly a hundred years. "Which of our modern historians," they asked themselves, "has had any real feeling of the importance, the sacredness, of his subject? Any real trust in, or respect for, the characters with whom he dealt? Has not the belief of each and all of them been the same—that on the whole, the many always have been fools and knaves; foolish and knavish enough, at least, to become the puppets of a few fools and knaves who held the reins of power? Have they not held that, on the whole, the problems of human nature, and human history, have been sufficiently solved by Gibbon and Voltaire, Gil Blas, and Figaro? That our forefathers were silly barbarians,—that this glorious nineteenth century is the one region of light, and that all before was outer darkness, peopled by "foreign devils," Englishmen, no doubt, according to the flesh,

*A History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth.* By J. A. FROUDE.

but in spirit, in knowledge, in creed, in customs, so utterly different from ourselves, that we shall merely show our sentimentalism by doing aught but laughing at them?

On what other principle have our English histories as yet been constructed, even down to the children's books, which taught us in childhood that the history in this country was nothing but a string of foolish wars, carried on by wicked kings, for reasons hitherto unexplained, save on that great historic law of Goldsmith's, by which Sir Archibald Alison would still explain the French Revolution,—

“The dog, to serve his private ends,  
Went mad, and bit the man?”

It will be answered by some, and perhaps rather angrily, that these strictures are too sweeping; that there is arising, in a certain quarter, a school of history-books for young people of a far more reverent tone, which tries to do full honour to the Church, and her work in the world. Those books of this school which we have seen, we must reply, seem just as much wanting in real reverence for the past, as the school of Gibbon and Voltaire. It is not the past which they reverence, but a few characters or facts eclectically picked out of the past, and for the most part, made to look beautiful by ignoring all the features which will not suit their preconceived pseudo-ideal. There is in these books a scarcely concealed dissatisfaction with the whole course of the British mind since the Reformation, and (though they are not inclined to confess the fact) with its whole course before the Reformation, because that course was one of steady struggle against the Papacy and its anti-national pretensions. They are the outcome of an utterly un-English tone of thought; and the so-called “ages of faith” are pleasant and useful to them, principally because they are distant and unknown enough to enable them to conceal from their readers that in the ages on which they look back as ideally perfect, a Bernard and a Francis of Assisi were crying all day long,—“O that my head were a fountain of tears, that I might weep for the sins of my people!” Dante was cursing popes and prelates in the name of the God of Righteousness; Chaucer and Boccaccio were lifting the veil from priestly abominations of which we now are ashamed even to read, and Wolsey, seeing the rotteness of the whole system, spent his mighty talents, and at last poured out his soul unto death, in one long useless effort to make the crooked straight, and number that which had been weighed in the balances of God, and found for ever wanting. To ignore wilfully facts like these, which were patent all along to the British nation, facts on which the British

laity acted, till they finally conquered at the Reformation, and on which they are acting still, and will, probably, act for ever, is not to have any real reverence for the opinions or virtues of our forefathers; and we are not astonished to find repeated, in such books, the old stock calumnies against our lay and Protestant worthies, taken at second-hand from the pages of Lingard. In copying from Lingard, however, this party has done no more than those writers have who would repudiate any party—almost any Christian—purpose. Lingard is known to have been a learned man, and to have examined many manuscripts which few else had taken the trouble to look at; so his word is to be taken, no one thinking it worth while to ask whether he has either honestly read, or honestly quoted, the documents. It suited the sentimental and lazy liberality of the last generation to make a show of fairness, by letting the Popish historian tell his side of the story, and to sneer at the illiberal old notion, that gentlemen of his class were given to be rather careless about historic truth when they had a purpose to serve thereby; and Lingard is now actually recommended, as a standard authority for the young, by educated Protestants, who seem utterly unable to see, that, whether the man be honest or not, his whole view of the course of British events, since Becket first quarrelled with his king, must be antipodal to their own; and that his account of all which has passed for three hundred years since the fall of Wolsey, is most likely to be (and, indeed, may be proved to be) one huge libel on the whole nation, and the destiny which God has marked out for it.

There is, indeed, no intrinsic cause why the ecclesiastical, or pseudo-Catholic, view of history should, in any wise, conduce to a just appreciation of our forefathers. For not only did our forefathers rebel against that conception again and again, till they finally trampled it under their feet, and so appear, *primâ facie*, as offenders to be judged at its bar; but the conception itself is one which takes the very same view of nature as that cynic conception of which we spoke above. Man, with the Romish divines, is, *ipso facto*, the same being as the man of Voltaire, Le Sage, or Beaumarchais;—he is an insane and degraded being, who is to be kept in order, and, as far as may be, cured and set to work by an ecclesiastical system; and the only threads of light in the dark web of his history are clerical and theurgic, not lay and human. Voltaire is the very *experimentum crucis* of this ugly fact. European history looks to him what it would have looked to his Jesuit preceptors, had the sacerdotal element in it been wanting; what heathen history actually did look to them. He eliminates the sacerdotal element, and nothing re-

mains but the chaos of apes and wolves, which the Jesuits had taught him to believe was the original substratum of society. The humanity of his history—even of his *Pucelle d'Orléans*—is simply the humanity of Sanchez, and the rest of those vingt-quatre Pères, who hang gibbeted for ever in the pages of Pascal. He is superior to his teachers, certainly, in this, that he has hope for humanity on earth; dreams of a new and nobler life for society, by means of a true and scientific knowledge of the laws of the moral and material universe; in a word, he has, in the midst of all his filth and his atheism, a faith in a *righteous and truth-revealing* God, which the priests who brought him up had not. Let the truth be spoken, even though in favour of such a destroying Azrael as Voltaire. And what if his primary conception of humanity be utterly base? Is that of our modern historians so much higher? Do Christian men seem to them, on the whole, in all ages, to have had the Spirit of God with them, leading them into truth, however imperfectly and confusedly they may have learnt his lessons? Have they ever heard with their ears, or listened when their fathers have declared unto them the noble works which God did in their days, and in the old time before them? Do they believe that the path of Christendom has been, on the whole, the path of life, and the right way, and that the living God is leading her therein? Are they proud of the old British worthies? Are they jealous and tender of the reputation of their ancestors? Do they believe that there were any worthies at all in England before the steam-engine and political economy were discovered? Do their conceptions of past society, and the past generations, retain any thing of that great thought which is common to all the Arya races—that is, to all races who have left aught behind them better than mere mounds of earth—to Hindoo and Persian, Greek and Roman, Teuton and Scandinavian, that men are the sons of the heroes, who were the sons of God? Or do they believe, that for civilized people of the nineteenth century, it is as well to say as little as possible about ancestors who possessed our vices without our amenities, our ignorance without our science; who were bred, no matter how, like flies by summer heat, out of that everlasting midden which men call the world, to buzz and sting their foolish day, and leave behind them a fresh race which knows them not, and could win no honour by owning them, and which owes them no more than if it had been produced, as midden-flies were said to be of old, by some spontaneous generation?

It is not likely that any writer in this review will be likely to undervalue political economy, or the steam-engine, or any other

solid and practical good, which God has unveiled to this generation. All that we demand (for we have a right to demand it) is, that rational men should believe that our forefathers were at least as good as we are ; that whatsoever their measure of light was, they acted up to what they knew, as faithfully as we do ; and that, on the whole, it was not their fault if they did not know more. Even now, the real discoveries of the age are made, as of old, by a very few men ; and, when made, have to struggle, as of old, against all manner of superstitions, lazinesses, skepticisms. Is the history of the Minié rifle one so very complimentary to our age's quickness of perception, that we can afford to throw many stones at the prejudices of our ancestors ? The truth is that, as of old, "many men talk of Robin Hood, who never shot in his bow ;" and many talk of Bacon, who never discovered a law by induction since they were born. As far as our experience goes, those who are loudest in their jubiliations over the wonderful progress of the age, are those who have never helped that progress forward one inch, but find it a great deal easier and more profitable to use the results which humbler men have painfully worked out, as second-hand capital for hustings speeches and railway books, and flatter a mechanic's institute of self-satisfied youths, by telling them that the least instructed of them is wiser than Erigena or Roger Bacon. Let them be. They have their reward. And so also has the patient and humble man of science, who, the more he knows, confesses the more how little he knows, and looks back with affectionate reverence on the great men of old time,—on Archimedes and Ptolemy, Aristotle and Pliny, and many another honourable man who, walking in great darkness, sought a ray of light, and did not seek in vain, as integral parts of that golden chain of which he is but one link more ; as scientific forefathers, without whose aid his science could not have had a being.

Meanwhile, this general tone of irreverence for our forefathers is no hopeful sign. It is unwise to "inquire why the former times were better than these ;" to hang lazily and weakly over some eclectic dream of a past golden age ; for to do so is to deny that God is working in this age as well as in past ages, that his light is as near us now as it was to the worthies of old time. But it is more than unwise to boast and rejoice that the former times were worse than these ; and to teach young people to say in their hearts, "What clever fellows we are, compared to our stupid old fogies of fathers !" More than unwise ; for possibly it may be false in fact. To look at the political and moral state of Europe at this moment, Christendom can hardly afford to look down on any preceding century, and seems to be in want of

something which neither science nor constitutional government seem able to supply. Whether our forefathers also lacked that something, we will not inquire just now; but if they did, their want of scientific and political knowledge was evidently not the cause of the defect; or why is not Spain now infinitely better, instead of being infinitely worse off, than she was three hundred years ago?

At home, too ——— But on the question whether we are so very much better off than our forefathers, Mr. Froude, not we, must speak; for he has deliberately, in his new history, set himself to the solution of this question, and we will not anticipate what he has to say; what we would rather insist on now are the moral ill effects produced on our young people by books which teach them to look with contempt on all generations but their own, and with suspicion on all public characters save a few contemporaries of their own especial party.

There is an ancient Hebrew book, which contains a singular story, concerning a grandson who was cursed, because his father laughed at the frailty of the grandfather. Whether the reader shall regard that story (as we do) as a literal fact recorded by inspired wisdom, as an instance of one of the great root-laws of family life, and therefore of that national life which (as the Hebrew book so cunningly shows) is the organic development of the family life; or whether he shall treat it (as we do not) as a mere apologue or myth, he must confess that it is equally grand in its simplicity, and singular in its unexpected result. The words of the story, taken literally and simply, no more justify the notion that Canaan's slavery was any magical consequence of the old patriarch's anger, than they do the well-known theory, that it was the cause of the negro's blackness. Ham shows a low, foul, irreverent, unnatural temper toward his father. The old man's shame is not a cause of shame to his son, but only of laughter. Noah prophesies (in the fullest and deepest meaning of that word) that a curse will come upon that son's son; that he will be a slave of slaves, and reason and experience show that he spoke truth. Let the young but see that their fathers have no reverence for the generation before them, then will they in turn have no reverence for their fathers. Let them be taught that the sins of their ancestors involve their own honour so little, that they need not take any trouble to clear the blot off the scutcheon, but may safely sit down and laugh over it, saying, "Very likely it is true. If so, it is very amusing, and if not—what matter?"—Then those young people are being bred up in a habit of mind which contains in itself all the capabilities of degradation and slavery, in self-conceit, hasty assertion, disbe-

lief in nobleness, and all the other "credulities of skepticism;" parted from that past from which they take their common origin, they are parted also from each other, and become selfish, self-seeking, divided, and therefore weak; disbelieving in the nobleness of those who have gone before them, they learn more and more to disbelieve in the nobleness of those around them, and by denying God's works of old, come, by a just and dreadful Nemesis, to be unable to see his works in the men of their own day, to suspect and impugn valour, righteousness, disinterestedness in their contemporaries; to attribute low motives; to pride themselves on looking at men and things as "men who know the world," so the young puppies style it; to be less and less chivalrous to women, less and less respectful to old men, less and less ashamed of boasting about their sensual appetites; in a word, to show all these symptoms which, when fully developed, leave a generation without fixed principles, without strong faith, without self-restraint, without moral cohesion, the sensual and divided prey of any race, however inferior in scientific knowledge, which has a clear and fixed notion of its work and destiny. That many of these signs are showing themselves more and more ominously in our young men, from the fine gentleman who rides in Rotten Row, to the boy-mechanic who listens enraptured to Mr. Holyoake's exposures of the absurdity of all human things save Mr. Holyoake's self, is a fact which presses itself most on those who have watched this age most carefully, and who (rightly or wrongly) attribute much of this miserable temper to the way in which history has been written among us for the last hundred years.

Whether or not Mr. Froude would agree with these notions, he is more or less responsible for them; for they have been suggested by his *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth*. It was impossible to read the book, without feeling the contrast between its tone and that of every other account of the times which one had ever seen. Mr. Froude seems to have set to work upon the principle, too much ignored in judging of the past, that the historian's success must depend on his dramatic faculty; and not merely on that constructive element of the faculty in which Mr. Macaulay shows such astonishing power, but on that higher and deeper critical element which ought to precede the constructive process, and without which the constructive element will merely enable a writer, as was once bitterly but truly said, "to produce the greatest possible misrepresentation, with the least possible distortion of fact." That deeper dramatic faculty, the critical, is not logical merely, but moral, and depends on the moral health, the wideness and hearti-



ness of his moral sympathies, by which he can put himself, as Mr. Froude has attempted to do, and as we think successfully, into the place of each and every character, and not merely feel for them, but feel with them. He does not merely describe their actions from the outside, attributing them arbitrarily to motives which are pretty sure to be the lowest possible, because it is easier to conceive a low motive than a lofty one, and to call a man a villain, than to unravel patiently the tangled web of good and evil of which his thoughts are composed. He has attempted to conceive of his characters, as he would if they had been his own contemporaries and equals, acting, speaking in his company; and he has, therefore, thought himself bound to act toward them by those rules of charity and courtesy, common alike to Christian morals, English law, and decent society; namely, to hold every man innocent till he is proved guilty; where a doubt exists, to give the prisoner at the bar the benefit of it; not to excite the minds of the public against him by those insinuating or vituperative epithets, which are but adders and scorpions; and on the whole, to believe that a man's death and burial is not the least reason for ceasing to behave to him like a gentleman and a Christian. We are not inclined to play with solemn things, or to copy Lucian and Quevedo in writing dialogues of the dead: but what dialogues might some bold pen dash off, between the old sons of Anak, at whose coming Hades has long ago been moved, and to receive whom all the kings of the nations have risen up, and the little scribblers who have fancied themselves able to fathom and describe characters to whom they were but pigmies! Conceive a half-hour's interview between Queen Elizabeth and some popular lady-scribbler, who has been deluding herself into the fancy that gossiping inventories of millinery are history. . . . "You pretend to judge me, whose labours, whose cares, whose fiery trials, were beside yours, as the heaving volcano beside a boy's firework? You condemn my weaknesses? Know that they were stronger than your strength! You impute motives for my sins? Know that till you are as great as I have been, for evil and for good, you will be as little able to comprehend my sins as my righteousness! Poor marsh-croaker, who wishest not merely to swell up to the bulk of the ox, but to embrace it in thy little paws, know thine own size, and leave me to be judged by Him who made me!" . . . How the poor soul would shrink back into nothing before that lion eye which saw and guided the destinies of the world, and all the flunkey-nature (if such a vice exists beyond the grave) come out in utter abjectness, as if the ass in the fable, on making his kick at the dead lion, had discovered

to his horror that the lion was alive and well—— Spirit of Quevedo! Finish for us the picture which we cannot finish for ourselves.

In a very different spirit from such has Mr. Froude approached these times. Great and good deeds were done in them; and it has therefore seemed probable to him that there were great and good men there to do them. Thoroughly awake to the fact that the Reformation was the new birth of the British nation, it has seemed to him a puzzling theory, which attributes its success to the lust of a tyrant, and the cupidity of his courtiers. It has evidently seemed to him paradoxical that a king who was reputed to have been a satyr, should have chosen to gratify his passions by entering six times into the strict bonds of matrimony, religiously observing those bonds. It has seemed to him even more paradoxical, that one reputed to have been the most sanguinary tyrant who ever disgraced the English throne, should have been not only endured, but loved and regretted by a fierce and free-spoken people; and he, we suppose, could comprehend as little as we can the reasoning of such a passage as the following, especially when it proceeds from the pen of so wise and temperate a writer as Mr. Hallam.

“A government administered with so frequent violations, not only of the chartered privileges of Englishmen, but of those still more sacred rights which natural law has established, must have been regarded, one would imagine, with just abhorrence, and earnest longings for a change. Yet contemporary authorities by no means answer this expectation. Some mention Henry after his death in language of eulogy; (not only Elizabeth, be it remembered, but Cromwell always spoke of him with deepest respect; and their language always found an echo in the English heart;) and if we except those whom attachment to the ancient religion had inspired with hatred to his memory, few seem to have been aware that his name would descend to posterity among those of the many tyrants and oppressors of innocence, whom the wrath of Heaven has raised up, and the servility of man endured.”

The names of even those few we should be glad to have; for it seems to us, that (with the exception of a few ultra Protestants, who could not forgive that persecution of the reformers, which he certainly permitted, if not encouraged during one period of his reign,) no one adopted the modern view of his character, till more than a hundred years after his death, when belief in all nobleness and faith had died out among an ignoble and faithless generation, and the scandalous gossip of such a light rogue as Osborne was taken into the place of honest and respectful history.

To clear up such seeming paradoxes as these, by carefully examining the facts of the sixteenth century, has been Mr. Froude's work, and we have the results of his labour in two volumes, embracing only a period of eleven years; but giving promise that the mysteries of the succeeding time will be well cleared up for us in future volumes, and that we shall find our forefathers to have been, if no better, at least no worse men, than ourselves. He has brought to the task known talents and learning, a mastery over English prose almost unequalled in this generation, a spirit of most patient and good-tempered research, and that intimate knowledge of human motives and passions which his former books have shown, and which we have a right to expect from any scholar who has really profited by Aristotle's unrivalled *Ethics*. He has plainly examined every contemporary document within his reach, and, as he informs us in the preface, he has been enabled, through the kindness of Sir Francis Palgrave, to consult a great number of MSS. relating to the Reformation, hitherto all but unknown to the public, and referred to in his work as MSS. in the Rolls' House, where the originals are easily accessible. These, he states, he intends to publish, with additions from his own reading, as soon as he has brought his history down to the end of Henry the Eighth's reign.

But Mr. Froude's chief text-book seems to have been *State Papers and Acts of Parliament*. He has begun his work in the only temper in which a man can write accurately and well: in a temper of trust toward the generation whom he describes. The only temper; for if a man has no affection for the characters of whom he reads, he will never understand them; if he has no respect for his subject, he will never take the trouble to exhaust it. To such an author the Statutes at large, as the deliberate expression of the nation's will and conscience, will appear the most important of all sources of information; the first to be consulted, the last to be contradicted; the Canon, which is not to be checked and corrected by private letters and flying pamphlets, but which is to check and correct them. This seems Mr. Froude's theory; and we are at no pains to confess, that if he be wrong, we see no hope of arriving at truth. If these public documents are not to be admitted in evidence before all others, we see no hope for the faithful and earnest historian; he must give himself up to swim as he may on the frothy stream of private letters, anecdotes, and pamphlets, the puppet of the ignorance, credulity, peevishness, spite, of any and every gossip and scribbler.

Beginning his history with the fall of Wolsey, Mr. Froude enters, of course, at his first step, into the vexed question of

Henry's divorce : an introductory chapter, on the general state of England, we shall notice hereafter.

A very short inspection of the method in which he handles his divorce question, gives one at once confidence in his temper and judgment, and hope that one may at last come to some clearer understanding of it than the old law gives us, which we have already quoted, concerning the dog who went mad to serve his private ends. In a few masterly pages he sketches for us the rotting and dying Church, which had recovered her power after the wars of the Roses, over an exhausted nation, but in form only, not in life. Wolsey, with whom he has fair and understanding sympathy, he sketches as the transition minister, "loving England well, but loving Rome better," who intends a reform of the Church, but who, as the Pope's commissioner for that very purpose, is liable to a *præmunire*, and therefore dare not appeal to Parliament to carry out his designs, even if he could have counted on the Parliament's assistance in any measures designed to invigorate the Church. At last arises in the divorce question, the accident which brings to an issue on its most vital point the question of Papal power in England, and which finally draws down ruin upon Wolsey himself.

This appears to have happened in the winter of 1526-7. It was proposed to marry the Princess Mary to a son of the French King. The Bishop of Tarbès, who conducted the negotiations, advised himself (apparently by special instigation of the devil) to raise a question as to her legitimacy.

No more ingenious plan for convulsing England could have been devised. The marriage from which Mary sprang only stood on a reluctant and doubtful dispensation of the Pope's. Henry had entered into it at the entreaty of his ministers, contrary to a solemn promise given to his father, and in spite of the remonstrances of the Archbishop of Canterbury. No blessing seemed to have rested on it. All his children had died young, save his one sickly girl ; a sure note of divine displeasure in the eyes of that coarse-minded Church which has always declared the chief, if not the only, purpose of marriage to be the procreation of children.

But more ; to question Mary's legitimacy was to throw open the question of succession to a half-a-dozen ambitious competitors. It was, too, probably to involve England at Henry's death, in another civil war of the Roses, and in all the interecine horrors which were still rankling in the memories of men, and probably, also, to bring down a French or Scotch invasion. There was, then, too good reason, Mr. Froude shows at length, for Wolsey's assertion to John Cassilis—"If his Holiness, which

God forbid, shall show himself unwilling to listen to the King's demands, to me assuredly it will be but grief to live longer, for the innumerable evils which I foresee will follow. . . . Nothing before us but universal and inevitable ruin." Too good reason there was for the confession of the Pope himself to Gardiner, "What danger it was to the realm to have this thing hang in suspense. . . . That without an heir-male, &c., the realm was like to come to dissolution." Too good reason for the bold assertion of the Cardinal-Governor of Bologna, that "he knew the guise of England as few men did, and that if the King should die without heirs-male, he was sure that it would cost two hundred thousand men's lives; and that to avoid this mischief by a second marriage, he thought, would deserve heaven." Too good reason for the assertion of Hall, that "all indifferent and discreet persons judged it necessary for the Pope to grant Henry a divorce, and, by enabling him to marry again, give him the hope of an undisputed heir-male." The Pope had full power to do this; in fact, such cases had been for centuries integral parts of his jurisdiction, as head of Christendom. He was at once too timid and too time-serving to exercise his acknowledged authority; and thus, just at the very moment when his spiritual power was being tried in the balance, he chose himself to expose his political power to the same test. Both were equally found wanting. He had, it appeared, as little heart to do justice among kings and princes, as he had to seek and to save the souls of men; and the Reformation followed as a matter of course.

Through the tangled brakes of this divorce question, Mr. Froude leads us with ease and grace, throwing light, and even beauty, into dark nooks where before all was mist, not merely by his intimate acquaintance with the facts, but still more by his deep knowledge of human character, and of woman's even more than of man's. For the first time, the actors in this long tragedy appear to us as no mere bodiless and soulless names, but as beings of like passions with ourselves, comprehensible, coherent, organic, even in their inconsistencies. Catherine of Arragon is still the Catherine of Shakspeare; but Mr. Froude has given us the key to many parts of her story which Shakspeare left unexplained, and delicately enough has made us understand how Henry's affections, if he ever had any for her—faithfully as he had kept (with one exception) to that loveless *marriage de convenance*,—may have been gradually replaced by indifference and even dislike, long before the divorce was forced on him as a question not only of duty to the nation, but of duty to Heaven. And that he did see in it this latter light, Mr. Froude brings

proof from his own words, from which we can escape only by believing that the confessedly honest "Bluff King Hal" had suddenly become a consummate liar and a canting hypocrite.

Delicately, too, as if speaking of a lady whom he had met in modern society (as a gentleman is bound to do,) does Mr. Froude touch on the sins of that hapless woman, who played for Henry's crown, and paid for it with her life. With all mercy and courtesy, he gives us proof (for he thinks it his duty to do so) of the French mis-education, the petty cunning, the tendency to sensuality, the wilful indelicacy of her position in Henry's household as the rival of his queen, which made her last catastrophe at least possible. Of the justice of her sentence he has no doubt, any more than of her pre-engagement to some one, as proved by a letter existing among Cromwell's papers. Poor thing, if she did that which was laid to her charge, and more, she did nothing, after all, but what she had been in the habit of seeing the queens and princesses of the French court do notoriously, and laugh over shamelessly; while, as Mr. Froude well says, "If we are to hold her entirely free from guilt, we place not only the King, but the Privy-Council, the Judges, the Lords and Commons, and the two Houses of Convocation, in a position fatal to their honour and degrading to ordinary humanity;" (Mr. Froude should have added Anne Boleyn's own uncle, the Duke of Norfolk, and her father, who were on the commission appointed to try her lovers, and her cousin, Anthony St. Leger, a man of the very highest character and ability, who was on the jury which found a true bill against her.) "We cannot," continues Mr. Froude, "acquiesce without inquiry in so painful a conclusion. *The English nation, also, as well as she, deserves justice at our hands*; and it cannot be thought uncharitable if we look with some scrutiny at the career of a person, who, but for the catastrophe with which it closed, would not have so readily obtained forgiveness for having admitted the addresses of the king, or for having received the homage of the court as its future sovereign, while the king's wife, her mistress, as yet resided under the same roof." Mr. Froude's conclusion is, after examining the facts, the same with the whole nation of England in Henry's reign: but no one can accuse him of want of sympathy with the unhappy woman, who reads the eloquent and affecting account of her trial and death, which ends his second volume. Our only fear is, that by having thus told the truth, he has, instead of justifying our ancestors, only added one more to the list of people who are to be "given up" with a cynical shrug and smile. We have heard already, and among young ladies, too, who can be as cynical as other people in these times, such speeches as, "Well, I suppose he has

proved Anne Boleyn to be a bad creature; but that does not make that horrid Henry any more right in cutting off her head." Thus two people will be despised, where only one was before; and the fact still ignored, that it is just as senseless to say that Henry cut off Anne Boleyn's head, as that Queen Victoria hanged Palmer. Death, and death of a far more horrible kind than that which Anne Boleyn suffered, was the established penalty of the offences of which she was convicted; and which had in her case this fearful aggravation, that they were offences not against Henry merely, but against the whole English nation. She had been married in order that there might be an undisputed heir to the throne, and a fearful war avoided. To throw into dispute, by any conduct of hers, the legitimacy of her own offspring, argues a levity or a hard-heartedness which of itself deserved the severest punishment.

We will pass from this disagreeable topic, to Mr. Froude's life-like sketch of Pope Clement, and the endless *tracasseries* into which his mingled weakness and cunning led him, and which, like most crooked dealings, ended by defeating their own object. Pages 125 and *sqq.* of Vol. I. contain sketches of him, his thoughts and ways, as amusing as they are historically important: but we have no space to quote from them. It will be well for those to whom the Reformation is still a matter of astonishment, to read those pages, and consider what manner of man he was, in spite of all pretended divine authority, under whose rule the Romish system received its irrecoverable wound. But of all these figures, not excepting Henry's own, Wolsey stands out as the most grand and tragical; and Mr. Froude has done good service to history, if only in making us understand at last the wondrous "butcher's son." Shakspeare seems to have felt (though he could explain the reason neither to his auditors, nor, perhaps, to himself) that Wolsey was, on the whole, a heroic type of man. Mr. Froude shows at once his strength and his weakness; his deep sense of the rottenness of the Church; his purpose to purge her from those abominations which were as well known, it seems, to him, as they were afterwards to the whole people of England; his vast schemes for education; his still vaster schemes for breaking the alliance with Spain, and uniting France and England as fellow-servants of the Pope, and twin-pillars of the sacred fabric of the Church, which helped so much toward his interest in Catherine's divorce, as a "means" (these are his own words) "to bind my most excellent sovereign and this glorious realm to the holy Roman See in faith and obedience for ever;" his hopes of deposing the Emperor, putting down the German heresies, and driving back the Turks beyond

the pale of Christendom; his pathetic confession to the Bishop of Bayonne, that, "if he could only see the divorce arranged, the King remarried, the succession settled, and the laws and the Church reformed, he would retire from the world, and would serve God the remainder of his days."

Peace be with him! He was surely a noble soul; misled, it may be, (as who is not when his turn comes,) by the pride of conscious power; and "though he loved England well, yet loving Rome better:" but still it is a comfort to see, either in past or in present, one more brother whom we need not despise, even though he may have wasted his energies on a dream.

And on a dream he did waste them, in spite of all his cunning. As Mr. Froude, in a noble passage says:—

"Extravagant as his hopes seem, the prospect of realizing them was, humanly speaking, neither chimerical, nor even improbable. He had but made the common mistake of men of the world, who are the representatives of an old order of things, when that order is doomed and dying. He could not read the signs of the times; and confounding the barrenness of death with the barrenness of winter, which might be followed by a new spring and summer, he believed that the old life-tree of Catholicism, which in fact was but cumbering the ground, might bloom again in its old beauty. The thing which he called heresy was the fire of Almighty God, which no politic congregation of princes, no state machinery, though it were never so active, could trample out; and as, in the early years of Christianity, the meanest slave who was thrown to the wild beasts for his presence at the forbidden mysteries of the Gospel, saw deeper, in the divine power of his faith, into the future even of this earthly world than the sagest of his imperial persecutors,—so a truer political prophet than Wolsey would have been found in the most ignorant of those poor men, for whom his police were searching in the purlieu of London, who were risking death and torture in disseminating the pernicious volumes of the English Testament."

It will be seen from this magnificent passage that Mr. Froude is distinctly a Protestant. He is one, to judge from his book; and all the better one, because he can sympathize with whatsoever nobleness, even with whatsoever mere conservatism, existed in the Catholic party. And therefore, because he has sympathies which are not merely party ones, but human ones, he has given the world, in these two volumes, a history of the early Reformation altogether unequalled. In this human sympathy, while it has enabled him to embalm in most affecting prose the sad story of the noble, though mistaken Carthusians, and to make even the Nun of Kent interesting, because truly womanly, in her very folly and deceit, has enabled him likewise to show us the hearts of the early martyrs as they never have been shown before.



His sketch of the Christian brothers, and his little true romance of Anthony Dalaber, the Oxford student, are gems of writing ; while his conception of Latimer, on whom he looks as the hero of the movement, and all but an English Luther, is as worthy of Latimer as it is of himself. Written as history should be, discriminatingly, patiently, and yet lovingly and genially, rejoicing not in evil, but in the truth, and rejoicing still more in goodness, where goodness can honestly be found.

To the ecclesiastical and political elements in the English Reformation, Mr. Froude devotes a large portion of his book. We shall not enter into the questions which he discusses therein. That aspect of the movement is a foreign and a delicate subject, from discussing which a Scotch periodical may be excused. North Britain had a somewhat different problem to solve from her southern sister, and solved it in an altogether different way : but this we must say, that the facts, and still more, the State-Papers, (especially the petition of the Commons, as contrasted with the utterly benighted answer of the Bishops,) which Mr. Froude gives, are such as to raise our opinion of the method on which the English part of the Reformation was conducted, and make us believe, that in this, as in other matters, both Henry and his Parliament, though still doctrinal Romanists, were sound-headed practical Englishmen.

This result is of the same kind as most of those at which Mr. Froude arrives. They form altogether a general justification of our ancestors in Henry the Eighth's time, if not of Henry the Eighth himself, which frees Mr. Froude from that charge of irreverence to the past generations, against which we protested in the beginning of this Article. We hope honestly that he may be as successful in his next volumes as he has been in these, in vindicating the worthies of the sixteenth century. Whether he shall fail or not, and whether or not he has altogether succeeded, in the volumes before us, his book marks a new epoch, and, we trust, a healthier and loftier one, in English history. We trust that they inaugurate a time in which the deeds of our forefathers shall be looked on as sacred heirlooms ; their sins as our shame, their victories as bequests to us ; when men shall have sufficient confidence in those to whom they owe their existence, to scrutinize faithfully and patiently every fact concerning them, with a proud trust, that, search as they may, they will not find much of which to be ashamed.

Lastly, Mr. Froude takes a view of Henry's character, not, indeed, new, (for it is the original one,) but obsolete for now two hundred years. Let it be well understood, that he makes no attempt (he has been accused thereof) to whitewash Henry :

all that he does is, to remove as far as he can, the modern layers of "blackwash," and to let the man himself, fair or foul, be seen. For the result he is not responsible: it depends on facts; and unless Mr. Froude has knowingly concealed facts, to an amount of which even a Lingard might be ashamed, the result is, that Henry the Eighth was actually very much the man which he appeared to be to the English nation in his own generation, and for two or three generations after his death,—a result which need not astonish us, if we will only give our ancestors credit for having, at least, as much common sense as ourselves, and believe (why should we not?) that, on the whole, they understood their own business better than we are likely to do.

The "bloated tyrant," it is confessed, contrived, somehow or other, to be popular enough. Mr. Froude tells us the reasons. He was not born a bloated tyrant, any more than Queen Elizabeth (though the fact is not generally known) was born a wizened old woman. He was, from youth, till he was long past his grand climacteric, a very handsome, powerful, and active man, temperate in his habits, good-humoured, frank and honest in his speech, (as even his enemies are forced to confess.) He seems to have been, (as his portraits prove sufficiently,) for good and for evil, a thorough John Bull; a thorough Englishman: but one of the very highest type.

"Had he died," says Mr. Froude, "previous to the first agitation of the divorce, his loss would have been deplored as one of the heaviest misfortunes which had ever befallen this country, and he would have left a name which would have taken its place in history by the side of the Black Prince, or the Conqueror of Agincourt. Left at the most trying age, with his character unformed, with the means of gratifying every inclination, and married by his ministers, when a boy, to an unattractive woman, far his senior, he had lived for thirty-six years almost without blame, and bore through England the reputation of an upright and virtuous king. Nature had been prodigal to him of her rarest gifts. . . . Of his intellectual ability we are not left to judge from the suspicious panegyrics of his contemporaries. His State Papers and letters may be placed by the side of those of Wolsey, or of Cromwell, and they lose nothing by the comparison. Though they are broadly different, the perception is equally clear, the expression equally powerful; and they breathe throughout an irresistible vigour of purpose. In addition to this he had a fine musical taste, carefully cultivated; he spoke and wrote in four languages; and his knowledge of a multitude of subjects, with which his versatile ability made him conversant, would have formed the reputation of any ordinary man. He was among the best physicians of his age. He was his own engineer, inventing improvements in artillery, and new constructions in shipbuilding; and this not with the condescending incapacity of a royal amateur, but with thorough workmanlike understand-

ing. His reading was vast, especially in theology. He was 'attentive,' as it is called, 'to his religious duties,' being present at the services in chapel two or three times a day with unfailing regularity, and showing, to outward appearance, a real sense of religious obligation in the energy and purity of his life. In private he was good-humoured and good-natured. His letters to his secretaries, though never undignified, are simple, easy, and unrestrained, and the letters written by them to him are similarly plain and business-like, as if the writers knew that the person whom they were addressing disliked compliments, and chose to be treated as a man. He seems to have been always kind, always considerate; inquiring into their private concerns, with genuine interest, and winning, as a consequence, their sincere and unaffected attachment. As a ruler, he had been eminently popular. All his wars had been successful. He had the splendid tastes in which the English people most delighted; . . . . he had more than once been tried with insurrection, which he had soothed down without bloodshed, and extinguished in forgiveness. . . . . And it is certain, that if he had died before the divorce was mooted, Henry the Eighth, like the Roman emperor said by Tacitus to have been *consensu omnium dignus imperii nisi imperasset*, would have been considered, by posterity, as formed by Providence for the conduct of the Reformation, and his loss would have been deplored as a perpetual calamity."

Mr. Froude has, of course, not written these words without having facts whereby to prove them. One he gives in an important note containing an extract from a letter of the Venetian ambassador in 1515. At least, if his conclusions be correct, we must think twice ere we deny his assertion, that "the man best able of all living Englishmen, to govern England, had been set to do it by the conditions of his birth."

"We are bound," as Mr. Froude says, "to allow him the benefit of his past career, and be careful to remember it, in interpreting his later actions." "The true defect in his moral constitution, that 'intense and imperious will,' common to all princes of the Plantagenet blood, had not yet been tested." That he did, in his later years, act in many ways neither wisely nor well, no one denies; that this conduct did not alienate the hearts of his subjects, is what needs explanation; and Mr. Froude's opinions on this matter, novel as they are, and utterly opposed to that of the standard modern historians, require careful examination. Now we are not inclined to debate Henry the Eighth's character, or any other subject, as between Mr. Froude, and an author of the obscurantist or pseudo-conservative school. Mr. Froude is a Liberal; and so are we. We wish to look at the question as between Mr. Froude and other Liberals: and, therefore, of course, first, as between Mr. Froude and Mr. Hallam.

Mr. Hallam's name is so venerable, and his work so important, that, to set ourselves up as judges in this, or in any matter,

between him and Mr. Froude, would be mere impertinence : but speaking merely as learners, we have surely a right to inquire, why Mr. Hallam has entered on the whole question of Henry's relations to his Parliament with a *præjudicium* against them ; for which Mr. Froude finds no ground whatsoever in fact. All acts both of Henry and his Parliament are to be taken *in malam partem*. They were not Whigs, certainly : neither were Socrates and Plato, nor even St. Paul and St. John. They may have been honest men, as men go, or they may not : but why is there to be a feeling against them, rather than for them ? Why is Henry always called a tyrant, and his Parliament servile ? The epithets have become so common and unquestioned, that our interrogation may seem startling. Still we make it. Why was Henry a tyrant ? That may be true, but must be proved by facts. Where are they ? Is the mere fact of a monarch's asking for money a crime in him and in his ministers ? The question would rather seem to be, Were the moneys for which Henry asked needed or not, and when granted, were they rightly or wrongly applied ? And on these subjects we want much more information than we obtain from Mr. Hallam's epithets. The author of a constitutional history should rise above epithets ; or, if he uses them, should corroborate them by facts. Why should not Mr. Hallam be as fair and as cautious in accusing Henry and Wolsey, as he would be in accusing Queen Victoria and Lord Palmerston ? What right, allow us to ask, has a grave constitutional historian to say, that " We cannot, indeed, doubt, that the unshackled and despotic condition of his friend, Francis the First, afforded a mortifying contrast to Henry ? " What document exists, in which Henry is represented as regretting that he is the king of a free people ?—for such Mr. Hallam confesses just above, England was held to be, and was actually, in comparison of France. If the document does not exist, Mr. Hallam has surely stepped out of the field of the historian into that of the novelist, *à la* Scott or Dumas. The Parliament sometimes grants Henry's demands ; sometimes it refuses them, and he has to help himself by other means. Why are both cases to be interpreted *in malam partem* ? Why is the Parliament's granting to be always a proof of its servility ?—its refusing, always a proof of Henry's tyranny and rapacity ? Both views are mere *præjudicia*, reasonable perhaps, and possible : but why is a *præjudicium* of the opposite kind as rational and as possible ? Why has not a historian a right to start, as Mr. Froude does, by taking for granted, that both parties may have been on the whole right ; that the Parliament granted certain sums, because Henry was right in asking for them ; refused others because

Henry was wrong; even that, in some cases, Henry may have been right in asking, the Parliament wrong in refusing; and that in such a case, under the pressure of critical times, Henry was forced to get, as he could, the money, which he saw that the national cause required? Let it be as folks will. Let Henry be sometimes right, and the Parliament sometimes likewise; or the Parliament always right, or Henry always right; or any thing else, save this strange diseased theory, that both must have been always wrong, and that, evidence to that effect failing, motives must be insinuated, or openly asserted, from the writer's mere imagination. This may be a dream: but it is as easy to imagine as the other, and more pleasant also. It will probably be answered (though not by Mr. Hallam himself) by a sneer: "You do not seem to know much of the world, Sir. So would Figaro and Gil Blas have said, Sir; and on exactly the same grounds as you do."

Let us examine a stock instance of Henry's "rapacity" and his Parliament's servility, namely, the exactions in 1524 and 1525, and the subsequent "release of the king's debts," which a late writer,—in a Review conducted by University men, and therefore, one would have supposed, superior to the stale and dangerous habit of reviewing one book by another,—quoted the other day, second-hand, out of Hallam, as a "settler" to Mr. Froude's view of Henry and his Parliament. What are the facts of the case? France and Scotland had attacked England in 1514. The Scotch were beaten at Flodden. The French lost Tournay and Therouanne, and, when peace was made, agreed to pay the expenses of the war. Times changed, and *the expenses were not paid*.

A similar war arose in 1524, and cost England immense sums. A large army was maintained on the Scotch border, another army invaded France; and Wolsey, not venturing to call Parliament,—because he was, as Pope's legate, liable to a præmunire,—raised money by contributions and benevolences, which were levied, it seems, on the whole, uniformly and equally, (save that they weighed more heavily on the rich than on the poor, if that be a fault,) and differed from taxes only in not having received the consent of Parliament. Doubtless, this was not the best way of raising money; but what if, under the circumstances, it were the only one? What if, too, on the whole, the money so raised was really given willingly by the nation? The sequel alone could decide that.

The first contribution for which Wolsey asked was paid. The second was resisted, and was not paid, proving thereby that the

nation need not pay unless it chose. The Court gave way; and the war became defensive only, till 1525.

Then the tide turned. The danger, then, was not from Francis, but from the Emperor. Francis was taken prisoner at Pavia; and shortly after, Rome was sacked by Bourbon.

The effect of all this in England is told at large in Mr. Froude's second chapter. Henry became bond for Francis's ransom, to be paid to the Emperor. He spent 500,000 crowns more in paying the French army; and in the terms of peace made with France, a sum-total was agreed on for the whole debt, old and new, to be paid as soon as possible; and an annual pension of 500,000 crowns beside. The French exchequer, however, still remained bankrupt, and again the money was not paid.

Parliament, when it met in 1529, reviewed the circumstances of the expenditure, and finding it all such as the nation on the whole approved, *legalized the taxation, by benevolences, retrospectively*; and this is the whole mare's nest of the first payment of Henry's debts; if, at least, any faith is to be put in the preamble of the Act for the release of the King's Debts, 21 Hen. VIII. c. 24. "The King's loving subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, calling to remembrance the inestimable costs, charges, and expenses which the King's Highness hath necessarily been compelled to support and sustain since his assumption to his crown, estate, and dignity royal, as well for the extinction of a right dangerous and damnable schism, sprung in the Church, as for the modifying the insatiable and inordinate ambition of them, who, while aspiring to the monarchy of Christendom, did put universal troubles and divisions in the same, intending, if they might, not only to have subdued this realm, but also all the rest, unto their power and subjection—for resistance whereof, the King's Highness was compelled to marvellous charges—both for the supportation of sundry armies by sea and land, and also for divers and manifold contribution on hand, to save and keep his own subjects at home in rest and repose—which hath been so politically handled, that when the most part of all Christian lands have been infested with cruel wars, the great Head and Prince of the world [the Pope!] brought into captivity, cities and towns taken, spoiled, burnt, and sacked—the King's said subjects in all this time, by the high providence and politic means of his Grace, have been nevertheless preserved, defended, and maintained from all these inconvenients, &c.

"Considering, furthermore, that his Highness, in and about the premises, hath been fain to employ not only all such sums of

money as hath risen and grown by contributions made unto his Grace by his loving subjects—but also, over and above the same, sundry other notable and excellent sums of his own treasure and yearly revenues, among which manifold great sums so employed, his Highness, also, *as is notoriously known, and as doth evidently appear by the ACCOUNTS OF THE SAME, hath to that use, and none other, converted all such money as by any of his subjects hath been advanced to his Grace by way of prest or loan, either particularly, or by any taxation made of the same—being things so well collocate and bestowed, seeing the said high and great fruits and effects thereof insured to the surety and commodity and tranquillity of this realm—of our mind and consent, do freely, absolutely, give and grant to the King's Highness all and every sum or sums of money,*" &c.

The second release of the King's debts, in 1544, is very similar. The King's debts and necessities were really, when we come to examine them, those of the nation; in 1538–40 England was put into a thorough state of defence from end to end. Fortresses were built along the Scottish border, and all along the coast opposite France and Flanders. The people were drilled and armed, the fleet equipped; and the nation, for the time, became one great army. And nothing but this, as may be proved by an overwhelming mass of evidence, saved the country from invasion. Here were enormous necessary expenses which must be met.

In 1543, a million crowns were to have been paid by Francis the First, as part of his old debt. And it was not paid, but, on the contrary, Henry had to go to war for it. The nation again relinquished their claim, and allowed Henry to raise another benevolence in 1545, concerning which Mr. Hallam tells us a great deal, but not one word of the political circumstances which led to it or to the release, keeping his sympathies and his paper for the sorrows of refractory Alderman Reed, who, refusing (alone of all the citizens) to contribute to the support of troops on the Scotch border or elsewhere, was sent down, by a sort of rough justice, to serve on the Scotch border himself, and judge of the "perils of the nation" with his own eyes; and being (one is pleased to say) taken prisoner by the Scots, had to pay a great deal more as ransom than he would have paid as benevolence.

But to return. What proof is there in all this, of that servility which most historians, and Mr. Hallam among the rest, are wont to attribute to Henry's Parliaments? What feeling appears on the face of this document, which we have given and quoted, but one honourable to the nation? Through the falsehood of a foreign nation, the King is unable to perform his engagements to

the people. Is not the just and generous course in such a case, to release him from those engagements? Does this preamble, does a single fact of the case, justify historians in talking of these "king's debts" in just the same tone as that in which they would have spoken of George the Fourth's or the Duke of York's? as if the King had squandered the money on private pleasures? Perhaps most people who write small histories, believe that this really was the case. They certainly would gather no other impression from the pages of Mr. Hallam. No doubt, the act must have been burdensome on some people. Many, we are told, had bequeathed their promissory notes to their children, used their reversionary interest in the loan in many ways; and these, of course, felt the change very heavily. No doubt; but why have we not a right to suppose that the Parliament were aware of that fact; but chose it as the less of the two evils? The King had spent the money; he was unable to recover it from Francis, could only refund it by raising some fresh tax or benevolence; and why may not the Parliament have considered the release of old taxes likely to offend fewer people than the imposition of new ones? It is, certainly, an ugly thing to break public faith; but to prove that public faith was broken, we must prove that Henry compelled the Parliament to release him; if the act was of their own free will, no public faith was broken, for they were the representatives of the nation, and through them, the nation forgave its own debt. And what evidence have we that they did not represent the nation, and that, on the whole, we must suppose, as we should in the case of any other men, that they best knew their own business? May we not apply to this case, and to others, *mutatis mutandis*, the argument which Mr. Froude uses so boldly and well in the case of Anne Boleyn's trial—" *The English nation also, as well as . . . deserves justice at our hands.*"

Certainly it does; but it is a disagreeable token of the method on which we have been accustomed to write the history of our own forefathers, that Mr. Froude should find it necessary to state formally so very simple a truth.

What proof, we ask again, is there that this old parliament was "servile?" Had that been so, Wolsey would not have been afraid to summon it. The specific reason for not summoning a Parliament for six years after that of 1524, was, that they were not servile; that when (here we are quoting Mr. Hallam, and not Mr. Froude) Wolsey entered the House of Commons with a great train, seemingly for the purpose of intimidation, they "made no other answer to his harangues, than that it was their usage to debate only among themselves." The debates on



this occasion lasted fifteen or sixteen days, during which, says an eye-witness, "there has been the greatest and sorest hold in the Lower House, 'the matter debated and beaten;' such hold that the House was like to have been dissevered;" in a word, hard fighting (and why not honest fighting?) between the court party and the opposition, "which ended," says Mr. Hallam, "in the court party obtaining, with the utmost difficulty, a grant much inferior to the Cardinal's original requisition." What token of servility is here?

And is it reasonable to suppose, that after Wolsey was conquered, and a comparatively popular ministry had succeeded, and that memorable Parliament of 1529, (which Mr. Froude, not unjustly, thinks more memorable than the Long Parliament itself,) began its great work with a high hand, backed not merely by the King, but by the public opinion of the majority of England, their decisions are likely to have been more servile than before? If they resisted the King when they disagreed with him, are they to be accused of servility because they worked with him when they agreed with him? Is an opposition always in the right; a ministerial party always in the wrong? Is it an offence against the people to agree with a monarch, even when he agrees with the people himself? Simple as these questions are, one must really stop to ask them.

No doubt, pains were often taken to secure elections favourable to the Government. Are none taken now? Are not more taken now? Will any historian show us the documents which prove the existence, in the sixteenth century, of Reform Club, Carlton Club, whippers-in and nominees, governmental and opposition, and all the rest of the beautiful machinery which protects our Reformed Parliament from the evil influences of bribery and corruption? Pah!—We have somewhat too much glass in our modern House, to afford to throw stones at our forefathers' old St. Stephen's. At the worst, what was done then but that without which it is said to be impossible to carry on a government now? Take an instance from the Parliament of 1539, one in which there is no doubt Government influence was used, in order to prevent as much as possible the return of members favourable to the clergy—for the good reason, that the clergy were no doubt on their own side intimidating voters by all those terrors of the unseen world, which had so long been to them a source of boundless profit and power.

Cromwell writes to the King to say that he has secured a seat for a certain Sir Richard Morrison, but for what purpose? As one who no doubt "should be ready to answer and take up such as should crack or face with literature of learning, if any

such should be." There was, then, free discussion; they expected clever and learned speakers in the opposition, and on subjects of the deepest import, not merely political but spiritual; and the Government needed men to answer such. What more natural, than that so close on the "pilgrimage of grace," and in the midst of so great dangers, at home and abroad, the Government should have done their best to secure a well-disposed House, (one would like to know when they would not?) but surely the very effort, (confessedly exceptional,) and the acknowledged difficulty, prove that Parliament were no mere "registrars of edicts."

But the strongest argument against the tyranny of the Tudors, and especially of Henry VIII. in his "benevolences," is derived from the state of the people themselves. If these benevolences had been really unpopular, they would not have been paid. In one case, we have seen, a benevolence was not paid for that very reason. For the method of the Tudor sovereigns, like that of their predecessors, was the very opposite to that of tyrants, in every age and country. The first act of a tyrant has always been to disarm the people, and to surround themselves with a standing army. The Tudor method was, as Mr. Froude shows us by many interesting facts, to keep the people armed and drilled, even to compel them to learn the use of weapons. Throughout England spread one vast military organization, which made every adult a soldier, and enabled him to find, at a day's notice, his commanding officer, landlord, sheriff, or lieutenant of the county; so that, as a foreign ambassador of the time remarks with astonishment, (we quote from memory,) "England is the strongest nation on earth, for though the King has not a single mercenary soldier, he can raise in three days an army of two hundred thousand men."

And of what temper those men were is well known enough. Mr. Froude calls them (and we beg leave to indorse, without exception, Mr. Froude's opinion,) "A sturdy high-hearted race, sound in body, and fierce in spirit, and furnished with thews and sinews, which, under the stimulus of those 'great shins of beef,' their common diet, were the wonder of the age." "What comyn folke in all this world," says a state-paper in 1815, "may compare with the comyns of England in riches, freedom, liberty, welfare, and all prosperity? What comyn folke is so mighty, so strong in the felde, as the comyns of England?" In stories of authentic actions under Henry VIII., (and we will add, under Elizabeth likewise,) where the accuracy of the account is undeniable, no disparity of force made Englishmen shrink from enemies whenever they could meet them. Again and again a few

thousands of them carried dismay into the heart of France. Four hundred adventurers, vagabond apprentices of London, who formed a volunteer corps in the Calais garrison, were for years (Hall says) the terror of Normandy. In the very frolic of conscious power they fought and plundered, without pay, without reward, save what they could win for themselves; and when they fell at last, they fell only when surrounded by six times their number, and were cut to pieces in careless desperation. Invariably, by friend and foe alike, the English are described as the fiercest people in all Europe, (English wild beasts, Benvenuto Cellini calls them;) and this great physical power they owed to the profuse abundance in which they lived, to the soldier's training, in which every one of them was bred from childhood.

Mr. Froude's novel assertion about profuse abundance must be weighed by those who have read his invaluable introductory chapter. But we must ask at once, how was it possible to levy on such a populace a tax which they were determined not to pay, and felt that they were not bound to pay, either in law or justice? Conceive Lord Palmerston's sending down to demand a "benevolence" from the army at Aldershot, beginning with the General in command, and descending to the privates. . . . What would be the consequences? Ugly enough: but gentle in comparison with those of any attempt to exact a really unpopular tax from a nation of well-armed Englishmen, unless they, on the whole, thought the tax fit to be paid. They would grumble, of course, whether they intended to pay or not—for were they not Englishmen, our own flesh and blood?—and grumble all the more in person, because they had no press to grumble for them: but what is there in the M. P.'s letter to Lord Surrey, quoted by Mr. Hallam, p. 25, or in the more pointed letter of Warham's, two pages on, which we do not see lying on our breakfast tables in half the newspapers every week? Poor, pedantic, obstructive, old Warham, himself very angry at so much being asked of his brother clergymen, and at their being sworn as to the value of their goods, (so like are old times to new ones;) and being, on the whole, of opinion, that the world (the Church included) is going to the devil, says, that as he has been "showed in a secret manner of his friends, the people sore grudgeth and murmureth, and speaketh cursedly among themselves, as far as they dare, saying that they shall never have rest of payments as long as some liveth, and that they had better die than be thus continually handed, reckoning themselves, their wives and children, as despolit, and not greatly caring what they do, or what becomes of them."

Very dreadful—if true ; which last point depends very much upon who Warham was. Now, on reading Mr. Froude's, or any other good history, we shall find that Warham was one of the leaders of that party (which will always have its antitype in England) represented now by *Blackwood's Magazine*, the *Standard*, and the *Morning Herald*. Have we, too, not heard within the last seven years, similar prophecies of desolation, mourning, and woe—of the Church tottering on the verge of ruin, the peasantry starving under the horrors of free-trade, noble families reduced to the verge of beggary by double income-tax. Even such a prophet seems Warham to have been—of all people in that day, one of the last whom one would have asked for an opinion.

Poor old Warham, however, was not so far wrong in this particular case ; for the “despoult” slaves of Suffolk, not content with grumbling, rose up with sword and bow, and vowed that they would not pay. Whereon the bloated tyrant sent his prætorians, and enforced payment by scourge and thumbscrew? Not in the least. They would not pay ; and, therefore, being free men, nobody could make them pay ; and although in the neighbouring county of Norfolk, from twenty pounds (*i. e.* £200 of our money) upward, (the tax was not levied on men of less substance,) there were not twenty but what had consented ; and though there was “great likelihood that this grant should be much more than the loan was,” (the “salt tears” shed by the gentlemen of Norfolk proceeding, says expressly the Duke of Norfolk, “*only from doubt how to find money to content the king's Highness,*”) the king and Wolsey gave way frankly and at once, and the contribution is remitted, although the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, writing to Wolsey, treat the insurrection lightly, and seem to object to the remission as needless.

From all which facts (they are Mr. Hallam's, not Mr. Froude's) we can deduce not tyranny, but lenity, good sense, and the frank withdrawal from a wrong position, as soon as the unwillingness of the people proved it to be a wrong one.

This instance is well brought forward (though only in a line or two, by Mr. Froude) as one among many proofs that the working-classes in Henry the Eighth's time “enjoyed an abundance far beyond that which in general falls to the lot of that order in long-settled countries, incomparably beyond what the same class were enjoying at that very time in Germany or France. The laws secured them ; and that the laws were put in force, we have the direct evidence of successive acts of the legislature, justifying the general policy by its success ; and we have also the indirect evidence of the contented loyalty of the

great body of the people, at a time when, if they had been discontented, they held in their own hands the means of asserting what the law acknowledged to be their right. The Government" (as we have just shown at length) "had no power to compel injustice. . . . If the peasantry had been suffering under any real grievances, we should have heard of them when the religious rebellions furnished so fair an opportunity to press them forward. Complaint was loud enough, when complaint was just, under the Somerset Protectorate."

Such broad facts as these (for facts they are) ought to make us pause ere we boast of the greater liberty enjoyed by Englishmen of the present day, as compared with the tyranny of Tudor times. Thank God, there is no lack of that blessing now; but was there any real lack of it then? Certainly, the outward notes of a tyranny exist now in far greater completeness than then. A standing army, a Government police, ministries who bear no love to a militia, and would consider the compulsory arming and drilling of the people as a dangerous insanity, do not look at first sight as much like "free institutions" as a Government which, though again and again in danger not merely of rebellion, but of internecine wars of succession, so trusted the people, as to force weapons into their hands from boyhood. Let us not be mistaken; we are no hankers after retrogression; the present system works very well; let it be; all that we say is, that the imputation of despotic institutions lies, *primâ facie*, rather against the reign of Queen Victoria than against that of King Henry the Eighth. Of course, it is not so in fact. Many modern methods, which are despotic in appearance, are not so in practice. Let us believe that the same was the case in the sixteenth century. Our governors now understand their own business best, and make a very fair compromise between discipline and freedom. Let us believe that the men of the sixteenth century did so likewise. All we ask is, that our forefathers should be judged as we wish to be judged ourselves, "not according to outward appearance, but with righteous judgment."

Mr. Froude finds the cause of this general contentment and loyalty of the masses, in the extreme care which the government took of their well-being. The introductory chapter, in which he proves to his own satisfaction the correctness of his opinion, is well worth the study of our political economists. The facts which he brings seems certainly overwhelming; of course, they can only be met by counter-facts; and our knowledge does not enable us either to corroborate or refute his statements. The chief argument used against them seem to us, at least, to show, that for some cause or other, the working-classes were prosper-

ous enough. It is said the Acts of Parliament regulating wages do not fix the minimum of wages, but the maximum. They are not intended to defend the employed against the employer, but the employer against the employed, in a defective state of the labour-market, when the workmen, by the fewness of their numbers, were enabled to make extravagant demands. Let this be the case, (we do not say that it is so,) what is it but a token of prosperity among the working-classes? A labour-market so thin that workmen can demand their own price for their labour, till Parliament is compelled to bring them to reason, is surely a time of prosperity to the employed,—a time of full work and high wages; of full stomachs, inclined from very prosperity to “wax fat and kick.” If, however, any learned statistician should be able to advance, on the opposite side of the question, enough to weaken some of Mr. Froude’s conclusions, he must still, if he be a just man, do honour to the noble morality of this most striking chapter, couched as it is in as perfect English as we have ever had the delight of reading. We shall leave, then, the battle of facts to be fought out by statisticians, always asking Mr. Froude’s readers to bear in mind, that though other facts may be true, yet his facts are no less true likewise, and shall quote at length, both as a specimen of his manner and of matter, the last three pages of this introductory chapter, in which, after speaking of the severity of the laws against vagrancy, and showing how they were excused by the organization which found employment for every able-bodied man, he goes on to say,—

“It was, therefore, the expressed conviction of the English nation, that it was better for a man not to live at all than to live a profitless and worthless life. The vagabond was a sore spot upon the commonwealth, to be healed by wholesome discipline if the gangrene was not incurable; to be cut away with the knife, if the milder treatment of the cart-whip failed to be of profit.

“A measure so extreme in its severity was partly dictated by policy. The state of the country was critical; and the danger from questionable persons traversing it unexamined and uncontrolled was greater than at ordinary times. But in point of justice as well as of prudence, it harmonized with the iron temper of the age, and it answered well for the government of a fierce and powerful people, in whose hearts lay an intense hatred of rascality, and among whom no one could have lapsed into evil courses except by deliberate preference for them. The moral sinew of the English must have been strong indeed when it admitted of such stringent bracing; but, on the whole, they were ruled as they preferred to be ruled; and if wisdom can be tested by success, the manner in which they passed the great crisis of the Reformation is the best justification of their princes. The era was great throughout Europe. The Italians of the age of Michael Angelo; the Spaniards who were the contemporaries of Cortez; the Germans who shook off the Pope at the call of Luther; and the splendid chiv-

alry of Francis I. of France, were no common men. But they were all brought face to face with the same trials, and none met them as the English met them. The English alone never lost their self-possession, and if they owed something to fortune in their escape from anarchy, they owed more to the strong hand and steady purpose of their rulers.

“ To conclude this chapter, then.

“ In the brief review of the system under which England was governed, we have seen a state of things in which the principles of political economy were, consciously or unconsciously, contradicted; where an attempt, more or less successful, was made to bring the production and distribution of wealth under the moral rule of right or wrong; and where those laws of supply and demand, which we are now taught to regard as immutable ordinances of nature, were absorbed or superseded by a higher code. It is necessary for me to repeat that I am not holding up the sixteenth century as a model which the nineteenth might safely follow. The population has become too large, and employment too complicated and fluctuating, to admit of such control; while, in default of control, the relapse upon self-interest as the one motive principle is certain to ensue, and, when it ensues, is absolute in its operations. But as, even with us, these so-called ordinances of nature in time of war consent to be suspended, and duty to his country becomes with every good citizen a higher motive of action than the advantages which he may gain in an enemy's market; so it is not uncheering to look back upon a time when the nation was in a normal condition of militancy against social injustice,—when the Government was enabled by happy circumstances to pursue into detail a single and serious aim at the well-being—well-being in its widest sense—of all members of the commonwealth. There were difficulties and drawbacks at that time as well as this. Of Liberty in the modern sense of the word,—of the supposed right of every man ‘ to do what he will with his own,’ or with himself, there was no idea. To the question, if ever it was asked, ‘ May I not do what I will with my own?’ there was the brief answer, ‘ No man may do what is wrong, either with what is his own, or with what is another's.’ Producers, too, who were not permitted to drive down their workmen's wages by competition, could not sell their goods as cheaply as they might have done, and the consumer paid for the law in an advance of price; but the burden, though it fell heavily on the rich, lightly touched the poor; and the rich consented cheerfully to a tax which insured the loyalty of the people. The working-man of modern times has bought the extension of his liberty at the price of his material comfort. The higher classes have gained in wealth what they have lost in power. It is not for the historian to balance advantages. His duty is with the facts.”

Our forefathers, then, were not free, if we attach to that word the meaning which our Transatlantic brothers seem inclined to give to it. They had not learnt to deify self-will, and to claim for each member of the human race a right to the indulgence of every eccentricity. They called themselves free, and boasted of

their freedom : but their conception of liberty was that of all old nations, a freedom which not only allowed of discipline, but which grew out of it. No people had less wish to exalt the kingly power into that specious tyranny, a paternal government ; the king was with them, and always had been, both formally and really, subject to their choice ; bound by many oaths to many duties ; the minister, not the master of the people. But their whole conception of political life was, nevertheless, shaped by their conception of family life. Strict obedience, stern discipline, compulsory education in practical duties, was the law of the latter ; without such training they thought their sons could never become in any true sense men. And when they grew up, their civic life was to be conducted on the same principles, for the very purpose of enabling them to live as members of a free nation. If the self-will of the individual was curbed, now and then, needlessly, (as it is the nature of all human methods to caricature themselves at times,) the purpose was, not to weaken the man, but to strengthen him, by strengthening the body to which he belonged. The nation was to be free, self-helping, self-containing, unconquerable ; to that great purpose the will, the fancy, even, if need be, the mortal life, of the individual must give way. Men must be trained at all costs in self-restraint, because only so could they become heroes in the day of danger ; in self-sacrifice for the common good, because only so would they remain united, while foreign nations and evil home influences were trying to tear them asunder. In a word, their conception of life was as a warfare ; their organization, that of a regiment. It is a question whether the conception of corporate life embodied in a regiment or army, be not, after all, the best working one for this world. At least the problem of a perfect society, howsoever beautiful on paper, will always issue in a compromise, more or less perfect, (let us hope more and more perfect as the centuries roll on,) between the strictness of military discipline, and the Irishman's *laissez-faire* ideal, wherein "every man should do that which was right in the sight of his own eyes, and wrong too, if he liked." At least, such had England been for centuries ; under such a system had she thriven ; a fact which, duly considered, should silence somewhat those gentlemen who (not being of a military turn themselves) inform Europe so patriotically and so prudently, that "England is not a military nation."

From this dogma we beg leave to differ utterly. Britain is at this moment, in our eyes, the only military nation in Europe. All other nations seem to us to have military governments, but not to be military themselves. As proof of the assertion, we



appeal merely to the existence of our militia. While other nations are employing conscription, we have raised, in twelve months, a noble army, every soul of which has volunteered as a free man; and yet, forsooth, we are not a military nation! We are not ashamed to tell how, but the other day, standing in the rear of those militia regiments, no matter where, a flush of pride came over us at the sight of those lads, but a few months since helpless and awkward country boors, now full of sturdy intelligence, cheerful obedience, and the manhood which can afford to be respectful to others, because it respects itself, and knows that it is respected in turn. True, they had not the lightness, the order, the practical ease, the cunning self-helpfulness of the splendid German legionaries who stood beside them, the breast of every other private decorated with clasps and medals for service in the wars of seven years since. As an invading body, perhaps, one would have preferred the Germans; but only because experience had taught them already, what it would teach in twelve months to the Berkshire or Cambridge "clod." There, to us, was the true test of England's military qualities; her young men had come by tens of thousands, of their own free-will, to be made soldiers of by her country gentlemen, and treated by them the while as men to be educated, not as things to be compelled; not driven like sheep to the slaughter, to be disciplined by men with whom they had no bond but the mere official one of military obedience; and "what," we asked ourselves, "does England lack to make her a second Rome? Her people have physical strength, animal courage, that self-dependence of freemen which enabled at Inkermann the privates to fight on literally without officers, every man for his own hand. She has inventive genius, enormous wealth: and if, as is said, her soldiers lack at present the self-helpfulness of the Zouave, it is ridiculous to suppose that that quality could long be wanting in the men of a nation which is at this moment the foremost in the work of emigration and colonization. If organizing power and military system be, as is said, lacking in high quarters, surely there must be organizing power enough somewhere, in the greatest industrial nation upon earth, ready to come forward, when there is a real demand for it; and, whatever be the defects of our system, we are surely not as far behind Prussia or France, as Rome was behind the Carthaginians and the Greeks whom they crushed. A few years sufficed for them to learn all they needed from their enemies; fewer still would suffice us to learn from our friends. Our working-classes are not, like those of America, in a state of physical comfort too great to make it worth while for them to leave their home occupations; and

whether that be a good or an evil, it at least insures us, as our militia proves, an almost inexhaustible supply of volunteers. What a new and awful scene for the world's drama, did such a nation as this once set before itself, steadily and ruthlessly, as Rome did of old, the idea of conquest. Even now, waging war as she has done, as it were *ἐν παρεργῃ*, thinking war too unimportant a part of her work to employ on it her highest intellects, her flag has advanced, in the last fifty years, over more vast and richer tracts than that of any European nation upon earth. What keeps her from the dream which lured to their destruction Babylon, Macedonia, Rome?"

This : that, thank God, she has a conscience still ; that feeling intensely the sacredness of her own national life, she has learnt to look on that of other people's as sacred also ; and since, in the fifteenth century, she finally repented of that wild and unrighteous dream of conquering France, she has discovered more and more that true military greatness lies in the power of defence, and not of attack ; in not waging war, but being able to wage it ; and has gone on her true mission of replenishing the earth more peacefully, on the whole, and more humanely, than did ever nation before her, conquering only when it was necessary to put down the lawlessness of the savage few, for the well-being of the civilized many. This has been her idea ; she may have confused it and herself, in Caffre or in Chinese wars ; for who can always be true to the light within him ? But this has been her idea ; and therefore she stands and grows and thrives, a virgin land for now eight hundred years.

But a fancy has come over us, during the last blessed forty years of unexampled peace, from which our ancestors of the sixteenth century were kept, by stern and yet most wholesome lessons ; the fancy that peace, and not war, is the normal condition of the world. The fancy is so fair, that we blame none who cherish it ; after all, they do good by cherishing it ; they point us to an ideal which we should otherwise forget, as Babylon, Rome, France in the seventeenth century, forgot utterly. Only they are in haste (and pardonable haste too) to realize that ideal, forgetting that to do so would be really to stop short of it, and to rest contented in some form of human society, far lower than that which God has actually prepared for those who love him. Better to believe that all our conceptions of the height to which the human race might attain, are poor and paltry compared with that toward which God is guiding it, and for which he is disciplining it by awful lessons ; and to fight on, if need be, ruthless and yet full of pity, (and many a noble soul has learnt within the last two years how easy it is to reconcile in practice that seeming paradox

of words,) smiting down stoutly evil, wheresoever we shall find it, and saying, "What ought to be, we know not; God alone can know: but that this ought *not* to be, we do know, and here, in God's name, it shall not stay."

We repeat it: war, in some shape or other, is the normal condition of the world. It is a fearful fact: but we shall not abolish it by ignoring it, and ignoring by the same method the teaching of our Bibles. Not in mere metaphor does the gospel of Love describe the life of the individual good man as a perpetual warfare. Not in mere metaphor does the apostle of love see in his visions of the world's future no Arcadian shepherd paradises, not even a perfect civilization, but an eternal war in heaven, wrath and woe, plague and earthquake; and amid the everlasting storm, the voices of the saints beneath the altar, crying, Lord, how long? Shall we pretend to have more tender hearts than the old man of Ephesus, whose dying sermon, so old legends say, was nought but—"Little children, love one another;" and yet could denounce the liar and the hater and the covetous man, and proclaim the vengeance of God against all evil-doers, with all the fierceness of an Isaiah? It was enough for him—let it be enough for us—that he could see, above the thunder-cloud, and the rain of blood, and the scorpion swarm, and the great angel calling all the fowl of heaven to the supper of the great God, that they might eat the flesh of kings and valiant men, a city of God eternal in the heavens, and yet eternally descending among men; a perfect order, justice, love, and peace, becoming actual more and more in every age, through all the fearful training needful for a fallen race.

Let that be enough for us: but do not let us fancy that what is true of the two extremes, must not needs be true of the mean also; that while the life of the individual and of the universe is one of perpetual self-defence, the life of the nation can be aught else: or that any appliances of scientific comforts, any intellectual cultivation, even any the most direct and common-sense arguments of self-interest, can avail to quiet in man those outbursts of wrath, ambition, cupidity, wounded pride, which have periodically convulsed, and will convulse to the end, the human race. The philosopher in his study may prove their absurdity, their suicidal folly, till, deluded by the strange lull of a forty years' peace, he may look on wars as in the same category with flagellantisms, witch-maniacs, and other "popular delusions," as insanities of the past, impossible henceforth, and may prophesy, as really wise political economists were doing in 1847, that mankind had grown too sensible to go to war any more. And behold, the peace proves only to be the lull before the thunder-

storm; and one electric shock sets free forces unsuspected, transcendental, supernatural in the deepest sense, which we can no more stop, by shrieks at their absurdity, from incarnating themselves in actual blood, and misery, and horror, than we can control the madman in his paroxysm, by telling him that he is a madman. And so the fair vision of the student is buried once more in rack and hail, and driving storm; and, like Daniel of old, when rejoicing over the coming restoration of his people, he sees beyond the victory some darker struggle still, and lets his notes of triumph die away into a wail,—“And the end thereof shall be with a flood; and to the end of the war desolations are determined.”

It is as impossible as it would be unwise, to conceal from ourselves the fact, that all the Continental nations look upon our present peace as but transitory, momentary; and on the Crimean war as but the prologue to a fearful drama—all the more fearful because none knows its purpose, its plot, which character will be assumed by any given actor, and least of all, the *dénouement* of the whole. All that they feel and know is, that every thing which has happened since 1848 has exasperated, not calmed, the electric tension of the European atmosphere; that a rottenness, rapidly growing intolerable alike “to God and to the enemies of God,” has eaten into the vitals of Continental life; that their rulers know neither where they are, nor whither they are going, and only pray that things may last out their time: all notes which one would interpret as proving the Continent to be already ripe for subjection to some one devouring race of conquerors, were there not a ray of hope in an expectation, even more painful to our human pity, which is held by some of the wisest among the Germans; namely, that the coming war will fast resolve into no struggle between bankrupt monarchs and their respective armies, but a war between nations themselves, an internecine war of opinions and of creeds. There are wise Germans now who prophesy with sacred tears, a second “thirty years’ war” with all its frantic horrors for their hapless country, which has found two centuries too short a time wherein to recover from the exhaustion of that first fearful scourge. Let us trust that if that war shall beget its new Tillys and Wallensteins, it shall also beget its new Gustavus Adolphus, and many another child of Light: but let us not hope that we can stand by, in idle comfort, and that when the overflowing scourge passes by, it shall not reach to us. Shame to us, were that our destiny. Shame to us, were we to refuse our share in the struggles of the human race, and to stand by in idle comfort, while the Lord’s battles are being fought. Honour to us, if in that day, we have

chosen for our leaders, as our forefathers of the sixteenth century did, men who see the work which God would have them do, and have hearts and heads to do it. Honour to us, if we spend this transient lull, as our forefathers of the sixteenth century did, in setting our house in order, in redressing every grievance, reforming every abuse, knitting the hearts of the British nation together by practical care and help between class and class, man and man, governor and governed, that we may bequeath to our children, as Henry the Eighth's men did to theirs, a British national life, so united and whole-hearted, so clear in purpose, and sturdy in execution, so trained to know the right side at the first glance, and take it, that they shall look back with love and honour upon us, their fathers, determined to carry out, even to the death, the method which we have bequeathed to them. Then, if God will that the powers of evil, physical and spiritual, should combine against this land, as they did in the days of good Queen Bess, we shall not have lived in vain; for those who, as in Queen Bess's days, thought to yoke for their own use a labouring ox, will find, as then, that they have roused a lion from his den.









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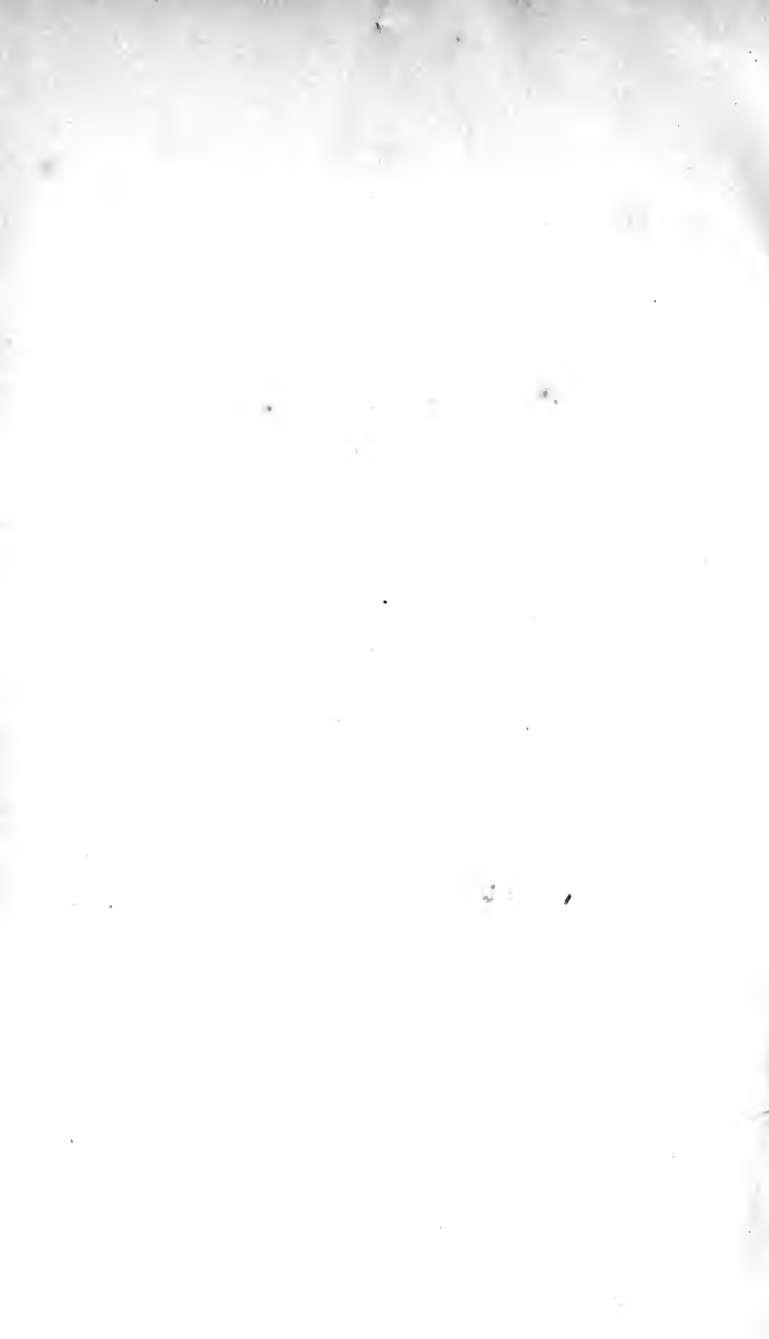
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