



THE UNIVERSAL
REVIEW.

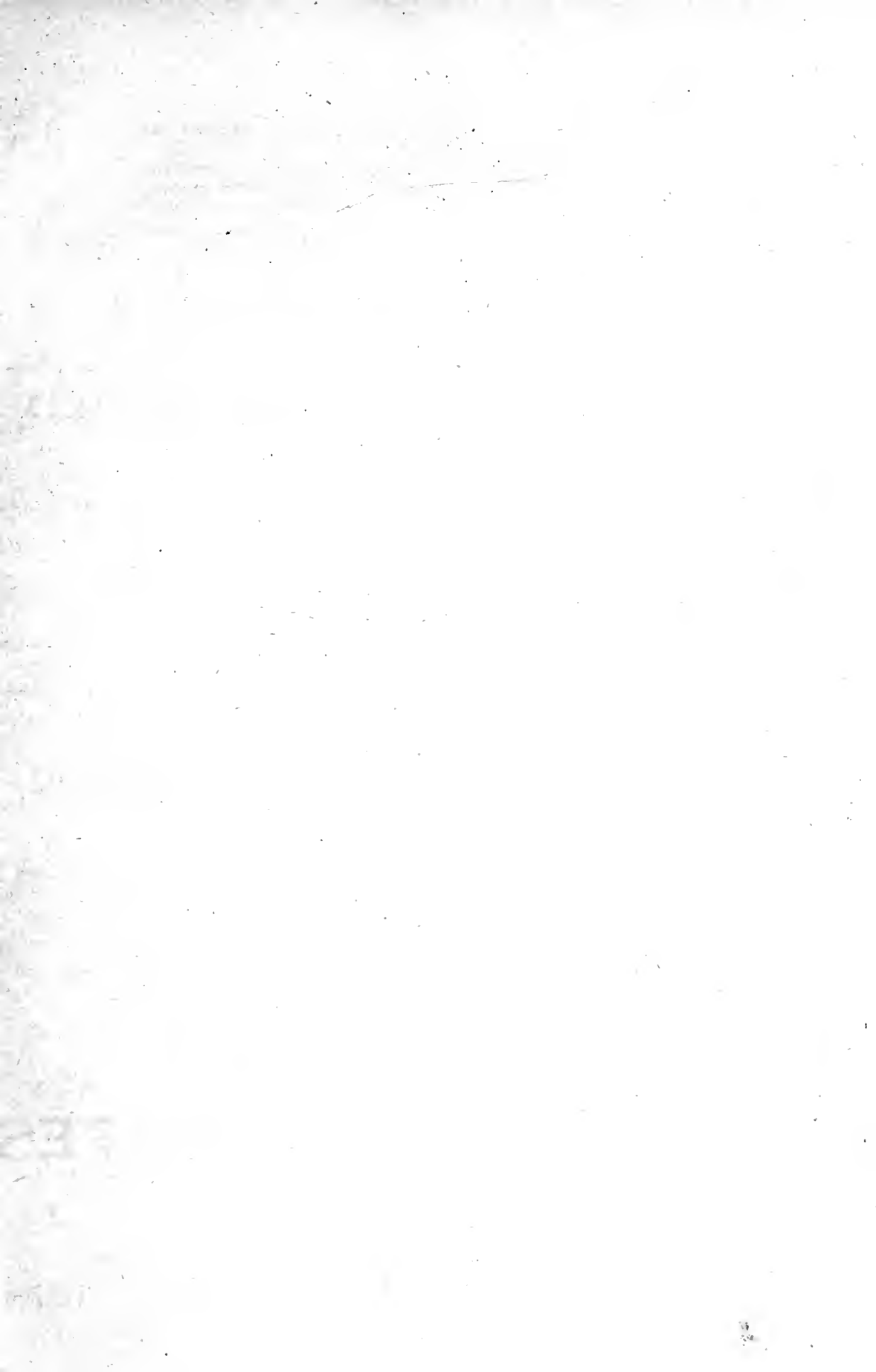
EDITED BY
HARRY
QVILTER.

ILLUS-
TRATED.





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation





P
2E
C

THE

UNIVERSAL REVIEW

EDITED BY

HARRY QUILTER

vol. 3

JANUARY TO APRIL

1889

*

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

R. P. BONINGTON, R.A. ; SIR JOHN MILLAIS, R.A.

G. D. LESLIE, R.A. ; JOHN LEWIS, R.A. ; CORREGGIO ; C. H. SHANNON ;

ESTHER ISAACS ; E. K. JOHNSON, R.W.S. ; PERCY YEATHERD ;

AND OTHERS.

477272
21.7.48

LONDON

SWAN SONNENSCHNEIN & CO.

1
2
3

PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
LONDON

CONTENTS

OF VOL. III.



ARTICLES

	PAGE
Art of England, The	449
At Sunset	387
Australian Writers	465
Beauty and Evolution	101
Beside the Sea	386
Bright, John, In Memoriam	429
Bright, John	431
Browning, Robert	230
Canada, The Future of	4
Chase in Art and Morals, The	247
David Gwyn	225
Day with Primeval Man, A	303
Feast of Saturn, The	84
Greek Textile Decoration	212
House of Commons, The Romance of	317
Hunting in the Midlands	67
Ibsen, Henrik	567
Indian Revenue, The	285
Isabella Supper, The	145
John Bull's Purse Strings	538
Kimberley to Delagoa Bay	515
L'Amour Sublime	483
Lick Observatory, The	165
Life Insurance in 1889	495
' Macbeth ' at the Lyceum	134
Modern Young Man as Critic, The	353
My Campaign in Pall Mall	373
Orators in the House	38
Our Great Gun Muddle	177
Population Problem in France	259
Recent Literature	422
Rodolph of Hapsburg	275
Smile of All Wisdom, The	129
Song of Ivàn Vasilyevich, The	388
Story of Shah Jehan, The	200

ARTICLES (*continued*).

	PAGE
Taxation and Finance	149
'Tempest,' The	556
Trésor du Lac, Le	21
Truth and Delusion	53
Two Holy Mothers, The	1
Un Soir	115
Unfinished History, An	187, 335
World in January, February, March, April	141, 278, 418, 575
Zanzibar	405

WRITERS

	PAGE		PAGE
Besant, Mrs.	200	Linton, Mrs. Lynn	187, 335
Bodley, J. E. C.	405	L'Isle-Adam, Comte de Villiers de	483
Boyd, C. W.	386, 387	Lucy, H. W.	38
Bradlaugh, Charles, M.P.	317	Maupassant, Guy de	115
Brunton, Dr. Lauder	53	Mivart, Prof. St. George	101
Buchanan, Robert	353	Morris, Lewis	225
Burdett, Henry C.	177, 538	Murray, C. Fairfax	1
Coké, A. Sacheverel	212	Quilter, Harry	145, 449
Donald, Robert	259	Ralston, W. R. S.	388
Editor, The	141, 278, 418, 422, 575	Rogers, Professor Thorold	431
Forbes, Archibald	373	Sarrazin, George	230
Garnett, Dr. Richard	556	Shaler, Professor N. S.	4
Gattie, W. M.	495	Symons, Arthur	567
Greene, C. E.	465	Theuriet, André	21
Grimley, W. H.	285	Tomson, Graham R.	129
Holden, Professor	165	Traill, H. D.	303
Kennard, Mrs.	67	Tyrwhitt, Rev. R. St. John	247
Kennedy, H. Arthur	134	Verrall, A. W.	84
Kilgour, George	515	Villiers, Rt. Hon. C. P., M.P.	429
Laing, Samuel	149		

ARTISTS

Bertie, Fanny	224, 353, 387	Leslie, G. D., R.A.	485
Bonington, R. P., R.A.	461	Lewis, John, R.A.	449, 463
Bunny, R.	23-37, 483-494	Millais, Sir John, R.A.	145, 146
Coke, A. Sacheverel	213-221	Poole, P. F., R.A.	429
Correggio	1	Shannon, C. H. 129, 130, 131, 132, 133	303-316
Isaacs, Esther	285	Yeatherd, Percy	67, 73, 81
Johnson, E. K., R.W.S. 187, 193, 199,	334, 339		

The most important illustrations only are given in the above list.

+ The Two Holy Mothers +

THIS picture, of which an autogravure is given on the opposite page, is one of the early works of Correggio, and is of peculiar interest to students of this master, as showing the strong influence which the work of Mantegna exercised upon Correggio's art. This influence is to be traced in several of the painter's most famous works, and is in the present picture specially evident in the figures of Saint Elizabeth and the children.

Of late years the researches of Signor Morelli and others have thrown much light upon this subject, and many interesting works have been by them recognised as being without doubt by Correggio in his early years, though their style, in its comparative severity and its likeness to Francia and Mantegna, had little in common with the preconceived opinion of this master's rounded forms and glowing over-sweetness of colour and expression. For of all early Italian masters Correggio is perhaps the one, not even excepting Raffael, the spirit of whose best-known works is most exclusively in accordance with modern sentiment; take as an instance of this the celebrated Uffizi Madonna clapping her hands over the cradle of the Saviour, who lies kicking his little limbs about and laughing with pleasure. Such a work has little in common with the picture which is here reproduced for the first time, by the kind permission of Mr. Fairfax Murray, in whose studio we saw it some months since. As it was then purchased by Prince Hohenzollern, and has since left England to be placed in his collection, the present record of it, which is the

only one in existence, possesses a unique interest. The following notes are by Mr. Murray on the other early works of this master, and it will be seen that they are for the most part in agreement with Signor Morelli's opinion.—ED. U.R.

THE famous signed 'Madonna and Saints' in the Dresden Gallery furnished the clue by which several interesting pictures have been recognised beyond doubt as the work of Correggio's early years. The study of Mantegna and Francia is very noticeable in several of these, and Morelli has objected to the master's being classified with the Lombards, his art education being derived from the Ferrara-Bologna school. The action of the Madonna in the Dresden picture is directly imitated from Mantegna's 'Madonna della Vittoria' in the Louvre, and the S. Elizabeth in 'The Two Holy Mothers' we reproduce, is markedly Mantegnesque, as are also the children.

Signor Morelli in speaking of the Dresden pictures¹ enumerates all the other known early pictures with the exception of three. One, however, is referred to elsewhere, and the other two were doubtless unknown to him at the time he wrote his book.

Morelli's list comprises—

1. Milan. Signor Frizzoni. Small damaged 'Madonna and Saints.' The most difficult in the list to be positive about.
2. Florence. Uffizi, No. 1002. 'Madonna and Angels.' Very brilliant in colour and well preserved.
3. Pavia Gallery, ex Malaspina. 'Holy Family.'
4. Milan Municipal Gallery, ex Bolognini. 'Holy Family.'
5. Hampton Court Palace, No. 276. 'Holy Family.'
6. London. Lord Ashburton. 'Four Saints in a Landscape.'
7. Modena. Count Campori. 'Madonna.'

The following are not in his list:—

8. London. R. H. Benson, Esq., ex Parlatore. 'Christ taking leave of the Virgin before the Passion'—a subject somewhat rare in art, but

¹ *Italian Masters in German Galleries*, pp. 121-23.

there is an example by Lotto, and two by Dürer, viz. in the 'Life of the Virgin' and 'The Little Passion.'

9. Milan? 'Flight into Egypt.' This picture, which belonged to Dr. J. P. Richter, is said to have been sold by him to a private collector in Milan.

10. Prince Hohenzollern. 'The Two Holy Mothers.' This picture is said to have been in the Schiavone Collection, Venice, and was imported into England by the late Signor Pinti. It was sold by him to a well-known collector, Mr. R. P. Nichols, at whose death it was purchased by Mr. Murray, who sold it to the present owner, Prince Hohenzollern.

CHARLES FAIRFAX MURRAY.

The Future of Canada

EVER since the close of the American revolution which separated the greater part of the colonies of North America from the mother country, the adjustment of relations between the Canadian possessions of the Crown and the United States has been a source of much trouble. At the time of the revolution, these northern provinces of Britain had but a small number of English settlers within their borders. There had been no sufficient opportunity since they came under the British dominion, for contests to arise such as led to a conflict with Great Britain in the older colonies. Between the settlements of Massachusetts and New York and those of the St. Lawrence and the coast provinces about its mouth, lay a great unbroken wilderness which made the efforts of the insurgent colonies to conquer Canada unavailing.

After the separation of the States from Great Britain these two portions of British people in North America developed in a way which soon brought them in contact at several points. At first the hostility pertained to fishing rights. New England had taken part in a war against the French colony of Cape Breton with the hope that she might expel a dangerous neighbour from the fishing grounds of the coast, only to find after a score of years the maritime district about the St. Lawrence again in the possession of a hostile government.

When the war of 1812 broke out between the United States and Britain, the States again came into conflict with Canada along a more

extended line, from Detroit to Eastern Maine. Various invasions were carried into the British provinces in a fruitless effort to obtain possession of the country. The warfare was of a brutal sort, involving the use of Indian auxiliaries, with the butchery of prisoners which the association of savages with civilised troops commonly brings about. The massacre of the River Rasin left bitter memories in the minds of the people from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio. The recollection of that unhappy episode remained vivid until the larger experiences of our civil war drove it out of mind. During the rebellion of the Southern States the enmity of the States people towards Canada was again aroused. The hostile neutrality of Great Britain made Canada an effective basis for the Confederate Government. The St. Albans raid, though composed of Confederate soldiers, had its base of supplies in Canada. The fact that the perpetrators of that outrage were insufficiently punished naturally intensified the animosity between the people of the two flags. Thus within a century there have been three periods of belligerent relations between the people of Canada and those of the United States. The intermediate times of peace have afforded an opportunity for unended bickering over fishing rights and commercial relations.

The history of these international episodes, though often trivial, will, to the historians of the coming centuries, be full of interest. It is impossible to conceive political and economic conditions which are more calculated to lead to war than those which beset the two branches of English folk in North America. Hatreds born of conflict, diversities in political purpose, contentions arising from the active commercial spirit of the two peoples, tend constantly to bring them into collision. If the destinies of the two countries were in the hands of less reasonable folk, the many subjects of controversy would have inevitably led to recurrent wars. It is, however, a striking fact that none of the serious disagreements between Great Britain and the United States has been due to Canadian disputes. These facts show that the English race has won from much conflict a sense of the true measure of war, and has gained a willingness to use all other means of redress before coming to that last argument of nations. Whenever the bitterness between Canada and the United States has grown to be serious, a 'square talk' between the representatives of the mother country and those of the United States has always served the needs of pacification. A combination of speech-making and dining has cleared the difficulties away. Six months ago it seemed that we were on the point of a breach with Canada. We had

debated the matter of fishermen's rights and the tariff questions of a trivial nature until there seemed a danger that through a system of reprisals we might easily drift into actual hostility. Mr. Chamberlain's visit served the needs of the moment. When that clever gentleman came to us, we had been contending for more than a decade about these trivial matters until they had assumed an unreal importance. Mr. Chamberlain's mission helped in no small measure to wipe out the memory of past evils and start the score anew.

The incidents connected with Mr. Chamberlain's mission have been several times paralleled in the diplomatic history of Canada and the United States. Grievances having accumulated until they brought about menace to the relations of the two countries, the dangers have been tided over by negotiations ; but the basis of the trouble has always remained unchanged. As long as the social and political conditions of the two countries remain as they are at present, we may expect a succession of these difficulties. We cannot hope to be always as successful as we have been in avoiding war by negotiation. Although the people of the United States are in general opposed to the adjustment of disputes by war, we must expect here as in other countries the occasional outbreaks of folly which lead states into such calamities. As long as the politics of the United States are controlled by statesmen who have seen battlefields, or who remember the woes they bring, we are in a measure safe from new experiments with arms ; but in less than a decade this country will be in the hands of men who know only the history of such periods, and that in an unreal way. For the moment the national humour sets against conquest of new territory. It is doubtful if the United States could be driven into taking Mexico by violence, or Cuba as a gracious gift. Certainly any politician would incur the mortal danger of being laughed at if he talked of conquering Canada and annexing it to the United States. We happen to be at the moment in a peculiarly sane period of our history ; but there are memories enough of past follies to show us that the greed of extended bounds, the covetousness of other people's land which is rarely more than dormant in the breast of every race, may at any time awaken and lead the country to folly.

A war of conquest directed against Canada would be a disastrous feature in our American life. That much is seen by every reasonable man in the United States ; but though a deliberate war professedly for annexation is impossible in the present or any conceivable future state

of mind of the American people, a conflict of an armed sort may possibly arise under the existing conditions, which would grow to be a battle for annexation, the result of which could hardly be doubted. The result of a forcible annexation of Canada to the United States would be to put the American Union in more danger than it incurred with the War of Secession. The United States would probably win a larger Ireland, and this Union is even less fitted to deal with recalcitrant states than is the mother country.

These considerations make it plain that if any form of union is to come about between Canada and the United States, it is to the last degree important to the interests of both countries, as well as to those of the English race in general, that the consolidation should be brought about in a perfectly peaceable manner, as the result of a common desire between two freely contracting parties. I therefore propose to examine into the conditions of territory and of population in these two countries, with a view to show the way in which the future relations of these states should be conducted, and perhaps the manner in which the needed and permanent adjustment should be made.

If the reader will turn to a map of North America on which the boundaries between Canada and the United States are laid down, he will at once observe the most important of the geographical conditions which have to be considered in any scheme for adjusting the relations between the two countries. He will in the first place note the fact that the boundary line between these two peoples is longer than that which separates any two states in the civilised world. It has a length of about three thousand miles, and, except for a short distance in the region of the Great Lakes, this line is absolutely without geographic value. It was run by surveyors and marked by occasional monuments; it cuts across mountains and divides rivers in twain; for the greater part of the distance it is not easy to find whether one is under the stars and stripes or the cross of St. George.

The history of Europe shows how intolerant nations are of such divisional lines. Even in the case of American states, although the communities are akin in motives and united under a common central government, such arbitrary partitions are the source of much trouble. It happens by the process of settlement that there are few people now dwelling along the dividing line between Canada and the United States. From Lake Superior to the Pacific the region is essentially uninhabited;

so, too, in Northern Maine and New Hampshire the confines of the two countries are unbroken forests. Only between Northern Vermont and Canada are the people of the two sides of the line in such relations as to invite discord. The St. Croix river, the untillable forest district of Northern Maine and New Hampshire, the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, have prevented the conflicts which such boundaries commonly entail. When the western country fills up, when in the section between Lake Superior and the Pacific coast the states to the north and south of this line press upon each other, then we shall see the effect of such an imperfect division between these nations. With the existing sources of discord it will hardly be possible to keep the peace between the people either side of this ideal line in even the imperfect way in which it has been maintained in the eastern part of the continent.

When we consider the distribution of natural resources and the products of economic labour in North America, we perceive the essential artificiality of this boundary line even more clearly than when we consider its geographic character alone. The continent of North America beyond any other great land area in the world is peculiarly suited for an exchange of products, both those of the under earth and those of the soil. The wide range of latitude between the Gulf of Mexico and the southern part of Hudson's Bay insures to this land the fullest variety of soil products. The absence of serious geographic barriers in this great trough-shaped continent greatly favours freedom of transfer between all the productive sections of its surface. In the list of important agricultural products the Canadian district is distinguished for its success in several departments. The smaller grains and root crops find there their best field. In the States such industries as cotton culture, rice, maize, and cattle breeding are most successful. The economic energies of the peoples on either side of this line will necessarily work each year more effectively to break down any political barriers which may tend to defeat the uses of nature.

The subterranean resources of Canada and the United States demand a free interchange of products, and in an even more accented way than do those which spring from the soil. The Canadian district has a scanty supply of coal, though it is a region which already feels, through the character of its climate and its increasing factories, the need of free access to subterranean fuel. The natural source of supply of coal for all the region east of Lake Winnipeg is found in the Appa-

lachian coal field, in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Kentucky, or the extensive carboniferous areas of the more Western States. On the other hand, the Canadian district in the eastern part of the continent—we know as yet little of the western area—is rich in iron ores of high grade and various other metalliferous deposits. Eastern Canada has also large deposits of high grade phosphates, such as are best suited for the manufacture of artificial fertilisers, which are known on the continent of North America. A free exchange of fuel and other earth products is manifestly demanded between these two countries. Neither can secure the fit development of its resources without access to the supplies afforded by the under earth in the other region.

It is true that the need of free exchange of natural products is greatest in the case of Canada, for the reason that the productive portion of the Dominion, that which is not sterilised by conditions of climate, is a relatively narrow fringe with a great east and west extension. The variety of climate and consequently of soil production is in Canada necessarily limited; so, too, the mineral resources are less ample, less sufficient for the needs of a great state, than those of its southern neighbour; but the needs which the United States have for free access to Canadian products, though at present less grave, are still even at the moment considerable. The Canadian forests yet abound in valuable woods, which should serve the uses of the people in the northern tier of the United States. Properly availed of, they may insure the sufficiency of timber within the federal limits for fifty years to come, and thus bridge us over the dangers of a timber famine until we have adopted methods of construction which demand less of forest products.

The continent of North America is thus by nature a singularly unified country. The dominance of English folk in it insures it a unity of motive and a closeness of interaction among its peoples which, so far as we can see, in centuries to come will not be attained in other lands. Before those conditions which lead to the consolidation of industries in an aggregated life, arbitrary commercial bounds, we may be sure, will be of no avail. The art of the legislator will be best exercised, not in maintaining such limits, but in regulating their disappearance, so that there may be the least possible friction in the process. It will be a shame to our race if they vanish by conquest, or if during the period when they are maintained they become a source of bitter memories. The question is how best to effect the commercial unity of these two

countries with the least danger to the better institutions of each. Manifestly there are two ways of securing this end. We may look forward to a complete political union of Canada with the United States, or we may seek to effect the natural interactions by some form of commercial unity which shall leave all political relations which have no reference to trade substantially as they are at present. I propose in the subsequent considerations of this paper to set forth what seem to be the advantages and disadvantages of these two methods of dealing with the problem.

The complete union of Canada with the United States appears to many men in both countries to be the simplest method of accomplishing the ends in view. It is evident that there would be a certain immediate profit both to the States and the Dominion from this mode of dealing with the question. All the gravest problems of commercial intercourse would at once be disposed of; there would remain only the questions of commerce between the states which, though long a troublesome matter in the Federal Union, are now apparently in a fair way of adjustment. North America, as a consolidated state extending from the Mexican Republic to the Arctic Sea, would constitute a majestic empire, and from its unified life would spring a commercial activity even greater than that which now characterises the Federal Union. Moreover, the presence in the American Union of a dozen states which would retain a lively affection for the mother country, such as is impossible in the case of the commonwealths of the existing United States, would possibly insure permanent amity between Great Britain and her ancient colonies. The union of Canada with the United States would be in a way contributive to the consolidation of English motives in the world, and thus the dignity and strength of the English people in general would probably be advanced by the change. Considering the advantages which this certainty of peaceful and sympathetic relations would give Great Britain, it seems possible that it would be a good policy for the mother country to promote such an arrangement. The fact that Britain had in a manner given to the United States a population of several millions and a territory almost as large as that which now is included in the Federal Union might have a moral influence of very great value.

When, however, we come to consider in a practical way the management of such a nation as would arise from the consolidation of the United States with the Canadian Dominion, we note a series of difficulties which would have to be carefully debated before we could be satisfied

that the change would be entirely profitable to either country. These difficulties are of two kinds: first, those arising from the character of the population in Canada; and secondly, those which rest upon certain inherent weaknesses in the system of government of the United States. The Canadian population consists of two very diverse elements—the English and the French.

The English-speaking population of Canada is throughout of excellent character. It would constitute a valuable element in any state. The Nova Scotia people, largely the descendants of Highland Scotch, is perhaps as fine a population as there is in the world, possessed of great physical and intellectual vigour. It is a country whose colonists were drawn from the sturdiest part of the British population, and where the conditions of life have been well fitted to maintain the pristine vigour of the folk. New Brunswick and Upper Canada have also obtained the worthiest material of the mother country in their settlement. There can be no question that as far as the English-speaking people are concerned the Canadian folk would be a precious acquisition to the United States; but beside the three millions of folk who speak English and are derived from British ancestors, Canada contains a population of somewhere near a million and a half who are descended from the French colonists, and who retain their mother tongue along with the social motives of their ancestry. In their present state they are not calculated to make good citizens of a Government which depends for its success on the political energy of all its population.

Already in the United States there are signs of difficulty arising from the perpetuation of foreign traditions in the European colonists who have flocked to its shores. The Pennsylvania Germans, though probably not half as numerous as the Canadian French, are, owing to the preservation of their speech, singularly isolated from the life of the community in which they dwell, contributing little save to its economic products. A state controlled by Canadian French would be a dangerous element in the American confederation. The influence of this population is likely to become more serious owing to the fact that the folk is characterised by an extraordinary fecundity. While the French in France appear to have lost the habit of breeding, the French of Canada are among the most prolific people in the world, equalled perhaps in civilised states only by the Irish. Thus, though these sons of France are in many respects admirable people, thrifty, honest, family-loving, they are in the main foreign peasants, and as such essentially unsuited

to the uses of a republican government. The difficulties which would arise from their possession would go to countervail the advantages which would accrue to the United States from the annexation of the Canadian folk.

The Canadian population includes about one hundred thousand Indians, or somewhere near one-half as many as those now in the United States. Under the federal system of government, the management of the aborigines has always been a serious problem. They have given, and even now give, more trouble to the authorities, and demand more control by means of arms, than all the rest of the population. The rapid process of settlement in the western part of the United States has fenced in these Indians upon reserved territories and diminished the difficulties of controlling them; yet it remains a formidable task to manage by the awkward mechanism of our central government the questions which continually arise with savage tribes. The annexation of Canada would vastly enhance the magnitude of this question. The savages of that region to a considerable extent dwell in parts of the country where they are not likely to be subjugated or surrounded by civilised folk. In the present area of the States we may hope to dispose of the question by the extirpation or the civilisation of the Indians in a few years. With Canada added to the domain, we should have an Indian question which would remain open for a century to come.

There is another class of difficulties which would beset the administration of the Canadian domain by the Federal Government. A large part of the area of the Dominion consists of lands which are unsuited to settlement, and will always be occupied, if possessed at all, by a scant population engaged in hunting or mining. The Federal system of the United States is extremely ill suited to the management of such areas. It was contrived for the government of a small set of states placed along the Atlantic coast. The modern advance in the means of communication and transit has made it possible to work the machinery of the Federal Union in places which are widely separated from the seat of government, provided they have a normal population; but desert areas, where such a population cannot exist, are a curse to the American government. Thus the State of Nevada, which was admitted to the Union under political pressure when it had a temporary population which brought it within the limits of the law regulating the admission of States, is now an anomaly as well as a danger to the Federal system. It has the same representation in the Senate and the same power of

controlling legislation in that body as has the State of New York, though from the failure of its mining industries it seems likely that its population may in a few decades in good part disappear. We shall then have an *Old Sarum* on a larger scale without any authority to annul its representation.

The government of our territories, like that of our states, rests on the supposition that there is a sufficient population to furnish material for a legislature, and to maintain the whole system of government for local purposes. The President appoints the territorial governor and a few other officers, but the machinery of the nascent state has to be run by the people. Now the possession of Canada would necessarily mean the organisation of half a dozen or more territories like Alaska, each with a vast domain beset with troublesome questions, and all without the necessary population for local control and without hope of attaining it in any foreseeable future. Properly to control, these territories would require a substantial change in our Federal system. We should have to lodge more authority in the hands of the Executive, and it is clear to every student of our institutions that such a course would be exceedingly dangerous to the welfare of the country. We already have in Alaska a grave problem. The people of the United States feel less interest in it than those of Great Britain in the remotest of their possessions. The country cannot be said to be governed at all. There is neither moral nor pecuniary profit, nor promise of them, in that irrelevant, indeed we may say absurd, acquisition which Mr. Seward forced upon the United States. By a process of simple neglect we may avoid difficulty with Alaska. The settlements are never likely to extend beyond the reach of gunboats, and the mismanagement of affairs which is even now begun may not become a crying evil. But half a dozen Alaskas near the Arctic circle, each manœuvring to become a State and securing the support of the *ins* and *outs* of politics in their efforts, would be a source of constant menace to the country.

The nature of such a conflict may be seen not only in the case of Nevada, but in those of Utah and New Mexico, two territories both of which have numbers of people fitting them to be states in the American Union, both constantly applying for a place in the Federal councils, but debarred therefrom because the moral condition of the countries is such as to make all right-minded people indisposed to give them any share in the control of the central government. They cannot be well managed by our territorial system, for the reason that the people

maintain a grudge against the central authority because of their exclusion. Immigrants shun them because of their isolation from the association of the States, and thus there is no prospect of overcoming the serious difficulties of the situation. With eight or ten territories of this sort, scantily settled and under the control of railway and mining companies, clamouring and manœuvring for admission to Congress, our situation would be very dangerous. It would probably demand some serious change in our system of government.

For it must be borne in mind that the federal system of the United States is designedly weak in its powers of control. This weakness is an inherent and, on the whole, beneficent element in the system. It seemed likely that the Civil War would lead to a consolidation and to the essential effacement of State authority ; but nothing so marks the essential conservatism of the American Union as the fact that the Republican Supreme Court has, by its recent decisions, reaffirmed the doctrine of States rights, so that we may say that the relation of the separate commonwealths to the Federal authority underwent no change whatsoever from that gigantic political and moral revolution. The only political effect of that struggle was to show the singular vitality of the Federal constitution. That consolidation which was not effected by the Civil War is not likely to be accomplished by deliberate enactment. The people are wedded to the system which has stood them in such good stead in time of trial. Whatever evils arise therefrom will probably be condoned for a long time without correction. These considerations should make American statesmen pause before they acquire more territory which needs to be governed in the colonial way.

It is this doubt as to the efficiency of our system in the management of colonies which makes our Congress unwilling to acquire possession of the Greater Antilles. Cuba and Hayti are naturally tempting to a land-loving folk. If we could manage them in a good way, they would be of vast advantage to our commerce, and if they could be shaped into American States the world would profit by their transfer to the Union ; but the trouble is that we cannot accept them as members of our national family, and we can see no way of managing them as mere possessions. Even in the time when an awakening of our land-grabbing motive led to the acquisition of Alaska, all the pressure which President Grant could bring upon a Congress of his own party could not induce them to found a coaling station on the island of Hayti, for the reason that the public made known its unwillingness to

enter through this gate on the system of foreign conquest which would give possession of areas which could not be governed as States.

The weakness of the Federal Government as well as its strength was well exhibited in the events which led to the Civil War. The question of slavery was in the main a local question directly affecting about one-third of the population and area of the United States. Under a stronger Government, as in Russia for instance, a matter of this sort would have been settled, as the slavery question was settled in the Czar's dominions, by an order from the superior authority. Although the free states had entire control of the Federal Government, this problem had to be solved by arms. Its complete solution in this rude way has made it certain that within the present generation no other local problem will be thus debated. It is furthermore true that within its present limits of the United States no problem so massive in its structure is likely to arise. If, however, the whole continent comes under one control, if the Federal power has to deal with questions arising in a realm stretching from the Arctic Sea to the tropics, we may be sure that other occasions for contention will arise. The people north of the St. Lawrence, even if annexed to the United States, would always retain a sense of political unity. They would probably act together and demand their share of Federal legislation. They are not likely to remain Irish in the measure of their isolation, but they will feel that they have rights, such as are claimed by the Pacific coast states, which have forced on the whole Union reckless legislation concerning the Chinese.

So, too, these states of the North, acting together in what Americans term the 'log-rolling way,' would endeavour to secure their measure of advantage in legislation. If granted, these laws will necessarily affect the whole country. If refused, they will afford a basis of discontent. Although it is not likely, even after the memories of the Civil War have faded, that there will be a resort to arms in the adjustment of such problems, it seems not improbable that in time the people may come to the conclusion that the Federal Union has become too large to be efficient. Its growth might well outrun the development of the sympathies which now hold the Union together. At present the Union is one body of states; the new have come from the old. Save in New Mexico and Utah, the people generally share common traditions and have been trained to a certain pride in the common weal. Although the American mind is elastic, and has a talent for conceiving a strong affection for a good deal of country, it may well be doubted whether by doubling the

area of the United States we should not go beyond the capacity of the people for taking their land into their affection, and guarding it with the peculiar devotion they now give to their country. For a time the sacrifices which were made during the Civil War will fortify the sense of nationality. It seems to have accomplished that result even with the Southern people. The states of Canada would have no share in these motives, even if they came into the Union through the unanimous consent of their people. There would remain a sense of isolation, a lack of kinship in deeds and memories, which now serve to bind the United States together.

Although Canada would doubtless receive a certain amount of immigration from the United States, it may be doubted whether any great movement of population from south to north will ever come about. So far the migrations of Americans have been in a general way from east to west along the parallels of latitude. There is now an obvious tendency of the population to drift southwards in order to escape the rigours of a northern climate. The empty places of the Canadian realm, even if that country were joined to the United States, would probably be colonised either from its own increase of population or by European settlers. Although it is not likely that the territory of the Dominion will ever reach to anything like the population of the present United States, there is every reason to believe that within the coming century it may afford a home to twenty or thirty million people. These folk, even though closely knit in commercial interests with the more southern people of North America, would not be likely to attain to a considerable union of spirit with the other part of the country. Under political conditions which are readily imaginable, frictions might arise which would repeat the old antagonisms between North and South.

It is a well-recognised fact that the conditions of the Federal Union tend to bring about a singular uniformity in the character of the folk within the United States. Already the sixty millions of people which occupy its area are more akin to each other in essential motives than any other folk of equal numbers. Up to a certain point the uniformity in the character of its citizens is an advantage to a state. The political life of the commonwealth depends upon common understandings. It cannot be denied, however, that an excessive uniformity has a certain measure of disadvantage. Provincialism is good in its way, for the reason that it gives that element of variety in the quality of a people which insures men of diverse capacities in social and political life. The

diversities which existed between the original settlements of the Atlantic coast have been most profitable to the State. America would have lost the best elements of its growth if New England, Virginia, and Carolina had not contributed their diverse motives to its development. The political annexation of Canada would, as regards the general life of the continent, be a step in the direction of excessive uniformity.

From the foregoing considerations, which might be much amplified without exhausting the matter, we come to the conclusion that a complete union between Canada and the United States cannot be regarded as desirable except as a means of avoiding more serious evils. As a remedy for the dangers of war, it would be justifiable, provided it could be brought about by other means than arms. For any less important object, it should, regarded from the point of view of true statesmanship, be considered of doubtful expediency. The question then arises, Is there any form of union which may secure an immunity from strife without bringing in its train the evils which arise from a complete consolidation of the two countries?

It appears to me that the end might be accomplished by means of a commercial union together with a well-arranged system of mutual relations with reference to penal enactments which would satisfy all the present conditions of the two countries. The experiments of the German Zollverein appear to show that the custom-house barrier between two states substantially independent of each other may be instituted and maintained without serious difficulty. Such an arrangement between Canada and the United States would undoubtedly make an end of a greater part of the perplexities which beset the relations of the two countries. There should be no difficulty in arranging for a division between the custom-house receipts of the two countries, for it might safely rest on the relative population of the two realms. On this basis it could be made substantially equitable, at least the discrepancies in the adjustment would not be greater than those which now exist between the states of the Federal Union. This commercial relation would at once make an end of all questions concerning fisheries, as well as of less important frictions which arise from the barriers of the custom house.

The principal objection of a valid sort which would be raised in the United States to such a union would be found in the fact that the fishing interests, and in a considerable measure the coast trade, of the Atlantic

district would fall into the hands of people living in the Canadian provinces about the mouth of the St. Lawrence. The United States would thus be deprived of a certain advantage which now arises from the training of seamen in this coastline work. There are, however, two facts which make these objections of less importance than they were a century ago. Our modern warships in the main call for a kind of man who is not bred on a fishing smack or a coasting schooner. For most of the work which is done on a modern man-of-war the fisherman is no better than the landlubber, save that he is less apt to be seasick. Moreover, a very large part of the sailors who now man the fishing fleet of New England are really men from the Canadian provinces, who come each year to Gloucester and the other fishing ports to ship for a cruise, returning regularly to their Canadian homes.

The coast trade of the United States is rapidly passing from sailing vessels to steamers. The trade between Boston and the ports of Chesapeake and Delaware Bays, which a few years ago required a great body of sailing craft, is now mostly done by steamships, and the crews of these vessels have become the natural source of supply for manning warships.

As long as the tariff which the United States imposes on foreign products is in its present condition, it is not likely any Zollverein arrangement between the two countries can be made. The interests concerned in the system are too varied to make a perfect reciprocity possible. It seems likely, however, that at the present time the set of public opinion is towards a rationalised tariff, one which will do away with the tax on raw materials, and put the principal burden of such taxation upon luxuries. With such an arrangement of the Federal duties, there can be no question that the public mind would incline strongly towards a complete reciprocity with Canada.

Some of the friction which at present exists between Canada and the United States arises from the disgraceful condition of laws concerning the extradition of criminals. The Dominion has become the Botany Bay of American defaulters. There are now scores if not hundreds of men who should be serving terms of imprisonment in the penitentiaries of the States who are enjoying the profit of their frauds on Canadian soil. If there had been no other elements of discord between the two countries save those arising from these refugees, the laws of the two realms would doubtless long ago have been brought into a more satisfactory shape

with reference to extradition. It is the fisheries dispute which has delayed this accord.

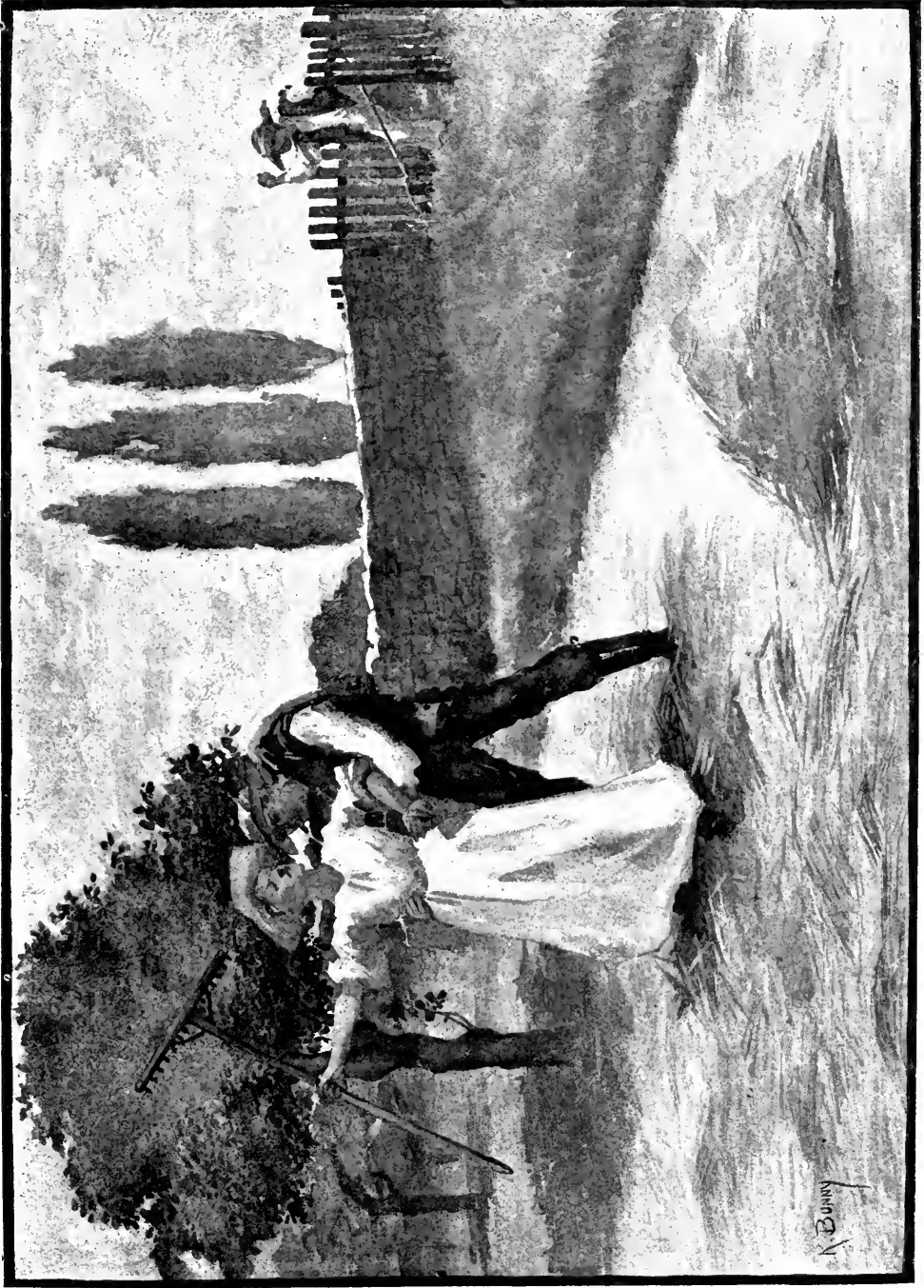
There can be no doubt that a complete commercial and penal reciprocity between the two countries would present a problem of some difficulty to legislators. Long-continued evils such as those which have arisen in the relations of these two realms become inwoven in the statutes in a complicated way. Nevertheless, the difficulties attendant on the legislative work required to secure a substantial reciprocity between the two countries are less considerable than those which would have to be met in the process of effecting a political union.

Even if we look forward to a final political union between Canada and the United States, it seems as if commercial solidarity should precede by some years the actual consolidation of the countries. After the two lands have enjoyed the measure of intimacy which would be secured by a free trade between them, the people will know each other better than they do at present. They will be infinitely better informed as to the desirability of a political alliance. If by any sudden movement the Dominion and the States were made one, the very surprise which the change would bring would be menacing to good relations. If Canada is to become a part of the Federal Union, the relation should be established only after a very serious and long-continued discussion between the contracting parties. In the present commercial attitude of the two countries, such a discussion is impossible. As a whole the Dominion is less known to the people of the United States, or at least to those Americans who influence public opinion, than is Great Britain, and in a like degree Canadians are ignorant of the conditions of government and society in the States. All real knowledge of the two countries is limited to the folk along the line which separates them. There is thus no basis for the formation of an intelligent political contract between the two peoples. With half a century of trade, such as the nature of the two lands makes possible, with the social relations which free commerce brings in its train, we should secure an immunity from the most serious difficulties which would attend annexation, though at the same time we should probably get rid of the strongest motives which now tend to bring it about. If after thirty years of free intercourse the two countries should come to the conclusion that it was better to bind themselves more firmly together by a political union, that step could be accomplished with far less risk than would attend it at the present time.

With a commercial union effected, the desire for a further political union between the United States and Canada would probably disappear. The importance of the State to the individual in modern days is steadfastly diminishing, while that of commerce is constantly increasing. The essential conditions of men in Great Britain and the United States are almost altogether determined by other circumstances than those afforded by the government of the two countries. It is not likely that this diminishing importance of national control has attained to anywhere near its limit. The more governments in general come to be alike in the goodness of protection which they afford, and in the lightness of the burdens they put upon their citizens, the less interest will these have in escaping from the control of one state to that of another. The history of the relations between Great Britain and Canada is good evidence on this point. The people of the Dominion have been gradually emancipated from British control until, except in matters of foreign relations, they are entirely their own masters. Such a conflict as that which grew up between the American colonies and the mother country in the last century is quite impossible in our time. Both the Home Government and the colonies would feel the irrationality of the situation far too soon for it to become menacing. It appears, therefore, likely that if a satisfactory basis for commercial relations between the United States and Canada can be effected, such other relations as may be required at the end of a few decades would be brought about without any conflict between any of the contracting parties—the Federal Union, Great Britain, or the Dominion.

N. S. SHALER
(of Harvard University).





'JE VAS TAIDER, MOI!' R. BUNNEY.

Le Trésor du Lac

I

NOTRE voiture descendait rapidement la rampe de Talloires. Arrivé au Vivier, le cocher mit son cheval au pas pour le laisser souffler, de sorte que nous pûmes examiner à loisir le paysage matinal. La route creusée dans le roc courait, blanche, au bord du lac d'Annecy, en doublant la pointe où se dresse la chapelle abandonnée de la *Madeleine*. A droite, la nappe glauque du lac, que le vent ridait légèrement, s'étendait jusqu'à la bordure des vignobles qui forment la première assise des montagnes d'Entrevernes. De longs nuages errants, coupant les sommets par le milieu, n'en laissaient voir que la base verdoyante et la cime ensoleillée. Au fond, les bois de sapins de la gorge de Doussard, à demi noyés dans une vapeur bleu foncé, faisaient mieux valoir encore l'azur clair de l'eau sur laquelle la presque île d'Angon découpait les dentelures de ses peupliers. A notre gauche, une paroi de rochers surplombait au-dessus de la route et, parmi les broussailles qui en tapissaient la crête, on distinguait un sentier de chèvre, serpentant sur la corniche, à une trentaine de mètres.

— C'est ici, dis-je à mon compagnon, qu'à l'époque où Henri IV. envahit la Savoie, il arriva malheur aux équipages de M. de Lesdiguières. Il faisait nuit noire ; les mulets qui portaient la vaisselle plate du connétable perdirent pied et dégringolèrent dans le lac, très profond en cet endroit. Toute la massive argenterie du duc est encore aujourd'hui au fond de l'eau.

Notre cocher, qui jusque là sifflait insoucieusement à plein gosier, devint tout à coup silencieux et prêta l'oreille à notre conversation.— Un gentil garçon que ce Jacques Sonnerat. Vingt-cinq ans, svelte, large d'épaules, avec de beaux yeux limpides, intelligents, et une fine moustache blonde estompant ses lèvres rieuses. Il nous avait séduits par sa bonne mine, son entrain, sa gaieté un peu narquoise, et nous l'avions choisi pour nous voiturier,—ou plutôt c'était lui qui nous avait choisis. En nous entendant demander à quelle distance se trouvait le village d'Angon, il avait offert ses services avec une si engageante bonne humeur, qu'il avait triomphé de nos hésitations.—Pourquoi allions-nous à Angon au lieu de filer droit sur Genève, comme nous l'avions projeté? . . . Tout simplement par un de ces caprices que les vrais touristes comprendront, et qui est un des charmes du voyage.—Au coin d'une des rues d'Annecy, nous étions tombés sur un cadre de photographies représentant des fac-similé d'aiguières et de plateaux de cuivre curieusement travaillés et nous avons lu au bas du cartel : 'Toinoz, artiste ciseleur sur cuivre, à Angon, près Talloires.' L'envie nous avait pris de posséder quelque échantillon de l'industrie locale et, Jacques Sonnerat aidant, nous étions partis.

Le cheval de Jacques marchait bien. Cinq minutes après avoir dépassé la Madeleine, nous entrions à Angon ;—un village ou plutôt un hameau composé de vingt maisons nichées dans un fouillis de noyers et chevauchant un ruisseau qui se jette dans le lac.

— Nous voici rendus ! s'exclama Jacques en sautant à terre pour prendre son cheval par la bride et le soutenir dans la descente du chemin raviné ;—vous savez ou vous ne savez point, messieurs, qu'il n'y a pas d'auberge à Angon, mais je vas tout de même vous conduire chez le père Toinoz, et sa demoiselle trouvera bien de quoi vous confectionner un déjeuner.

Il s'était arrêté devant une rustique demeure au toit en auvent, composée d'un seul étage surélevé au-dessus d'un sous-sol et auquel on accédait par un raide escalier de pierre. Dans le massif de maçonnerie de l'escalier, une porte cintrée ouvrait sur une sorte de cave éclairée par une lucarne donnant sur le jardin ; dans le demi-jour de ce cellier on distinguait des futailles, un étau, des bancs, un établi chargé d'outils et de feuilles de cuivre. La cave servait d'atelier à l'artiste-ciseleur.

Jacques Sonnerat était entré le premier. A peine eut-il franchi le seuil qu'il fut accueilli par un grognement peu hospitalier :

— Te voilà, faignant ! . . . Tu viens encore traîner tes guêtres par ici ?

— Bon jour, père Toinoz, répliqua le cocher, le sourire aux lèvres, plaignez-vous! . . . Je vous amène de la pratique. . . . Voici des messieurs qui souhaiteraient voir vos cuivres.

— Ha! c'est différent. . . . Je vous salue bien, messieurs; passez de ce côté, si ça ne vous dérange pas.

Il nous emmena près de la fenêtre et nous distinguâmes alors un petit homme trapu, en bras de chemise, vêtu d'un pantalon de coutil, portant avec une certaine solennité une tête drôlement construite; mâchoires saillantes, yeux luisants et enfoncés sous des sourcils broussailleux, front têtue et un peu fuyant.

— Vous savez, continua-t-il, je ne travaille que sur commande et je n'ai pas grand chose à vous montrer. . .

En même temps il fouillait dans un coin et tirait d'un paquet de chiffons une buire de forme orientale, entièrement couverte de ciselures d'un dessin fort original.

— Voici ce que je puis faire, et voici, ajouta-t-il en déroulant des photographies, les modèles que vous pouvez choisir.

Notre choix se fixa sur un plateau et une buire, puis il nous fit son prix, qui était relativement modeste. Le seul point qui donna matière à discussion fut le délai stipulé pour la livraison. Le bon homme exigeait un mois et n'en démordait pas. Tandis que mon compagnon s'efforçait d'obtenir un délai moins long, j'avisai sur un tonneau des morceaux de minerai où scintillaient des paillettes de métal.

— Est-ce du minerai de cuivre? demandai-je au ciseleur.

Les yeux de M. Toinoz eurent des scintillements pareils à ceux des parcelles métalliques semées dans ses cailloux.

— Il y a du cuivre, répondit-il avec un hochement de tête mystérieux, mais il y a aussi autre chose . . . de l'or, monsieur, de bel et bon or de la montagne.

— Comment, on trouve de l'or ici? m'écriai-je.

— Il y en a là-haut, reprit-il en levant le doigt d'une air illuminé, dans la direction de la Tournette;—où? . . . On ne sait pas au juste. . . . La montagne garde son secret et cache son or ni plus ni moins qu'un avare. Seulement, à la fonte des neiges, le torrent roule des débris de roche dans les gorges d'Angon et ces débris-là contiennent de l'or . . . moi seul je sais les reconnaître. . . . Je les devine à la forme et au toucher



et je les ramasse. . . . C'est la dot de ma fille Philomène. . . . Philo sera riche un jour, ajouta-t-il en lançant un regard méprisant du côté de Jacques Sonnerat,—et je ne la marierai qu'à un garçon qui aura de quoi! . . .

Le jeune cocher, sans trop s'émouvoir de cette insinuation qui avait tout l'air d'être envoyée à son adresse, se contentait de secouer les épaules et de sourire avec une lueur gouailleuse dans l'œil. Il sortit du cellier sous prétexte de commander le déjeuner 'à la bourgeoise,' et nous allâmes, en attendant, visiter le hameau.

Laissant mon ami en contemplation devant la cascade, je suivis le ruisseau qui sautillait sous les noyers. Je gagnai ainsi en quelques minutes la lisière d'un pré qu'on venait de faucher et qu'une haie de coudrier, enchevêtrée de vigne sauvage, séparait du chemin. De l'autre côté de cette muraille de verdure j'entendis deux voix jeunes et alertes qui dialoguaient à l'ombre des pommiers et, en me haussant sur le talus, je pus apercevoir les deux causeurs :—une fille de vingt ans occupée à retourner l'herbe fauchée, et Jacques Sonnerat en personne. Au milieu des jonchées de foin odorant, ces deux jeunes gens formaient un couple vraiment fait pour réjouir les yeux.—La jeune fille avait le buste serré dans un de ces casaquins de toile claire, à trois larges plis dans le dos, qu'on nomme une *taille* dans le pays ; la jupe de même étoffe collait aux hanches et tombait jusqu'aux pieds chaussés de gros brodequins ; les manches retroussées au-dessus du coude montraient des beaux bras hâlés, appuyés sur le rateau ;—sous le chapeau de paille un visage



frais s'arrondissait, éclairé par de vifs yeux bleus sur lesquels se jouaient des mèches de cheveux frisottants. Jacques Sonnerat, le pantalon enfoncé dans ses bottes, la veste sur l'épaule, se profilait vigoureusement en plein soleil et mâchonnait un brin d'herbe, tout en dévorant du regard son interlocutrice :

— Je suis content de vous revoir, Philomène, disait-il de sa voix la plus caressante ; vous devez être étonnée . . . et un peu contente aussi, pas vrai, que je sois revenu si tôt par chez vous ?

— Pour sûr, Jacques. . . . Je croyais que vous aviez dessin de passer la semaine à Annecy.

— C'était mon plan, en effet, mais quand j'ai entendu ces deux messieurs parler d'Angon, j'ai si bien manœuvré que je les ai décidés à monter dans ma voiture, et nous avons marché rondement, je vous en

réponds ! . . . On aurait dit que le Blond se doutait que j'allais vers vous. . . . Philo ! comme récompense, si vous me laissiez vous embrasser un brin ?

— Non, Jacques, tenez-vous tranquille. . . . Les gens peuvent nous voir et tout redire au père. . . . Il n'est toujours pas consentant, vous savez, et nos affaires ne marchent pas aussi bien que votre cheval.

— Bah ! le père Toinoz est occupé avec ses pratiques. . . . Un petit baiser sur la joue, ce sera tôt fait !

— Nenni . . . quand nous serons mariés, vous m'embrasserez tant que vous voudrez, mais jusque là, rien !

— C'est ce que nous allons voir ! ripostait l'entreprenant Jacques Sonnerat en passant lestement le bras autour de la taille de son amoureuse, — pas si lestement néanmoins qu'elle n'eût le temps de se jeter de côté en le menaçant de son rateau.

Peu effrayé de cette menace et excité par le sourire de défi qui courait sur les lèvres de Philomène, Jacques allait renouveler sa tentative, quand il fut arrêté net par une voix rude qui criait à l'autre bout du pré :

— Attends un peu, drôle ! je vas t'aider, moi, à coups de fourche ! . . . Et toi, Philo, au lieu de te laisser affronter par ce coureur là, tu ferais mieux d'aller chez nous où la besogne ne manque pas. . . . Je t'ai déjà défendu de causer avec lui. . . . Décampe et va mettre le couvert dans la chambre haute ! . . .

La jeune fille jeta son rateau et, sans se presser, avec un mouvement d'épaules qui marquait une médiocre disposition à l'obéissance passive, elle s'éloigna dans la direction de la maison. Les deux hommes restèrent en présence. Jacques Sonnerat, sans se déconcerter, mâchonnait de nouveau son brin d'herbe et s'avançait nonchalamment vers l'artiste-ciseleur :

— Comme ça, dit-il, père Toinoz, vous êtes toujours aussi peu raisonnable. . . . Vous ne voulez pas me donner votre Philomène ? . . . Je l'aime pourtant bien et nous ferions une belle paire ensemble !

— Aime-la ou ne l'aime pas, ça m'est égal, grogna Toinoz. . . . Tu connais mes idées. Je veux un gendre qui m'aide à exploiter mon minéral. . . . Pour ça il faut de l'argent et de l'industrie. Or, toi, mon garçon, tu ne sais rien que conduire ton cheval et pêcher dans le lac. . . . Ça ne suffit pas et tu n'es point mon homme.

— Père Toinoz, vous avez tort ; je ne suis pas plus maladroit qu'un autre, et quant à de l'argent, j'ai mon oncle, le curé de Rovagny, qui est à l'aise et qui me laissera son héritage.

— Pff ! siffla dédaigneusement le ciseleur, ton oncle de Rovagny est

vert comme un houx et ne veut pas mourir de si tôt. Je n'ai pas le temps d'attendre qu'il soit défunt ; le minerais est là qui presse et je veux un gendre qui se mette tout de suite dans l'affaire jusqu'au cou. . . . Tu n'es pas mon homme !

— C'est votre dernier mot, M. Toinoz ?

— C'est mon dernier mot, Jacques Sonnerat.

— Eh ! bien, qui vivra verra, répliqua le cocher avec son éternel sourire ; en attendant je m'en vais déjeuner. . . .

Pendant ce déjeuner servi par Philomène, que Sonnerat en dépit de la défense du ciseleur reluquait sournoisement, tout en mettant les morceaux doubles, il fut convenu que nous irions nous installer à Talloires, dont nous ferions notre centre d'excursions jusqu'au moment où Toinoz pourrait nous livrer ses cuivres. Nous reprîmes donc, vers le tantôt, le chemin de l'auberge de l'*Abbaye*, et quand, sur le seuil de notre nouveau gîte, nous eûmes réglé le compte de Sonnerat, celui-ci me tira à l'écart.

— Dites-moi, monsieur, murmura-t-il confidentiellement, est-ce que c'est la vraie vérité, cette histoire des mulets tombés dans le lac avec leur charge d'argenterie, près de la Madeleine ?

— C'est absolument vrai, mon brave.

— Et vous pensez que la vaisselle d'argent est toujours au fond de l'eau ?

— Dame, c'est fort possible . . . toutefois, comme on a construit une route neuve au pied des rochers, il y a apparence que l'argenterie de M. de Lesdiguières est aujourd'hui couverte par trente mètres de remblai.

— Ah ! fit-il un peu désappointé . . . ; tout de même avec de persévérance et de l'adresse, on arriverait peut-être à repêcher le magot . . . Croyez-vous, monsieur ?

— Auriez-vous l'intention de plonger au fond du lac pour y chercher le trésor, Jacques ?

Le cocher se mit à rire :—On ne peut pas savoir, répliqua-t-il plaisamment ; votre histoire s'accorde avec un vieux conte qui court dans le pays. . . . Par les nuits de pleine lune, on rencontre, dit-on, près de la Madeleine un fantôme à jambes de bois et si on a le courage de le suivre, il vous conduit au coup de minuit vers une *balme* (une grotte) où il y a un trésor. . . . C'est peut-être bien l'argenterie de votre ancien troupière ? ajouta-t-il en grimant sur son siège ; faudra voir ! . . . Hue, Blond ! . . . Bien le bonsoir, messieurs !

Et là-dessus il prit congé de nous.

II

A QUELQUES jours de là, l'ouvrage ayant chômé, Jacques Sonnerat remisa sa voiture et grimpa de son pied léger jusqu'à Rovagny afin de faire visite à son oncle. Il trouva le curé dans le jardin du presbytère, occupé à dire son bréviaire près du rucher, tandis que les abeilles affairées accompagnaient de leur bourdonnement les paroles latines marmottées à mi-voix. Le vieux prêtre avait coutume de fêter l'arrivée de son neveu. Dès qu'il le vit apparaître au bout de la charmille, il héla sa gouvernante Etiennette et lui commanda d'aller quérir en cave une bouteille de vin blanc. Mais quand, après avoir vidé son verre, Jacques eut confessé mystérieusement à son oncle l'objet de sa visite, la figure poupine du bon ecclésiastique se rembrunit soudain, et de loin la curieuse gouvernante qui épiait l'oncle et le neveu, vit son maître



répondre par des gestes de dénégation à la requête que semblait formuler patelinement Jacques Sonnerat. La discussion dura longtemps ; le prêtre levait ses bras courts en l'air, puis frappait sur son bréviaire du plat de la main ; Jacques redoublait de calineries et de faconde pour vaincre les résistances de son oncle. Il se montra finalement si persuasif que le curé plia les épaules d'un air résigné et secoua la tête en signe d'acquiescement. Alors Etiennette, de plus en plus intriguée, les vit tous deux s'acheminer vers la salle à manger où elle entendit son maître fureter en soupirant. Après de nouveaux chuchotements, elle aperçut Sonnerat quittant le presbytère, avec un paquet soigneusement ficelé sous son bras, tandis que le curé l'accompagnait jusqu'à la porte de la cour, puis s'en revenait tout songeur, le nez dans son bréviaire.

Au retour de cette visite à Rovagny, Jacques passa plusieurs jours à Talloires. Deux ou trois fois, dans mes promenades, je l'aperçus rôdant en barque aux environs de la Madeleine ; une

fois même, à la nuit close, il me sembla le voir, nu jusqu'à la ceinture, se dresser au bord de son bateau et faire un plongeon dans le lac :— Ah ! ça, pensai-je, est-ce que sérieusement il se serait mis en tête de repêcher l'argenterie de M. de Lesdiguières ? . . .

Une après-midi, il alla trouver le père de Philomène, et voici la conversation qui eut lieu entre eux, telle qu'elle me fut rapportée plus tard par Sonnerat lui-même :

— Comment, encore toi ? lui cria le père Toinoz, occupé à façonner la buire que nous lui avions commandée.

— Encore ? répliqua plaisamment le cocher ; c'est un mot de reproche, M. Toinoz, et ce n'est pas gentil de recevoir ainsi un garçon qui vous apporte une bonne nouvelle.

— Quelle bonne nouvelle ? grommela le ciseleur ; viens-tu m'annoncer que tu as renoncé à courtiser ma fille ?

— Ah ! non, pas ça . . . au contraire !

— Eh bien, alors, tu peux retourner d'où tu viens.

— Minute ! . . . Comme vous êtes prompt, père Toinoz ! . . . Vous ne laissez pas seulement aux gens le temps de s'expliquer. . . . Voici ma nouvelle : nous sommes à deux de jeu ; si vous avez découvert une mine d'or, moi j'ai trouvé une mine d'argent. . . . La seule différence est que la mienne est plus facile à exploiter que la vôtre.

Aux mots d'or et d'argent, le vieux ciseleur avait relevé la tête et ses yeux luisaient comme ceux d'un chat, dans la pénombre du cellier.

— Qu'est-ce que tu me chantes là ? demanda-t-il, moitié incrédule et moitié émoustillé.

— Il ne s'agit pas de chansons. . . . J'ai mis la main sur un trésor et je viens vous dire : ' part à deux,' si vous consentez à ce que Philo soit ma femme.

— Prouve-moi d'abord que tu ne te moques pas de moi.

— Rien de plus facile. . . . Trouvez-vous ce soir, entre onze heures et minuit, près de la Madeleine ; j'y serai et je vous mettrai la preuve sous les yeux.

Toinoz le dévisageait d'un air ahuri.

— Tu me montreras ton trésor ?

— Je vous en montrerai du moins un échantillon. . . . Ça vous va-t-il ?

— Soit : mais, tu sais, je suis un vieux singe et on ne me fait pas prendre des vessies pour des lanternes.

— Tranquillisez-vous, vous serez satisfait de votre promenade !

A l'heure indiquée, Toinoz cheminait nuitamment sur la route d'Angon.

C'était une belle nuit transparente. Avec la limpide clarté lunaire une paix profonde tombait sur les montagnes d'en face et sur le lac uni comme une glace. Le silence n'était troublé que par le tremolo des grillons, par le saut brusque d'une carpe bondissant hors de l'eau ou par le cri d'une sarcelle parmi les joncs de la rive. De la pointe d'Angon à la presqu'île de Duingt, un rideau lumineux courait sur le lac et s'y mouvait pareil au frétillement d'un millier de poissons aux écailles argentées. Il faisait clair comme en plein jour et dans cette pacifique lumière les tourelles du château de Duingt et les toits de tuile des maisons éparses se détachaient nettement des massifs d'arbres.—Au moment où Toinoz atteignait le mur blanc de la Madeleine, il vit soudain une svelte silhouette surgir du fond d'une barque amarrée à la berge.

— Est-ce toi, Jacques ? murmura-t-il en ayant peine à réprimer un léger frisson.—Le bon homme n'était pas très brave, la nuit, même au clair de lune.

— Présent, maître Toinoz, répondit gaîment le jeune homme, qui sauta sur la route.

— Ah ! . . . très-bien. Maintenant je pense que tu vas m'expliquer pourquoi tu m'as amené ici à une heure où je devrais dormir dans mon lit.

— Comment donc ? . . . Ecoutez : vous n'êtes pas sans avoir entendu parler du revenant aux jambes de bois qui se promène près de la chapelle, entre onze heures et minuit, pendant les nuits de lune !

— Des bêtises ! répondit le ciseleur, en tournant anxieusement la tête dans la direction de la Madeleine ; assez là-dessus ! . . . Il n'est pas convenable de causer de ces choses-là à l'heure qui il est. . . . D'ailleurs quel rapport ça peut-il avoir avec ton trésor ?

— Ça en a plus que vous ne croyez. . . . On raconte donc que si on suit l'homme aux jambes de bois, il vous conduit tout droit à un trésor caché au fond du lac. . . . Seulement il faut emplir ses poches avant le dernier coup de minuit, sans quoi on ne rapporte que des cailloux.

— Tais-toi ! . . . Tout ça, c'est des menteries.

— Pour ce qui est du revenant, je n'affirme rien ; mais quant au trésor, c'est différent. . . . Il y avait une fois, dans les temps, un général qui voyageait par ici avec sa vaisselle portée à dos de mulets ; près de la Madeleine, les mulets ont roulé dans le lac et l'argenterie y est encore. . . . Ça n'est pas des menteries, ça ; c'est écrit dans les livres, et d'ailleurs j'ai vu et touché la vaisselle d'argent.

— Tu l'as vue, Jacques, mon ami ! . . . Tu l'as touchée ? s'exclama le ciseleur dont les yeux étincelaient.

— Oui, père Toinoz, comme je vous vois. . . . Le trésor est là, dans

le lac, juste au-dessous de ma barque. J'y ai plongé et j'ai vu briller dans l'eau des piles de plats, et des soupières, et des écuelles comme celles que vous fabriquez, mais tout ça en argent massif et pesant lourd. . . . C'était plus fourni que la devanture d'un orfèvre et j'en suis resté estomaqué pendant huit jours.

— Tu n'as conté la chose à personne? murmura Toinoz, très allumé, en lui empoignant le bras.

— A personne qu'à vous.

— A la bonne heure! . . . Maintenant tu vas me montrer que tu ne te gausse pas de moi!

— Oui, et ce ne sera pas long, répartit Jacques.



En un clin d'œil il mit bas sa veste, sa chemise et son pantalon. Son corps nu, svelte et musclé luisait au clair de lune. Il se tint un moment debout sur la barque, tandis que Toinoz haletant s'approchait du bord.—Houp! . . . ça y est, dit gaîment Sonnerat,—et plouf! d'un bond il plongea dans le lac. . . .

Le ciseleur restait tout pantelant sur les pierres du talus. Une double émotion l'agitait. D'abord une poignante curiosité, puis une certaine appréhension de se trouver seul, la nuit, près de cette vicille chapelle hantée occupé à une besogne mystérieuse qui tenait un peu du sortilège. Il avait beau faire l'esprit fort; toutes les superstitions de son enfance lui revenaient en mémoire, et si, tout à coup, il eût entendu résonner sur la route le piétinement diabolique des jambes de bois, il se fût évanouï de peur. Un hôlement de chouette dans le ravin d'Angon le fit frissonner de la tête aux pieds; les profils nettement découpés des montagnes dansaient devant ses yeux. Il commençait à trouver le temps horriblement long, quand la surface du lac se rida, des cercles se formèrent et dans un éparpillement de gouttelettes diamantées, brusquement, Jacques Sonnerat émergea de l'eau, sauta dans la barque et s'ébrouant :

— Tenez, père Toinoz, cria-t-il au bonhomme en lui jetant un singulier objet qui rendit un son argentin en tombant sur le talus; que dites-vous de ça?

Toinoz ne répondait pas; le saisissement lui coupait la respiration. Il avait ramassé et soupesait un plat oblong et lourd, dont le métal s'était bossué et noirci, probablement à la suite d'un long séjour dans le

sable humide. Machinalement il prit un caillou pointu et en écorcha le plat, dont les rayures scintillèrent au clair de lune.

— C'est du vieil argent, bégaya-t-il enfin ; je m'y connais. . . . Et tu crois, Jacques, qu'il y en a beaucoup de pareils, au fond du lac ?

— Toute une batterie de cuisine, père Toinoz . . . ça grouille ! . . . Je n'ai eu qu'à prendre dans le tas, affirma Jacques en s'essuyant le dos et les jambes avec son mouchoir.

— Retournes-y, mon brave, hardi ! . . . Encore un plongeon, et rapporte ce que tu pourras ! chuchota Toinoz, l'œil flambant.

— Nenni, assez pour cette nuit ! riposta l'autre en se rhabillant ; la lune a tourné, la place est maintenant dans l'ombre et je n'y verrais goutte. . . . Vous avez demandé une preuve ; je vous la donne. . . . A votre tour de me bailler une bonne parole. . . . Philo sera-t-elle ma femme ?

— Tout de même, répondit le ciseleur à moitié convaincu, si tu me pêchais beaucoup d'assiettes comme celle-ci, ce serait une jolie dot et je ne dirais pas non.

— Vous me jurez que nous irons avant un mois à la mairie et à l'église ?

— Soit . . . avant un mois, si tu promets de m'apporter le restant de la vaisselle.

— Tope ! s'écria Jacques en lui tapant dans la main. . . . En attendant, prenez comme gage le plat d'argent. . . . Dès demain, nous nous occuperons des publications et dans trois semaines, vers la Saint-Jean, quand de nouveau la lune sera pleine, nous reviendrons ici avec une charrette et nous ramasserons tout le butin. . . . D'ici là, n'en ouvrez la bouche à personne, même à Philo !

— Je serai muet comme un poisson, répliqua le ciseleur en frottant le plat contre sa manche . . . ; et maintenant, Jacques, tu serais bien gentil de m'accompagner jusqu'à Angon . . . ça te réchaufferait.

— Ah ! ah ! dit le camarade en riant, vous avez peur que les jambes de bois ne vous courent après pour vous reprendre le plat ! . . . A votre service, père Toinoz, à condition que vous me paicz une bouteille de votre vin blanc . . . ça me réchauffera encore mieux ! . . .

Quand Jacques Sonnerat, après avoir remis Toinoz chez lui et vidé la bouteille, en trinquant à Philomène, reprit tout seul le chemin de Talloires, la lune le vit tout à coup esquisser un pas de danse sur le gazon, puis il se mit à siffler si gaîment et si fort, que l'écho de la Madeleine lui renvoya son sifflement et que, dans les bois de Vivier, les merles s'éveillèrent en sursaut, croyant le jour déjà levé.

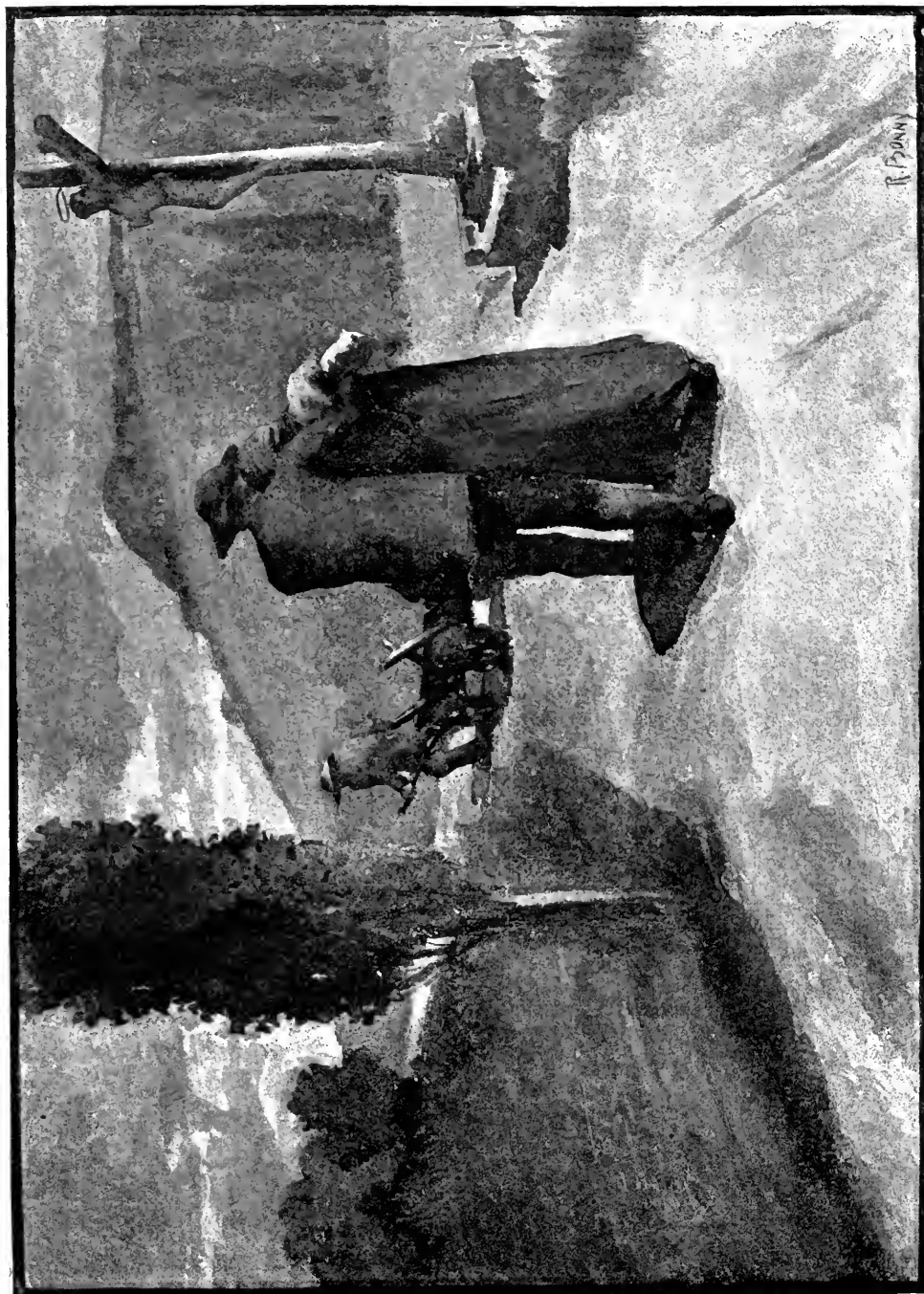
III



PHILOMÈNE, qui n'était pas dans le secret, n'en revenait pas du revirement qui s'était opéré dans les idées de son père. Non seulement Toinoz donnait son consentement au mariage, mais il en pressait activement la conclusion. La trouvaille du plat d'argent lui avait mis l'eau à la bouche ; dans ses rêves il entendait le tintement clair de la vaisselle plate du connétable ; il voyait déjà les pièces d'orfèvrerie, empilées dans son coffre, jeter de blancs éclairs métalliques à travers l'obscurité du cellier. Aussi, maintenant que le repêchage de l'argenterie était subordonné à la célébration des noces de Philomène, il lui tardait d'arriver au jour du mariage. Ce fut lui qui se chargea de toutes les démarches préalables à la publication des bans ; et trois semaines, jour pour jour, après la mémorable nuit du plongeon de Jacques, un joyeux cortège de gens endimanchés s'égréna sous les noyers de la route d'Angon à Talloires, précédé d'un garçon qui jouait de l'accordéon,—l'instrument préféré des montagnards de la Savoie.—En tête marchait Toinoz, rasé de frais et engoncé dans sa redingote des jours de fête ; il donnait le bras à Philomène, toute blanche et rose en ses atours de mariée ; Jacques Sonnerat, la moustache au vent, le sourire aux lèvres, conduisait la mère Toinoz. Quand la noce défila devant la Madeleine, le ciseleur se retourna vers son futur gendre et eut un mystérieux clignement d'yeux, auquel le garçon répondit par un sourire silencieux et plein de promesses.

Jacques nous avait invités à la cérémonie et nous assistâmes à la bénédiction nuptiale dans l'église bourrée de curieux. Ce fut l'oncle de Rovagny qui officia, paré de sa plus belle chasuble. Avant d'unir les deux jeunes gens, le brave curé leur adressa un discours joliment tourné où il leur disait, entre autres choses, que l'argent ne fait pas le bonheur et que la tendresse mutuelle de deux époux vaut mieux que tout les trésors de la terre. En prononçant ces paroles avec onction, le vieux prêtre dont la ronde figure épanouie était dorée par un rayon de soleil tombant de l'abside, avait une fine expression doucement sardonique, qui me frappa. Jacques écoutait dévotement son oncle et approuvait par des hoche-

Handwritten text at the bottom of the page, possibly a signature or a date, which is mostly illegible due to fading and blurring.



JACQUES NE SE PRESSAIT NULLEMENT. R. BONNY.

ments de menton, tandis que le ciseleur, plissant dédaigneusement les lèvres, regardait sournoisement du côté du portail grand ouvert, par la baie duquel on apercevait dans un coup de soleil le lac bleu, les montagnes vertes et, au bout de la route fuyante, les murs ruinés de la Madeleine s'enlevant en clair sur les vignobles d'Angon. . . .

Je ne vous raconterai pas les festivités, danses et grasses lippées qui suivirent le retour au village. Cela dura jusqu'au soir ; puis la nuit descendit à pas de velours sur les noyers d'Angon, enveloppant dans son ombre violette le bonheur des jeunes mariés.

Le lendemain, la journée parut interminable au père Toinoz. Il allait et venait par l'atelier, consultant à chaque instant l'horloge qui battait les secondes dans une encoignure. Au rebours de Josué, il aurait voulu précipiter la course du soleil vers les sommités vaporeuses des montagnes d'Annecy. Enfin l'heure du souper sonna, et, tandis que la mère Toinoz allumait la lampe, le ciseleur tira son gendre à l'écart.

— C'est aujourd'hui la St.-Jean, murmura-t-il, et il fera pleine lune cette nuit, mon camarade ; j'ai tenu ma promesse ; maintenant c'est à toi de t'exécuter.

— Parfaitement, père Toinoz, répondit Jacques d'un air délibéré ; je suis à vos ordres. . . . Préparez votre charrette et laissons tranquillement la mère se coucher . . . ; quand tout le village dormira, vers les onze heures nous partirons pour la Madeleine et nous emmènerons Philo avec nous. . . . Elle est maintenant au courant de l'histoire, et elle nous aidera.

Ce fut avec une sourde jubilation que Toinoz entendit au loin, à travers la bleuâtre illumination de la lune, onze heures tinter au clocher de Talloires. Il poussa vivement hors du cellier la charrette, dont il avait soigneusement emmitouflé les roues de chiffons, afin que personne ne les entendît rouler. Jacques prit le bras de Philo, et tous trois se glissèrent, avec des mines de contrebandiers, sur la route de la Madeleine. Jacques, très occupé à caresser sa jeune femme et à lui prendre des baisers, ne se pressait nullement. Quant au bonhomme Toinoz, impatient d'arriver, il filait devant avec sa charrette, puis, tout à coup, s'apercevant de son isolement et ressaisi de ses terreurs superstitieuses, il rebroussait chemin pour gourmander les trainards. Ceux-ci faisaient la sourde oreille, n'étant point fâchés de savourer leur tête-à-tête.

— Sarpejeu ! bougonnait Toinoz ; vous allez comme des limaçons ! . . . Vous aurez bien le temps de vous becqueter quand vous serez rentrés !

— Minute, beau-père, ripostait Jacques ; la foire n'est pas sur le pont, et la vaisselle ne délogera pas sans notre permission.

Ils mirent ainsi une bonne demi-heure à atteindre l'ancienne chapelle, dont l'intérieur, traversé par un rayon de lune, était inondé de blancheurs étranges. Le père Toinoz, haletant d'émotion, s'était assis sur les brancards de la charrette. Sonnerat, lui, plus calme et nonchalant que jamais, continuait à musarder et semblait prendre plaisir à irriter l'impatience de son beau-père. Il dissertait sur la récolte qui promettait d'être magnifique, regardait le ciel constellé, les profils des montagnes, et prédisait du beau temps pour le lendemain.

— Jacques, grommelait Toinoz, dépêche un peu ; tu me fais bouillir, mon camarade !

— Voilà, voilà, beau-père, ricanait-il, en se hâtant lentement.

A la fin, il se déchaussa, ôta son pantalon, et comme il enlevait sa chemise, minuit sonna. Il n'y prit point garde et descendit en se dandinant dans son bateau.

— Attention ! s'écria-t-il ; une, deux, trois !—Et il plongea.

Assis parmi les menthes du talus, le père Toinoz frissonnait d'impatience, tandis que Philomène, peu rassurée, joignait les mains.

Tous deux avaient les yeux fixés sur les cercles concentriques qui s'élargissaient à la surface de l'eau. Les grillons chantaient dans les vignes et leur mélodie faisait paraître le silence de la nuit plus solennel. Philo aperçut la première les légers globules d'air qui annonçaient la remontée du plongeur ; puis dans un bouillonnement et un rejaillissement d'eau Jacques reparut —les mains vides.

— Comment ? s'exclama le ciseleur stupéfait ; tu ne rapportes rien ?

— Rien, père Toinoz, répondit Jacques en se secouant comme un chien mouillé ; coquin de sort, la vaisselle a disparu !

— Disparu ? balbutia le bonhomme ; impossible ! Tu te seras trompé de place !

— Je ne me suis pas trompé, répliqua Sonnerat, j'avais marqué l'endroit avec une grosse pierre et je n'ai plus trouvé que des cailloux. . . . Il y a du sortilège là-dessous.



— Laisse-moi tranquille; quel diable de sortilège veux-tu qu'il y ait?

— Je l'ignore, répondit-il flegmatiquement; puis il ajouta d'un air candide:—Est-ce que par hasard minuit serait sonné?

— Oui, le dernier coup tintait comme tu t'enfonçais dans l'eau; mais le lac est encore éclairé par la lune. . . . Replonge, mon ami, je t'en prie!

— Le dernier coup tintait? répéta Jacques sans sourciller; par ma foi, ça explique tout! . . . Le trésor, vous le savez bien, disparaît dès que minuit a sonné. . . . J'aurais beau plonger maintenant; j'en serais pour mes frais, et la fée du lac a resserré la vaisselle au fin fond de son coffre. . . . En voilà pour jusqu'à la St.-Jean prochaine.

— Il n'y a pas de fée, et tu te fiches de moi! hurla Toinoz exaspéré. . . . J'aurais dû m'en douter et ne pas me fier à un filou de ton espèce! Tu m'as volé ma fille, brigand; rends-la moi. . . . Je ferai casser le mariage!

En même temps il avait empoigné le bras de Philomène et la tirait vers le milieu de la route; mais la jeune femme se dégagea vivement de l'étreinte paternelle.

— Non, papa, dit-elle d'un ton décidé; j'aime Jacques, vous me l'avez donné; je suis sa femme et je reste avec lui.

— Merci, Philo! cria Jacques en l'embrassant; tu es la crème des femmes! . . . Et maintenant, père Toinoz, venez me la prendre!

— Ah! mauvaise fille, tu renies ton père! . . . geignait le ciseleur; vous ne valez pas mieux l'un que l'autre, et vous vous êtes entendus comme larrons en foire pour me dépouiller et me vexer!

— Mais non, père Toinoz, ripostait Jacques en riant; personne ne veut vous vexer. Soyez donc raisonnable et souvenez-vous de ce que prêchait hier mon oncle le curé: l'argent ne fait pas le bonheur. . . .

— Allez-vous en au diable, toi et ton oncle! murmurait Toinoz en poussant sa charrette vide; je vous renie à mon tour, et il n'y aura plus rien de commun entre nous.

— Vous aurez tort, beau-père; nous ne demandons qu'à vous satisfaire et à vous aider à exploiter le minerai.

— Ce n'est pas mon minerai, c'est moi que tu veux exploiter, vaurien! . . .

Ainsi se chamaillant, ils regagnèrent Angon, où ils s'enfermèrent chacun dans leur chambre, sans avoir fait la paix.

Pourtant, deux jours après, quand je vins au village pour chercher le plateau et la buire que le ciseleur venait de terminer, le bonhomme commençait à s'amadouer. Il avait réfléchi qu'en se brouillant avec son gendre, il se séparerait forcément de sa fille, et que la maison serait du coup bien maussade et bien vide. Et puis, tout en frottant son plat d'argent avec un vieux chiffon de laine, il conservait au fond du cœur un peu d'espoir : malgré tout, il croyait encore au trésor enfoui au fond du lac, et il se disait, que si la séparation avait lieu, Jacques Sonnerat était capable de le repêcher pour lui tout seul. . . .

Ce fut Jacques qui, le lendemain, se chargea de nous voiturer à Annecy, et comme le bruit de la trouvaille du plat était venu jusqu'à nous, je profitai de l'occasion pour tirer la chose au clair :

— Voyons, Jacques, lui demandai-je, est-ce vrai que vous avez repêché une pièce d'argenterie dans le lac, près de la Madeleine ?

Le sourire familier du cocher s'accrut sur ses lèvres narquoises :

— Je vas vous dire, monsieur, répliqua-t-il en clignant de l'œil. J'étais très amoureux de Philo et le père Toinoz était plus entêté que les mulets de votre *M. des Diguières*. . . . Quand je vous ai entendu raconter la dégringolade de ces animaux avec leur charge d'argenterie, ça m'a fait pousser dans la tête une riche idée. . . . Je me suis souvenu que mon oncle, le curé de Rovagny, possédait justement un plat d'argent qui lui avait été donné par la comtesse de Menthon. Ma foi, je n'ai fait ni une ni deux, j'ai été trouver le brave homme et je l'ai si bien endoctriné qu'il m'a laissé emporter sa vieille relique. Quand j'ai tenu dans mes mains la pièce d'argenterie, je l'ai bossuée à coups de marteau, je l'ai noircie à la fumée et j'ai été la mettre au frais dans le lac, au rez de la Madeleine. . . . Je savais que le père Toinoz, à force de manier des métaux, ne rêvait plus que mines d'or et d'argent. Je lui ai conté l'aventure des mulets, et quand je l'ai vu bien allumé, je l'ai mené au bord du lac, j'ai plongé, je lui ai rapporté mon plat et il m'a baillé Philomène dans l'espérance d'avoir le reste de la vaisselle. . . . Voilà comment le tour a été joué, grâce à vous, messieurs, et je vous en remercie de tout mon cœur.

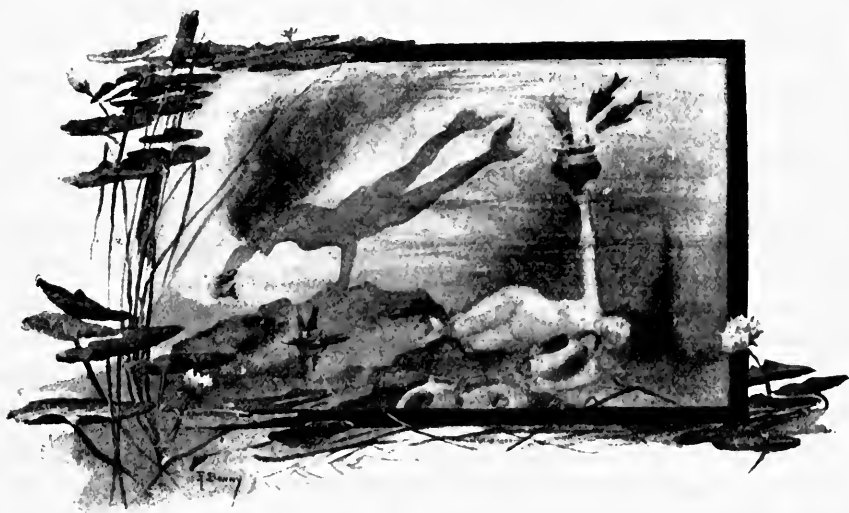
— Il n'y a pas de quoi, Jacques. . . . Et en plongeant dans le lac, vous n'avez pas trouvé trace de l'argenterie de M. de Lesdiguières ?

Il éclata de rire :—Je n'y ai trouvé que du sable et des gravats ; si l'argenterie est là-dessous, il y a apparence qu'elle y restera jusqu'à la consommation des siècles, comme dit mon oncle. . . . Mais j'en ai tout

de même rapporté un trésor, c'est Philo. . . . Je vous assure qu'elle vaut son pesant d'or et d'argent,—et, ajouta-t-il en passant le fin bout de sa langue sur ses lèvres gouailleuses,—c'est un trésor qui fera des petits!

Juillet, 1888.

ANDRÉ THEURIET.



Orators in the House, and Others

IT is a noteworthy circumstance that in a picked assembly of 670 gentlemen, one of whose especial functions it is to make speeches, so few should reach the standard of oratory. Now that Mr. Bright has practically retired from parliamentary life Mr. Gladstone stands alone, the only man in the House of Commons to whom the old-fashioned term of orator may be fitly applied. Mr. Disraeli never seriously aspired to it, and some fitful attempts to qualify for the position stand out among his more disastrous parliamentary failures. He began by being an orator, and everyone knows the history of his first deliberate attempt. But he drifted into the more useful position of a debater, and it was only when he had nothing to say, or did not desire to say something, that he momentarily returned to his earlier manner. Mr. Gladstone holds two unique positions in the present House of Commons. He is not only the only orator, but with one possible exception he is the supremest debater, two qualities which, even less richly bestowed, rarely meet in a man.

The late Mr. P. J. Smyth had the oratorical faculty developed in no inconsiderable degree. With due preparation this shabbily dressed plebeian-looking man was wont to rise and, in the presence of an entranced House of Commons, declaim glittering passages of polished periods. Members crowded in to listen when 'Smyth was up,' sat in something approaching devotional attitude for a quarter of an hour, found half an hour rather long, and went away with a pleasing sense of having assisted at a function. It was magnificent, but it was not debating. Mr. Joseph Cowen is another born orator, whose absence the House of Commons laments. Mr. Cowen's oratory was nearly as ornate as Mr. Smyth's, and was declaimed with something of the same indication of possession of illimitable hoards of polished sentences. But Mr. Cowen,

deeply stirred himself, really did momentarily move the House of Commons, though it is doubtful whether he ever influenced a vote. His speech in 1876 on the Royal Titles Bill, and a second delivered two years later on the Vote of Credit moved by Sir Stafford Northcote under the impression that the Russians were at the gates of Constantinople, hold high place in the records of parliamentary oratory.

Excepting Mr. Gladstone, I know of only three men in the present House of Commons who have the oratorical faculty. They are the Speaker, Mr. Bradlaugh, and Mr. O'Brien, an odd conjunction of persons, each differing widely from the other. Mr. Arthur Peel's opportunities of doing justice to his natural gifts are rigorously limited by his official position. In ordinary times the Speaker is the man who does not speak. But circumstances arising since he was called to the Chair have once or twice given Mr. Peel an opportunity of displaying the charm of perfected grace, force, and dignity in public speech. No one who heard his speech on taking the Chair upon his election can forget the impression created. It was, as far as I remember, the most perfect surprise, the most striking revelation that ever came upon the House. Up to that time Mr. Peel had been slightly known in various Under-Secretaryships. He had answered a few questions and taken an occasional part in debate. But though a member of long standing, he had made no impression on the House such, for example, as had been established by his elder brother. He was looked upon as a sort of ordinary, not to say provincial, member, who, inheriting a great name, naturally came in for a vacant Under-Secretaryship, took his salary, did his office work, and would presently die and be forgotten. Called to the post of highest dignity open to a Commoner, Mr. Peel quietly, at a single step, assumed his natural place. His very personal appearance seemed to have undergone a change since last he was seen at the lower end of the Front Opposition Bench. He looked taller, and had taken on an impressive dignity; his voice sounded deeper and his intonation was more measured. Of course this was all fancy. The simple fact was, he had lived in the House of Commons for twenty years, and only on this February afternoon, when he stood up and declared that 'if elected to the Chair he would humbly and honestly try to do his duty,' did the House of Commons know him.

That was a very difficult speech for a man to make, and its successful accomplishment was equal to a triumph. Quite another manner was necessary on a painful occasion during the present year, when

the Speaker met the necessity of taking note of certain charges levelled against the impartiality of the Chair. No position could be more difficult than that in which Mr. Peel found himself placed. To defend himself without appearing to make excuse, to vindicate the impartiality of the Chair without appearing to admit the possibility of its fallibility, was a task the full difficulty of which can be appreciated only by those steeped in the traditions of the House of Commons. The difficulty was increased by a consciousness that there were many men whose opinion he valued who were not sure that the conduct noisily challenged out of doors had been altogether free from error. Yet Mr. Peel came unhurt out of the horny dilemma. There was just enough concession in his tone and manner to make the nice distinction that, though the Chair was infallible, and its decisions not to be appealed against, yet the present incumbent, honest in intention, was after all human, and claimed nothing more than the possession of absolute integrity of purpose.

Mr. O'Brien is one of the large body of members, chiefly Irish, who have taught themselves parliamentary oratory at the expense of the House of Commons. When Mr. O'Brien took his seat for Mallow a little more than five years ago he was even repulsively uncouth. He had a way when addressing the Chair of gnashing his teeth and clenching his hands, which was painfully suggestive of what might take place if he could only get within reach of the unoffending Speaker. Traces of these gestures still linger around his more impassioned speech. But by practice and perseverance he has brought them under command, so that they even lend force to his invective. He is as fluent as Mr. Sexton, as fiery as Major Nolan, and sometimes—more especially when fresh from prison, with the spectacle before him of Mr. Balfour languishing on the Treasury Bench—it seems as if his passion would overmaster him and carry him away into the regions of shrieking bathos. A picturesque figure he presents, with pale set face, flashing eyes gleaming from under his spectacles, and long arm signalling denunciation of right hon. gentlemen on the Treasury Bench. His paroxysm is, in these later days, of limited duration. He always pulls up in time, and comes out in the end master of himself and of the critical and, to a considerable extent, hostile assembly he addresses. His speech on the Vote of Censure, moved by Mr. John Morley last session, was a splendid sample of militant oratory of the 'Ruin-seize-thee-ruthless-king' kind. In truth, in these later days, the House of Commons presents no nearer resemblance to the angered bard than is found in Mr. William O'Brien on the war path. Listening to him as with a 'master's hand and prophet's fire

he strikes the deep sorrows of his lyre,' one expects him to lapse into the Pindaric strain—

Weave the warp and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Balfour's race.
Give ample room and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.

Mr. Bradlaugh differs in all personal respects from Mr. O'Brien, except inasmuch as he has an evil habit of occasionally addressing the House at the very top of a strident voice. Mr. O'Brien is ascetic looking, with something of the air of a professor not overwell remunerated. Mr. Bradlaugh is plump, not to say massive, and looks as if he slept o' nights. The position he has achieved to-day in the House of Commons furnishes remarkable evidence of the ultimate success of natural ability when pitted against prejudice. As a rule the House of Commons is the fairest-minded assembly in the world. It looks to what a man is, not to what he possesses, whether in respect of advantages of birth or accumulation of wealth. Being human and English, it has a natural leaning towards a lord. But, as Lord George Hamilton has discovered, that a man should be the son of a duke does not solely suffice for his acceptance by the House of Commons. It is pretty certain that had the present member for Paddington been simply Mr. Churchill, his father a Manchester merchant, a Scotch ironmaster, or something in the City, he would not so readily have achieved his present position. To discover that a young man inheriting a title, even though it be of courtesy, has in him appreciably more than the average commoner, is so agreeable a surprise that the House of Commons is always inclined to make the most of it. But it must have something more, and it does not withhold its admiration because one who deserves it was obscurely born, and has nothing but his talents to recommend him to notice.

The exception made at the outset of Mr. Bradlaugh's parliamentary career testifies to the intensity of the distaste in which he was held. Since Wilkes was expelled from the House of Commons and brought back again and again on the crest of the wave of popular enthusiasm, there have been no such scenes in the House of Commons as once raged round the burly figure of Mr. Bradlaugh. Devout men like Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Henry Wolff, and Mr. Gorst had their deepest sensibilities shocked by his avowed atheism. That was an insuperable barrier to their approval of his claim to take his seat. But behind Mr. Bradlaugh stood the figure of Mr. Gladstone, just at that time (1880) returned to power at the head of what looked like an impregnable majority. A crusade led against atheism and Mr. Gladstone was a

delirious delight, the more treasured since it would in ordinary circumstances have seemed a combination impossible for imagination to conceive. Thus Mr. Bradlaugh was, year after year, barred out whilst Mr. Gladstone was leader of the House, and quietly admitted in the very earliest days of Conservative accession to power. In the now far-off days when Mr. Bradlaugh was wont to be buffeted at the bar, with occasional processes of propulsion into Palace Yard, he made his mark as an orator. His opportunities were unique. Whilst ordinary members, desiring to take part in debate, rose in their places and struggled with others to catch the Speaker's eye, Mr. Bradlaugh had provided for him special advantages. The veritable Bar of the House of Commons, a mysterious entity rarely gazed upon in the course of a generation, was solemnly drawn out. Behind it he stood, the Serjeant-at-Arms in immediate attendance, with the House crowded from floor to topmost range of the galleries, and all London waiting outside to catch the earliest echoes of his speech. The opportunity was great, and time after time he rose to it. The audience forgot his ungainly presence in the keenness of his argument and the glowing eloquence of his appeal.

Those were his palmy days, to which he must occasionally look back with regret as he now not infrequently rises from the bench below the gangway and argues with a half-empty House, whose lymphatic mood is stirred only by occasional applause from the ministerial majority, or a nod of approval from the Conservative Attorney-General. In these quieter days Mr. Bradlaugh has had time to cultivate a new oratorical attitude. He always addresses the House from precisely the same place far down on the third bench below the gangway, almost level with the line of the Bar, and so commanding the fullest view of his audience. Beginning on two legs, Mr. Bradlaugh as his argument advances finds his thoughts and his tongue run freer if he stands upon one. So, with one knee resting on the back of the bench before him, he will stand by the twenty minutes on one leg and wrestle with the convictions of the House of Commons.

Examples of the burlesque of oratory and of the fatal tendencies of fluency are seen in diverse development in Mr. Chaplin and Mr. Sexton. Probably if Mr. Chaplin had never had an opportunity of studying Mr. Disraeli's manner his parliamentary failure would have been considerably less complete. Able, well informed, personally popular, enjoying exceptional opportunities of ascertaining the views and feelings of the country gentlemen, he might, as their spokesman, have achieved

a position of influence and usefulness something akin to that of Lord George Bentinck. But the temptations thrown in his way by Mr. Disraeli were irresistible. To listen to that great man uttering pompously conceived commonplaces in deep chest notes, to behold him literally filling out his cheeks with wind, to note his Jove-like frown, and to see him fling his arms about in windmill fashion, seemed easy for anyone with ordinary mimetic powers to imitate. So it was. But where Mr. Chaplin made the mistake was in believing these little mannerisms, rarely and with deliberate purpose assumed, held the secret of Mr. Disraeli's parliamentary success. Making due allowance for diversity of personal appearance, Mr. Chaplin reproduces them skilfully enough. But the House of Commons only laughs, for this is all of the great Master the earnest painstaking pupil can recall.

Sir William Harcourt is another frequent participator in debate who shows traces of having studied in the school where Mr. Chaplin's gifts were cultivated. The House laughs at Sir William Harcourt, too, when he flings about his arms and trembles with carefully cultivated indignation at the shortcomings or iniquity of some right hon. gentleman on the bench near him or on the bench opposite, as the time may serve. But Sir William Harcourt has something more than these borrowed garments wherewith to fix the fancy of the House. He has much of Mr. Disraeli's great gift of phrase-making, though he lacks the skill with which Mr. Disraeli was wont to hide evidences of deliberate preparation. Like Mr. Disraeli, Sir William Harcourt brings all his impromptus down to the House with him. But he has not Mr. Disraeli's skill in deftly removing and hiding away the little pieces of paper in which they were wrapped.

As unconscious imitators of familiar styles, both Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Chaplin must yield to the supremacy of Mr. Biggar. Whilst they concentrate their attention upon one great *exemplaire*, he mingles with skilful touches traces of the personal manner of half a dozen. If one famous parliamentary man predominates over the rest in his influence on Mr. Biggar's later parliamentary style it is Mr. Bright. The traces are faint and fleeting, indescribable by the pen, but recognisable by anyone familiar with Mr. Bright's parliamentary manner. Mr. Biggar's imitative faculty is indeed habitually called into play by immediate connections, and since Mr. Bright's voice has of late been silent in the House he has partially lost touch with him. But Mr. Gladstone is always with us, and Mr. Biggar, following upon one of his speeches, is certain to show some recognisable trace of his influence. He also, when opportunity offers, lapses into his Randolph-

Churchillian manner ; whilst if the Speaker has had occasion prominently to interfere in the course of a sitting, the member for Cavan, following at a later hour, assumes a certain dignity of manner and authority of tone which would bewray the secret to any late comer ignorant of the course of earlier proceedings. It is in this mood that he makes use of his familiar gesture—holding out his right hand palm downwards, imperiously waving it and authoritatively disposing of other members who may rise at the same moment to compete with him for precedence.

Mr. Sexton imitates no one unless it be Lord Castlereagh, whose likeness to a pump was discovered by Tom Moore. 'Why is a pump like Lord Castlereagh?' the poet asked and answered:—

Because it is a slender thing of wood,
That up and down its awkward arm doth sway ;
In one weak, washy, everlasting flood,
It coolly spouts, and spouts, and spouts away.

The pity of it is that Mr. Sexton's flood of eloquence is not invariably weak and washy, and need never be so. There are passages in his voluminous discourses which are flashes of heaven-born eloquence. But they are so smothered in verbiage that they have no chance either to burn or to illumine. He rarely addresses the House of Commons for less period than an hour at a stretch, hopelessly wearying it. If he were content with a quarter of an hour, or at most twenty minutes, he would be a valuable addition to its debating power. But he is so openly and undisguisedly in love with his own gift of speech-making that he has no room for consideration of the physical frailty of his audience. Mr. Chaplin does not disguise the pleasure with which he listens to himself. The Earl of Wemyss, whether late in the Commons or now in the Lords, hugely enjoys an hour's conversation with himself. The late Mr. Beresford-Hope used literally to hug himself with delight in anticipation of a yet unspoken witticism. But none of these peculiarities is so aggravating as the seraphic smile which wreathes the lips of Mr. Sexton as he listens to his own intolerable talk. To compare small things with great, he recalls a criticism of Lord Thurlow's which hits off in a sentence the prevailing difference between the oratory of Fox and of Pitt. 'Fox,' said the Lord Chancellor, 'always speaks to the House ; Pitt speaks as if he were speaking to himself.' The phrase may be borrowed to indicate the fundamental difference between Mr. Sexton and another well-known Irish member. Mr. Healy always speaks to the House ; Mr. Sexton speaks as if he had himself for sole audience—a condition of affairs which his more prolonged harangues tend literally to bring about.

Mr. Healy, out of unpromising materials, has grown into one of the most acceptable and influential debaters in the House of Commons. Of practical work accomplished by Irish members during the past five years, it is a moderate computation to say that fully one-half has been achieved by him. He can see farther through the intricacies of a bill than most men, and is exceedingly adroit in drawing up amendments. When Mr. Gladstone was piloting his last Irish Land Bill he remarked that there were only three men in the House who thoroughly understood it. One was himself, another Mr. Law (then Attorney-General for Ireland), and the third Mr. Healy. The member for North Longford, like some other of his compatriots, has gained in polish at the expense of a long-suffering House. To this day he is not debarred from using a phrase because it is coarse, or following a line of argument because it is personally offensive. But he is a very different person from the one whom, eight years ago, Wexford Borough sent to Parliament. Those were the days of coercion pure and simple, with Home Rule scouted, and the Irish members a sort of guerilla force whose duty it was, between intervals of imprisonment and suspension, to make things as uncomfortable as possible for the Saxon at Westminster. Mr. Healy entered the House with a consummate contempt and hatred for it. He once informed a listening senate that he 'did not care two rows of pins whether he was in prison or whether he was in the House of Commons.' In the relations which then existed between the Irish Party and their fellow-members the House probably had a preference, which it was too polite to express. When addressing the Speaker he would not even take the trouble to remove his hands from his trousers pockets. With both hands hidden away, with neck bent forward in slouching attitude, a scowl on his face, and rasping notes of hatred in his voice, he scolded at large. All that is changed. Mr. Healy is now the 'hon. and learned gentleman,' one of the leaders in debate, in open counsel, even in collegueship, with right hon. gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench.

That these relations should exist with a prominent section of English members is no new thing in Mr. Healy's experience. In the Parliament of 1880 Lord Randolph Churchill, his immediate neighbour below the gangway, was in constant personal communication with him. One night Mr. Healy created quite a sensation by alluding to Lord Folkestone, one of the Conservative Whips, as 'my noble friend.' But these were fleeting acquaintance, arising out of temporary tactical movements, and have no ground of comparison with

the formal and regularised alliance between the Irish members and the Leaders of the Liberal Party.

In the last division Mr. Gladstone took part in during the summer session—it was on the Parnell Commission Bill—a crowded House watched with breathless interest a significant scene. The Leader of the Opposition, strolling down the floor of the House towards the division lobby, halted at the bar, and, turning round, took out his glasses and eagerly scanned the Irish benches. Perceiving the person he sought, he retraced his steps as far as the gangway, stood there, the focus of four hundred pair of eyes, beckoned Mr. Healy down and, placing his arm within his, walked out eagerly conversing with him. Mr. Healy has risen to the full height of altered circumstances. He lives cleanly, and has almost entirely abjured sack. Now and then he falls into his old bullyragging manner, as when in debate on the Parnell Commission Bill he tickled the fancy of the House with his reiterated inquiry, 'Where's Walter?' meaning the respected proprietor of the *Times*. But for the most part he is grave, responsible, acute, weighty in counsel, overpowering in attack, living up to his new status as an 'hon. and learned gentleman.'

Mr. Parnell is still another, and not the least striking, example of the disciplinary influence of the House. In the self-possessed, softly spoken, courteous gentleman who at long intervals addresses the House, it is difficult to recall the lineaments of the once member for Meath. A dozen years have passed since Mr. Parnell found in Mr. Biggar his chosen companion, and, sustained by his acrid cheer, was wont to flout the then leader of the Irish Party, Mr. Isaac Butt, and nightly assail the authority of the Chair. He began parliamentary life by being in an ungovernable passion. He promises to end it in an atmosphere of icy calm. His coolness in debate is almost supernatural, and probably has something to do with the secret of his supremacy over an emotionable nation and a heterogeneous party whose leading characteristic is certainly not repose of manner. He comes and goes without affectation of mystery, but with all its effect. No one can say whether he will be in his place on a particular occasion, however specially interesting to him, and, if he comes, whether he will take part in the debate or remain to vote. He is the only man of prominent position who has not appropriated for himself a corner seat. When he speaks he rises from some midway place on the bench below the gangway, in which he has happened to drop on arriving. He has a pleasant voice, a clear enunciation, and a pellucid style. He never, even on the most moving

occasions, attempts to rise into the oratorical style. Having something to say—and he never speaks till he has, a rare personal peculiarity in the House of Commons—he says it as simply, as briefly, yet as forcibly as possible, and sits down. For an Irish leader, wielding more power than any man has held since the days of O'Connell, Mr. Parnell is in appearance, in manner of speech, in tone of thought, and in all his ways, less like a typical Irishman than any man in Parliament.

Take him for all in all, I should say Mr. Chamberlain is the best debater in the House, not excepting Mr. Gladstone. He is not an orator, but rather a man of business gifted with lightning-like acuteness and consummate gift of lucid expression. With intimate knowledge of Mr. Chamberlain's speeches during the last twelve years, I remember only one occasion when he permitted himself to drop into oratory, as Mr. Silas Wegg used to drop into poetry. That was at Birmingham in the bright June days of 1885, and the passage itself is so remarkable, and affords within brief space so admirable a specimen of Mr. Chamberlain's more elevated style, that it is worth citing:—

I sometimes think (he said) that great men are like great mountains, and that we do not appreciate their magnitude while we are still close to them. You have to go to a distance to see which peak it is that towers above its fellows; and it may be that we shall have to put between us and Mr. Gladstone a space of time before we shall know how much greater he has been than any of his competitors for fame and power. I am certain that justice will be done to him in the future, and I am not less certain that there will be a signal condemnation of the men who, moved by motives of party spite, in their eagerness for office, have not hesitated to load with insult and indignity the greatest statesman of our time; who have not allowed even his age which should have commanded their reverence, or his experience which entitles him to their respect, or his high personal character or his long services to his Queen and to his country, to shield him from the vulgar affronts and the lying accusations of which he has nightly been made the subject in the House of Commons. He, with his great magnanimity, can afford to forget and forgive these things. Those whom he has served so long it behoves to remember them, to resent them, and to punish them.

Mr. Chamberlain is good on a platform addressing an applauding audience, a quality which does not by any means imply that he will be a success in Parliament. He swiftly rose to the front rank in the House of Commons whilst yet a favourite captain in the Liberal host. As a Minister in charge of intricate Bills he displayed capacity for exposition and management not excelled by Mr. Gladstone. But to see him at his very best is to watch him in the House of Commons in these days, when he stands with his back to the wall engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle with his former comrades. Mr. Gladstone in the full swing of his

oratory is often disconcerted by hostile interruption, and is too easily led astray into devious paths. The fiercer the attack on Mr. Chamberlain, and the more noisy the interruptions, the brighter and cooler he grows, warding off bludgeon blows with deft parrying of his rapier, swiftly followed up by telling thrust at the aggressor. A very dangerous man to tackle even with the advantage of overwhelming numbers—one whom it would never be safe to count as beaten, however disastrous circumstances which concern him may at the moment seem to be.

There is a passage in Mr. Lecky's 'History of England in the Eighteenth Century' which reads like a page taken out of a study of Mr. Gladstone, to be written by the historian who shall take for his subject 'England in the Nineteenth Century.'

Pitt had (Mr. Lecky writes) every requisite of a great debater: perfect self-possession; an unbroken flow of sonorous and dignified language; great quickness and cogency of reasoning, and especially of reply; an admirable gift of lucid and methodical statement; an extraordinary skill in arranging the course and symmetry of an unpremeditated speech; a memory singularly strong and singularly accurate. No one knew better how to turn and retort arguments, to seize in a moment on a weak point or an unguarded phrase, to evade issues which it was not convenient to press too closely, to conceal if necessary his sentiments and his intentions under a cloud of vague, brilliant, and imposing verbiage.

With one exception this is a minute, accurate, and striking description of Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons. The exception will be found in the first requisite cited in the summing up of the character of a great debater. When Mr. Gladstone is once on his feet in the House of Commons his self-possession leaves little to be desired. But when in times of great pressure, badgered by inconsiderable persons on the opposite benches, the great orator, the statesman who towers head and shoulders above any who sit around him or before him, falls into a condition of mind and body that excites the mocking laughter of his opponents and the sorrow and regret of his friends.

This weakness, the more notable by reason of its contrast with the imperturbability of Mr. Disraeli, has made the parliamentary fortune of many men of varying ability. When Sir William Harcourt and Sir Henry James sat together below the gangway in the Parliament of 1868 they shrewdly recognised the pathway to promotion. In the session of 1873 Mr. Gladstone's Government, based on the triumphant majority of 1868, was tottering to a fall. Mr. Gladstone himself was in that irritated frame of mind which culminated in the sudden dissolution that startled his own friends in the early days of 1874. Badgered by the regular

Opposition, skilfully led by Mr. Disraeli, he was hampered by foes found among his own household, prominent among them being the then members for the City of Oxford and Taunton. Almost the closing scene of the session was a wrangle between the Premier and this brace of ardent supporters, and no one familiar with parliamentary procedure was surprised when, a couple of months later, making a desperate effort to reconstruct his ministry, Mr. Gladstone made Mr. Henry James Attorney-General and Mr. Vernon Harcourt Solicitor-General, providing the latter gentleman with a pedestal from which he might with greater effect attack his patron in the spring of 1874, when Mr. Gladstone's sun seemed finally to have set.

In the same way, though not in similar degree, Mr. Ashmead Bartlett and Mr. Warton profited by Mr. Gladstone's inability to control himself when, seated on either of the front benches, he followed the course of acrimonious debate. Mr. Stanley Leighton, who at one time seemed in the running, has lost the prize only because he had not staying power. Mr. Warton, a vulgar, boorish partisan, early discovered that he could 'draw' Mr. Gladstone at pleasure, disturbing him at his work just as the braying of an ass which had strayed into the courtyard of a certain house in the quiet suburbs of Athens might have fatally broken in on the meditation of Plato. To call 'Oh! oh!' and 'Ah! ah!' when the veteran statesman, borne down through the day with imperial cares, was occupying an hour of the evening in strenuous debate, did not require much mental activity or seem to demand prodigious recompense. Yet it led Mr. Warton into a comfortable salaried office at the Antipodes. Mr. Ashmead Bartlett did better still; and, working in the same way, though on a higher level, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Henry Wolff, and Sir John Gorst first brought themselves into notice.

Except at its very best, Mr. Gladstone's parliamentary manner sadly lacks repose. He is always brimming over with energy which had much better be reserved for worthier objects than those that sometimes succeed in evoking its lavish expenditure. I once followed Mr. Gladstone through the hours of an eventful sitting and jotted down notes of his manifold gyrations. A transcript of them may convey some faint impression of his manner in the House. It should be premised that the date was towards the conclusion of his last Ministry, when once more, as in 1873, things were going wrong: the foe opposite was increasing in the persistence of its attack, and nominal friends on the benches near him were growing weary in their allegiance and lukewarm in their attach-

ment. The Premier (as he then was) came in from behind the Speaker's chair with hurried pace. He had been detained in Downing Street up to the last moment by important despatches on a critical matter then engrossing public attention. As usual when contemplating making a great speech, he had a flower in his buttonhole, and was dressed with unusual care. Striding swiftly past his colleagues on the Treasury Bench, he dropped into the seat kept vacant for him, and hastily taking up a copy of the Orders, ascertained what particular question in the long list had been reached. Then, turning with a sudden bound of his whole body to the right, he entered into animated conversation with a colleague, his pale face working with excitement, his eyes glistening, and his right hand vehemently beating the open palm of his left as if he were literally pulverising an adversary. Tossing himself back with equally rapid gesture, he lay passive for the space of eighty seconds. With another swift movement of the body, he turned to the colleague on the left, dashed his hand into his breast pocket as if he had suddenly become conscious of a live coal secreted there, pulled out a letter, opened it with violent flick of extended forefingers, and earnestly discoursed thereon.

Rising presently to answer a question addressed to him as First Lord of the Treasury, he instantly changed his whole bearing. His full rich voice was attuned to conversational tone. The intense eager restlessness of manner had disappeared. He spoke with exceeding deliberation, and with no other gesture than a slight outward waving of the right hand, and a courteous bending of the body in recognition of his interlocutor. The mere change of position, the literal feeling of his feet, seemed, as is usually the case, to have steadied him and re-endowed him with full self-possession. Often in angry debates one has seen him bounding about on the seat apparently in uncontrollable rage, loudly ejaculating contradiction, violently shaking his head, and tendering other evidence of lost temper, hailed with hilarious laughter and cheers from hon. gentlemen opposite. Finally springing to his feet with a fierce bound, he has stood at the table motionless and rigid, whilst the House was filled with the tumult of cheers and hostile clamour. When the Speaker has authorised his interruption it has seemed as if the devil of unrest were thereby literally cast out. Mr. Gladstone has suddenly become himself again, and in quiet voice has set forth in admirably chosen language a weighty objection.

On the night to which my notes refer the debate was resumed by Lord Randolph Churchill, who, then seated below the gangway, irre-

sponsible and irrepressible, had an hour's perfect enjoyment. Standing below his corner seat, with eye watchfully fixed on the mobile figure stretched out in the seat of the Leader of the House, he pricked and goaded him as the sprightly matador in the arena girds at the infuriate bull which, if it were only intelligently to expend its force, could tear the human mite into unrecognisable shreds. At first the Premier assumed an attitude of ordinary attention, with his legs crossed, hands folded so that they caressed either elbow. He threw back his head and closed his eyes, the light from the roof falling on a perfectly placid countenance. But, as Lord Randolph went on with quip and crank, audacious accusation and reckless misrepresentation of fact or argument, he lifted his head, shuffled his feet, crossed and recrossed his hands, and fixed an angry eye on the delighted tormentor. The potion was beginning to work, and jeering cries from Conservatives above the gangway or howls from the Irish camp, at the gates of which Lord Randolph's standard was at that time planted, added to its efficacy. Soon Mr. Gladstone began to shake his head with increased violence as Lord Randolph repeated a statement thus contradicted. Louder grew the irritating cheers from the Opposition. The triumphant whisper went round, 'Randolph's drawing him!' Excited by the tumult, and vainly trying to lift his still mighty voice above the uproar, Mr. Gladstone, seating himself perilously near the edge of the seat, bending forward and grasping himself somewhere below the knee, leant across towards the more-than-ever-delighted adversary and angrily reiterated 'No, no, no!' A pitiful and undignified demonstration on the part of the Prime Minister, which was exactly what Lord Randolph Churchill was endeavouring to bring about, and was hailed with increasing cheers by the pleased Opposition.

When Lord Randolph had made an end of speaking, Mr. Gladstone sprang up with catapultic celerity. For a moment he held on to the box on the table at arm's length, drawing himself up to fullest height with a genial smile on his countenance that completed the contrast with his late perturbed manner. Once more he was himself, his supremacy of the House, lost through the lamentable exhibitions but just witnessed, immediately reassumed with his self-command. Now was witnessed the exhibition of that skill which Mr. Lecky noted in Pitt. Like Pitt—as far as opportunity is provided to the present generation infinitely beyond Pitt—'no one knows better how to turn and retort arguments, to seize in a moment on a weak point or an unguarded phrase.' In half a dozen sentences of exquisitely modulated speech Mr. Gladstone, with the delightful benevolence with which Gulliver was able to refrain from

resenting the pricking of the lance of Lilliput's doughtiest champion, played with Lord Randolph, and finally rolled him aside, turning his attention, as he said, to more serious matters.

This was all very well to begin with. But warming with his work, the Premier proceeded through a series of gymnastic exercises which would have left an ordinary man of half his years pale and breathless. Watching him as he brought down his strong right hand with resounding blows upon the Blue Book from which he had just quoted, new comers to the House understood the fervency with which Mr. Disraeli once thanked God that the table intervened between him and his lifelong rival. So vigorous were the thumps that it was with difficulty the words they were intended to emphasise could be caught. The famous pomatum pot, which plays a prominent part on these occasions, had an exceedingly bad time. Mr. Gladstone's eye falling upon it as he fiercely gyrated, he seized it with sudden gesture, brought it to his lips with swift movement, and devoured a portion of its contents as if, instead of being an innocent compound of egg and wine, it were concentrated essence of Lord Randolph Churchill conveniently prepared with a view to his final disappearance from the scene. Sometimes with both hands raised rigid above his head; often with left elbow leaning on the table and right hand with closed fist shaken at the head of some unoffending country gentleman on the back benches opposite; anon standing half a step back from the table, with the left hand hanging at his side and the right uplifted so that he might with thumb nail lightly touch the shining crown of his head, Mr. Gladstone trampled his way through the arguments of the adversary as an elephant in an hour of aggravation rages through a jungle.

It is no new thing for great orators to have extravagant gestures. Peel had none; Pitt but few, and these monotonous and mechanical. But Pitt's father, the great Chatham, knew how to flash his eagle eye, to flaunt his flannels, and strike home with his crutch. Brougham once dropped on his knees in the House of Lords and with outstretched hands implored the Peers not to reject the Reform Bill. Fox was sometimes moved to tears by his own eloquence. Burke, on an historic occasion, brought a dagger on the scene. Sheridan, when nothing else was to be done, knew how to faint; whilst Grattan used to scrape the ground with his knuckles as he bent his body and thanked God he had no peculiarities of gesture. But in respect of originality, multiplicity, and vehemence of gesture, Mr. Gladstone, as in some other things, beats the record of human achievement.

HENRY W. LUCY.

Truth and Delusion

ONE might almost say, regarding popular beliefs, that one man's opinion is as good as another's, and a good deal better too, and there are no doubt many whose opinion on the subject is much better than mine. My excuse for speaking on this subject is that, although I have few observations or experiments of my own to bring forward, yet the kind of work in which I have been for some years engaged has led me to look at the phenomena connected with popular beliefs from a different point of view than the usual one, and my opinions, although I cannot claim for them any special weight, may perhaps present to some readers a new aspect of the truth. For truth generally has more than one side. When we find two contradictory opinions held with equal tenacity by different people, it is always well to try to see whether both of them have not got hold of part of the truth, and neither of them got hold of the whole.

There is an old story which well illustrates this point. Two knights-errant met at cross-roads where a statue of Victory was standing, with a shield in her hand. 'What a magnificent silver shield!' said one. 'It is not silver—it is bronze,' said the other. Each held to his own opinion; from words they came to blows, and it was only when they had unhorsed each other, and were lying bleeding and helpless beneath the statue, that they saw that the shield was silver on one side and bronze on the other, so that both were right and both were wrong. In the same way, when we find that certain things are implicitly believed in by some people,

while they are laughed at as ridiculous and absurd by others, it is worth while to inquire whether there may not be an element of truth as well as of falsehood in both belief and ridicule.

Ignorance is the parent both of blind credulity and of scoffing scepticism, and leads not only to implicit belief in untruths, but to a rash denial of what is true. We all know the old story of the sailor who came back to his mother, and when asked what he had seen, replied, 'Mountains of sugar, rivers of rum, and fish that fly.' 'Mountains of sugar and rivers of rum you may have seen,' said the old woman; 'but fishes that fly, never!' She readily believed in the things that did not exist, but scouted as false the only statement that was true. Another example of the incredulity bred by ignorance occurred in my own observation a week or two ago. An old lady, absolutely ignorant of geology, on being told that one of the best geologists now living regarded earthquakes as a consequence of the growth of the rocks forming the earth's crust, at once replied, 'Oh! that's too ridiculous. It's something about the sun and moon.' But I need not go beyond my own personal error for an illustration of incredulity due to ignorance. Some years ago an American from the Eastern States told me that in winter he could light the gas by simply pointing his finger at it. I at once put this down as a fib, and it was only a year or two afterwards, when I heard it again and again from scientific men and others on whose word I could perfectly rely, that I credited the statement. When I got the explanation it was simple enough: during the cold winter the air becomes so very dry that it acts as an insulator, and the mere act of walking about, or at any rate of shuffling about over a carpet, causes the body to become so highly charged with electricity that the finger will yield a spark sufficient to light a gas jet.

In the same way that ignorance leads us to disbelieve occurrences which take place under unfamiliar conditions, as in the example just given, it may lead us to regard with incredulity popular beliefs which are really true. Thus we know that long ago the toad was regarded as a venomous animal: this belief is rejected by many writers on natural history, but it is nevertheless true, and a powerful poison has been obtained from its skin. In the south of Scotland the common newt (there called an eft) is still regarded as a venomous animal. In many books of natural history it is stated to be harmless, but a distinguished naturalist lately made the experiment of bringing it into contact, not, as is usually done, with the hard skin of the palm of the hand, but

with the soft mucous membrane of the mouth, with the result of producing pain and numbness with a sensation of spasm, such as to occasion fear of lockjaw. Both in the toad and newt there appears to be a poison in the skin sufficiently powerful to produce marked effects when it comes in contact with the soft mucous membrane, and in the case of the toad to affect the heart also when so absorbed, although it has no action on the hard epidermis of the hand.

But at the same time that knowledge renders us more receptive, it renders us also more sceptical. It prevents our casting aside many statements without examination, but at the same time it makes us more careful in accepting any conclusion without satisfactory proof. The ignorant man goes to one extreme or another either of belief or of doubt. The learned man takes everything into consideration.

I have already said that in this paper I shall give my own opinions, and I wish them to be taken simply as possibly representing one side of the truth, and not to be accepted as final conclusions. In trying to ascertain the element of truth in popular beliefs we may be helped, I think, to a considerable degree by applying the same method which has proved so useful in other branches of investigation since the publication of Mr. Darwin's work on 'Origin of Species.' In the process of evolution from a lower to a higher type of animal we find that it occasionally happens that the higher animal retains remnants, now useless or even injurious, of a structure which was originally useful to the lower animal from which it is descended, and these remnants are frequently so changed in form that we could hardly guess what they were unless intermediate forms had been observed. Thus there is in each of us the remnant of a third eye, which is now useless, although it may have been beneficial to some other form of life antecedent to man. The horse and the pig are very different in appearance, and none who had ever seen a horse only would have much idea of what a pig was like; or one who had seen a pig only, of what a horse was like. It is only by the study of intermediate forms that we are able to see how a pig may have grown into a horse.

In the same way as we find useless remnants occurring in the structure of animal bodies, we find them occurring in dress.

In the centre of men's coat tails we find two useless little tucks, each of which is surmounted at the top by an equally useless button.

These tucks, I have been informed by an eminent evolutionist, are the remnants of the original coat tail, and the greater part of the present coat tail represents simply the flap which used to be formerly turned back, and the two useless buttons are the representatives of those which were formerly useful in keeping the flap back in its place.

We find the same thing in art. One of our commonest ornaments, known by the name of anthemion, has this form.

On the under side are two curves, and probably the majority of people, when asked why these curves are there, say, simply for ornament; but there is a certain Assyrian slab in the British Museum, which proves to me, at all events, that the anthemion is simply a conventional drawing of a palm tree with the stem very much shortened and that the two curves represent bunches of dates. I was once shown some floral ornament taken from the outside of a watch, which at first sight seemed to have nothing whatever to do with fire, and when Dr. Christopher Dresser told me that it had, I was very sceptical. I went with him, however, one day to the South Kensington Museum, and he showed me a number of statuettes representing Indian deities, in which the process of transformation from pure flame to pure floral ornament was clearly shown by intermediate examples. In the first figure a sort of reredos behind the statuette had its edge cut in a way to represent tongues of flame, the representation being made more complete by their being painted yellow and red. In the next statuette the ends of the tongues of flame were turned in so as to form a small circle at the end of each; in the next these circles were ornamented with a curve; and in the next they had developed into flowers, while the other part of the tongue was modified so as to represent a leaf. But for the light thrown upon the history of the anthemion by the record of the Assyrian slab, it would be almost impossible to say what it represented, and but for the intermediate forms representing the transition from flames to flowers, one could hardly believe that such a transition had ever occurred.

Just as changes have occurred in structure, in clothing, and in art, so they have occurred in beliefs, and in the case of many, though not of all of them; we shall only be able to understand their meaning either by getting information regarding their historical development or by a comparison of intermediate forms. Thus, a belief that is held by many is that horseflesh is only fit for cats' meat, and is unfit for human food. The belief in its present form is untrue; the old form of it, was not

that horseflesh was unfit for human food, but that it was unfit for Christian food, inasmuch as it was meat sacrificed to idols. Amongst the Scandinavians the horse was sacred to Odin, and on high festivals it was sacrificed to him, the flesh being afterwards boiled, and the broth and meat distributed among the worshippers. When Christianity was introduced, the converts were obliged to renounce all participation in this sacrifice ; and a story is told of one of the Norse kings who, after his conversion, begged hard to be allowed at least to wave some of the steam from the broth into his nostrils, if he were not allowed to partake otherwise, but the Christian missionary was stern, and even this was not permitted, and so horseflesh gradually sank into complete disuse, and is disused to this day, although the reason for its disuse has long ago passed away.

As an example of the use of intermediate forms of a belief in enabling us to find out its real origin, we may take the belief that a person cannot die easily so long as any doors are allowed to remain locked in the house in which he is lying. In this form the belief is ridiculous. Another form of it, however, is that so long as the doors and windows of the room in which the dying person is, are kept shut, death will not occur, the idea being that the soul cannot escape unless the door or window is opened to allow it to pass out. The explanation is a most fantastic one, but it is a fact that if the doors and windows be kept shut, persons will live very many hours after they have become perfectly unconscious, and are almost dead. I have myself watched by a deathbed for many hours, and had this fact strongly impressed upon me, but the reason is that so long as the person is kept warm, respiration and circulation will continue, although feebly, for a very long time, even although there is not the faintest hope of ultimate recovery. So long as the doors and windows are kept shut, the room is likely to be kept tolerably warm, but when they are opened the person dies, not because the exit has been given to his spirit, but because the draught of cold air thus let in has quenched the last spark of life.

Another superstition, that a person will not die readily in a feather bed containing the feathers of game,¹ has, I have no doubt, a somewhat similar origin. The feather bed retained warmth and prolonged life, but in consequence of this superstition dying people have sometimes been pulled out of their beds and laid upon the floor, in order to allow

¹ *Folk Lore of the Northern Counties* : Henderson, page 60.

them to die comfortably, and it has been recorded that the result was perfectly satisfactory.

The superstition in regard to having an opening into the open air to facilitate the passing away of departing life appears to be widely spread, as it occurs in Germany, Spain,¹ and also in China, where a hole is made in the roof to let out the soul.² This is just what one would expect if it be really founded upon fact as I have supposed, and this tends to confirm the explanation I have just given. Another widely spread superstition is that which supposes the dead body of a person in the house, or even the neighbourhood, where he has died, to be dangerous to the living. Hottentots leave dead persons for fear of the spirit, and in Old Calabar the house where a person has died is allowed to decay for two years, and is then rebuilt, as the spirit is supposed to have departed by that time.³

In Madagascar, among the Sakalava, when a death occurs in one of their villages, the settlement is broken up, and the tribe remove their homes some distance from their former abode, believing that the spirits of the dead will haunt the spot, and do harm to those who remain in the place where it had dwelt.⁴

The wide spread of this belief leads us to infer that it is founded upon fact, and both the belief and the practice founded upon it are at once seen to be rational if we assume that the fatal disease has been infectious, for the infection would cling both to the body and the place, thus rendering them dangerous for a length of time, although experience may have shown to the native of Calabar that at the end of two years the infection had gone. Pestilence has very generally been ascribed to the action of invisible beings. The Assyrians and Babylonians believed that the world was swarming with noxious spirits, who, in food or drink, might be swallowed, and so cause disease.⁵ The aborigines of Australia ascribe small-pox to a spirit who delights in mischief; in Cambodia all disease is attributed to an evil spirit who torments the sick man. Among the Dayacks of Borneo, to have been smitten by a spirit is to be ill; 'sickness may be caused by invisible spirits inflicting invisible wounds with invisible spears, or entering men's bodies and driving them raving mad.'⁶ The causes of disease still remain invisible to our unaided eyes,

¹ *Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties.* William Henderson, p. 56.

² Thiselton Dyer's *Folk-Lore.*

³ Thiselton Dyer.

⁴ *Folk Medicine.*

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 8.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 5.

but by means of the microscope we now are able to see them, and instead of calling them spirits we classify them as low forms of life, and name them bacilli and micrococci.

In all epidemic diseases it frequently happens that when one patient is recovering, another falls ill of the disease, and we also know that the disease germs, whether bacilli or micrococci, adhere to articles of clothing or other objects, and may thus be conveyed to considerable distances, and originate a fresh outbreak of the disease in places far away from its original seat.

We know now that the second person's falling sick when the first recovered was a mere coincidence, and that the first did not recover because the second fell sick. We also know that the communication of disease by *fomites* as they are termed, such as clothing, toys, &c., which have been in contact with the patient during the infectious stage, to other persons or to distant places, does not in the least aid the original patient to recover, although such communication of the disease may be coincident with his recovery. But it is a very common thing to mistake coincidence for consequence, and this mistake appears to have originated the idea that the disease could be transferred either to persons or things with the effect of insuring the recovery of the original patient.

In Devonshire and Scotland alike, when a child has whooping cough a hair is taken from its head, put between slices of bread and butter, and given to a dog, and if in eating it the dog coughs, as naturally he will, the whooping cough will be transferred to the animal, and the child will go free.¹

In Thuringia it is considered that a string of rowan berries, a rag, or any small article, touched by a sick person, and then hung on a bush beside some forest path, imparts the malady to any person who may touch this article in passing, and frees the sick man from the disease. Captain Burton speaks of articles into which spirits had been drawn being driven into or hung to a devil's tree, and this 'has the effect of laying the disease spirit.'²

Salmuth relates a case of cure by transplantation. The patient had a most violent pain of the arm, and 'they beat up red coral with oaken leaves, and, having kept them on the part affected till suppuration, they

¹ *Folk Medicine*, p. 35.

² *Ibid.* p. 39.

did in the morning put this mixture into an hole bored with an auger in the root of an oak, respecting the east, and stopt up this hole with a peg made of the same tree ; from thenceforth the pain did altogether cease, and when they took out the amulet, immediately the torments returned sharper than before.¹

There are many forms of the belief that disease can be transferred either to an animal or to an inanimate object.² Thus in some parts of Ireland a little hair is cut off from the head of a patient suffering from scarlet fever, and put down the throat of an ass, who is then and there supposed to receive the illness. Whooping cough is sometimes supposed to be cured by the head of a living fish being put for a few seconds into the mouth of a child suffering from the disease, and then returned to the water. In the north of Scotland the parings of the finger and toe nails of a person suffering from consumption were wrapped in a rag cut from the person's clothes, waved three times round his head with the cry 'Deas soil,' and then buried in an unknown place. In New England, to cure a child of the rickets a lock of its hair is buried at a cross-roads, and if at the full moon so much the better.³

Some beliefs regarding the communicability of certain diseases, especially of colds and coughs, from one person to another, or from the lower animals to man, are probably just as true as those which we hold regarding the communicability of scarlet fever and measles.⁴ Thus, in the islands of St. Kilda and Tristan d'Acunha the inhabitants nearly always become affected with influenza after vessels have touched at these islands. It is a common belief in many households in England that if one person catches cold all the family is likely to have it, or, as it is said, 'the cold goes through the house.' 'In Sussex the most petted cat is turned out of the house if she sneezes, for should she stay and sneeze three times in the house, everybody within the walls will have colds and coughs.'⁵ Sneezing simply indicates that the cat is suffering from irritation in the nose, and although I do not think that all forms of colds and coughs are infectious, yet I do think that some forms are extremely so, and it is very likely that these may be communicated from the lower animals to man, as well as by one person to another, just as much as diseases like glanders, which we have positive proof are communicable.

¹ *Folk Medicine*, p. 37.

² *Ibid.* p. 35.

³ *Ibid.* p. 56.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 24.

⁵ *Folk Lore of Northern Counties*, p. 206.

Another belief, which seems to me to be to a certain extent allied to those just mentioned, is that persons at a distance could be tortured or killed by making waxen images of them and then running pins into, or otherwise maltreating, these images. I am not, however, sufficiently acquainted with the history of this belief or with the various forms of it to know in how far it is connected or derived from the ideas regarding transference which I have already mentioned. The same mistake of confusing coincidence with consequence which led to the notion of transference of disease, is probably the origin of a good deal of the bad surgery of the Middle Ages. We know now that the danger of a wound and the difficulty of its healing frequently depend more upon the access of low organisms, bacilli or micrococci, to it, than on the amount of actual injury. It is probable that many of the balsams used in the Middle Ages were antiseptics, like the preparation known as Friar's Balsam, and that they were exceedingly useful in dressing wounds and tending to prevent the danger which might otherwise have arisen of septic poisoning by bacilli or micrococci. But many substances which are antiseptic are at the same time irritating, and it is probable that, not knowing what the desirable property in their balsams and ointment was, the surgeons went on making them more and more irritating until they did more harm than good. After a great battle, where so many soldiers were wounded that the stores of dressings were quite insufficient, the kind-hearted Ambrose Parry was unable to sleep all night for thinking of the poor soldiers whose wounds had not been attended to, but was greatly relieved on going round the next morning to find that they were much better than those whose wounds had been dressed. This led to all the irritating ointments being completely discarded. But it is only of recent years that Sir Joseph Lister has discovered the truth which the surgeons of the Middle Ages were blindly groping after, and revolutionised the practice of surgery by introducing antiseptic treatment of wounds.

The same astonishment and delight which Ambrose Parry felt at finding how well the wounds were healing which had not been treated at all appears also to have been felt by those who watched¹ Sir Kenelm Digby's sympathetic method of treatment, which consisted in applying the treatment to the weapon which had inflicted the wound, instead of to the wound itself. So that the patient, in addition to the wound being left alone, had the advantage of the mental stimulus afforded by the hope and expectation raised by the

¹ *Folk Medicine*, p. 53.

supposed curative powers of the measures employed. If these explanations are correct, then we have surgeons starting with an element of truth, namely, the antiseptic powers of their first balsams, and then falling more and more deeply into error, through mistaking the irritant for the curative element in their applications, to the injury of their patient, and then attributing to the treatment of a weapon the benefit which was simply due to letting the wound alone.

But for the intermediate stages it would be almost impossible to understand how such an absurd practice as the sympathetic treatment of wounds could ever have arisen from any basis of truth.

It is often very difficult to distinguish between coincidence and consequence, and it is only careful and prolonged observation which allows us to do so in many instances. We frequently see children blowing at a watch to make it spring open, and continuing to do this even after they have blown in vain many times. The same confusion has led to a belief in portents; thus in Shakespeare's play of 'Henry IV.,' Owen Glendower says :

At my birth
The frame and huge foundation of the earth
Shak'd like a coward.

To which Hotspur truly answers :

Why, so it would have done
At the same season, if your mother's cat had
But kitten'd, though yourself had ne'er been born.

It is quite possible, though here also I lack the necessary information to prove my point, that the popular beliefs in omens from magpies &c. may have had an historical basis. One form of the magpie lore is, 'One for sorrow, two for mirth, three for a wedding, four for a birth.' Another runs, 'One for sorrow, two for mirth, three for a wedding, four for a death.' And another is, 'One, joy; two, a greet; three, a wedding; four, a sheet.' It is quite evident that such opposite prognostics cannot all be generally true, but the fact that they are so opposite rather indicates that there is some historical basis for the superstition.

Another class of omens are founded upon real physical conditions, although it is quite probable that a number of them may have attained additional importance from historical examples. To this class belong such omens as stumbling on leaving the house in the

morning, putting the wrong foot first, letting food fall on conveying it to the mouth, allowing soap or other objects to fall from the hand, or putting the button-hook into the wrong button-hole. All these acts, unimportant in themselves, are yet important as indicating the condition of the nervous system of the person who does them, and may precede misfortunes in the same way as the fall of the barometer precedes the approach of a storm.

As to the omen of stumbling on leaving home in the morning, when a person is exhausted at the end of a long day's work, stumbling is not unlikely to occur, and stumbling on returning home is not regarded as an evil omen, because a person is not likely to undertake anything of importance at that time. But the case is very different in the morning, and the man stumbles on leaving his house ; for this shows that his nervous system is already in such bad working order that any enterprise in which he engages is not unlikely to prove a failure. If the person himself attaches no importance to omens, the failure of his enterprise will no more depend upon the stumbling, than the wreck of a vessel is caused by the falling of the barometer ; but if the man believes in omens it is quite possible that the depression of spirits caused by the omen may do him further harm, unless he utilises it as a sailor does his barometer, and hesitates to embark in any enterprise demanding the full exercise of his powers.

Misfortunes are sometimes preceded, not by failure of motor power as in the examples just given, but by vague sensations of impending danger. These sensations sometimes refer to the life or health of the person himself. In very many cases—indeed, probably in the great majority of cases—they are perfectly groundless, and depend chiefly on derangement of the digestive organs ; but in some instances they prove true. This is more especially the case in persons who are suffering from some disease which may prove fatal, but whose health at the time is such as to cause no immediate apprehension. In these instances the feelings of the persons enable them to come to a more correct conclusion regarding their own health than their medical adviser or those around them. In another class of cases the presentiment has reference, not to the health of the individual, but to his circumstances or to the health or circumstances of others. For example, an intimate friend of my own told me that after being absent from home for some time he felt a strong presentiment that unless he reached a certain place by a certain time a great evil would befall him ; so strong was this impression that he

travelled two hundred miles across the prairie to reach the place in question, and he arrived just in time to prevent the misfortune which would otherwise have occurred. He did not mention to me the nature of this misfortune, but I have frequently thought over the incident, and it appears to me to be simply an unusual form of a very common phenomenon. Numbers of people who are obliged to catch an early train are able to wake just at the right time to enable them to do so, and they arrive at the station in time to proceed on their journey, just as my friend arrived in time to prevent the misfortune. Before going to sleep the traveller has before him the fact that if he does not wake at a certain time he will have the misfortune to lose his train, and during the apparently unconscious hours of sleep this fact appears still to be present to some portion of the brain ; a watch is kept, still unconsciously, upon the lapse of time, and the person wakes at the right moment. I do not know whether it is so or not, but I am inclined to believe that before my friend started on his journey he may have had certain data, which, although never definitely present to his consciousness even in the waking condition, had led him unconsciously to the conclusion that they would result in some misfortune at a given time unless he was there to prevent it. The difference between the phenomenon in the case of my friend and in that of an ordinary traveller is that in the latter all the data are consciously present before he goes to sleep, although they work themselves out during the period of unconsciousness, and the whole process is only a question of hours. In my friend's case the data were probably never consciously appreciated, the problem worked itself out in weeks or months instead of hours, and although the impression was so strong as to lead him to travel two hundred miles across the prairie, he was not even at the last definitely conscious, but only as it were sub-conscious, of what the misfortune was which was about to befall him.

Although the belief in fairies is gradually dying out, it used to be quite as general, in Scotland at least, as the belief in ghosts. I have only met one person who had ever actually seen fairies ; this was the servant of a relative, and I received from her the following details of the occurrence. Many years ago, when a girl, she was standing in front of her mother's house in a small village during the forenoon, when she saw six little people very neatly dressed in green, with white straw bonnets, all the same size, coming up the street ; they walked off the side of the path on to the street. She was greatly delighted at seeing the fairies, and ran to her mother to tell her, but her mother naturally saw nothing. My informant tells me that although

this occurred many years ago she is still able to see them with her mind's eye as distinctly as she saw them originally for the first time. In this case it is probable that a mental picture of the fairies had been formed from description, and then from some peculiar condition of the brain had given rise to the vision. At one time, no doubt, my informant's vision would have been regarded as evidence of the real existence of fairies, and there can be no doubt that similar hallucinations formed the evidence on which the belief in witchcraft was to a great extent founded. In many cases the confessions of supposed witches that they had transformed themselves into animals, injured their neighbours in various ways, and taken part in the Witches' Sabbath, were doubtless wrung from them by torture, but in a number of cases the persons who made the confession appeared thoroughly to believe in the truth of their own statements. To many people it may appear almost incredible that such a condition of self-delusion should exist, yet even in well-balanced minds it is possible by suggestion to shake belief in what the person knows to be true, and to induce belief in what is false. Thus if a person is asked to relate a simple occurrence and does so truly, his belief in his own veracity may be shaken, and he may gradually come to believe in the truth of another statement if he is continually asked, 'Are you quite sure that you are right? Was it not so-and-so?' introducing a slight modification.

It so often happens that when we speak of a person we shortly after see him that it has become proverbial. A year or two ago when in a room on the third floor of my house I suddenly began to think of a man whom I had not seen for several years; on coming down I was greatly astonished to find him waiting for me. But on thinking over the matter it occurred to me that, although my senses were not sufficiently acute to make me distinctly conscious of his presence, yet probably if a dog of my friend's had been in the room with me it would have been enabled by its acuter senses to know, either by hearing or smell, that he was in the house, while the stimuli which would have produced the definite consciousness in the animal were only sufficient in me to awaken a train of thought connected with him. I think that in a great number of cases of this sort, where the thought of a person is succeeded by his appearance, the acuter senses of a dog or of some savages would enable them to foretell the person's arrival. My friend Professor Wood, of Philadelphia, told me that once when in the Adirondacks an old Indian hunter whom he had with him said, 'A man and a woman are coming across the lake about a mile and a half off,

and will be here in about half an hour.' Wood could hear nothing and see nothing, and asked him why he said so. 'Oh!' said the old hunter, 'I hear the dip of the oars and I hear their voices,' and his prediction proved to be perfectly correct. Had these been acquaintances instead of strangers I think that the auditory impression which gave the old hunter exact information regarding the number of the party and their position might have excited in Professor Wood a train of ideas connected with them.

I am inclined to think that the success of the divining rod in some hands as an instrument for finding water, or even for tracing criminals, is due to its causing involuntary muscular action, and thus enabling the person using it to consciously recognise that impressions have been made upon him which would otherwise never have risen above the state of sub-consciousness. The divining rod is simply a Y-shaped piece of elastic wood, the leg of the Y being about three inches, and the forks by which it is held each about a foot long. When we hear that a man is able to discover water at a considerable distance below the ground on which he stands we are at first apt to scout the idea as ridiculous, while if we were told that a caravan was crossing a desert, and that all at once the thirsty camels started off quickly and at the distance of a mile or more water was found, we look upon the occurrence as quite natural. In the same way we regard as very remarkable the story of a man tracing criminals with a divining rod, but it becomes quite ordinary if we put a bloodhound in the man's place.

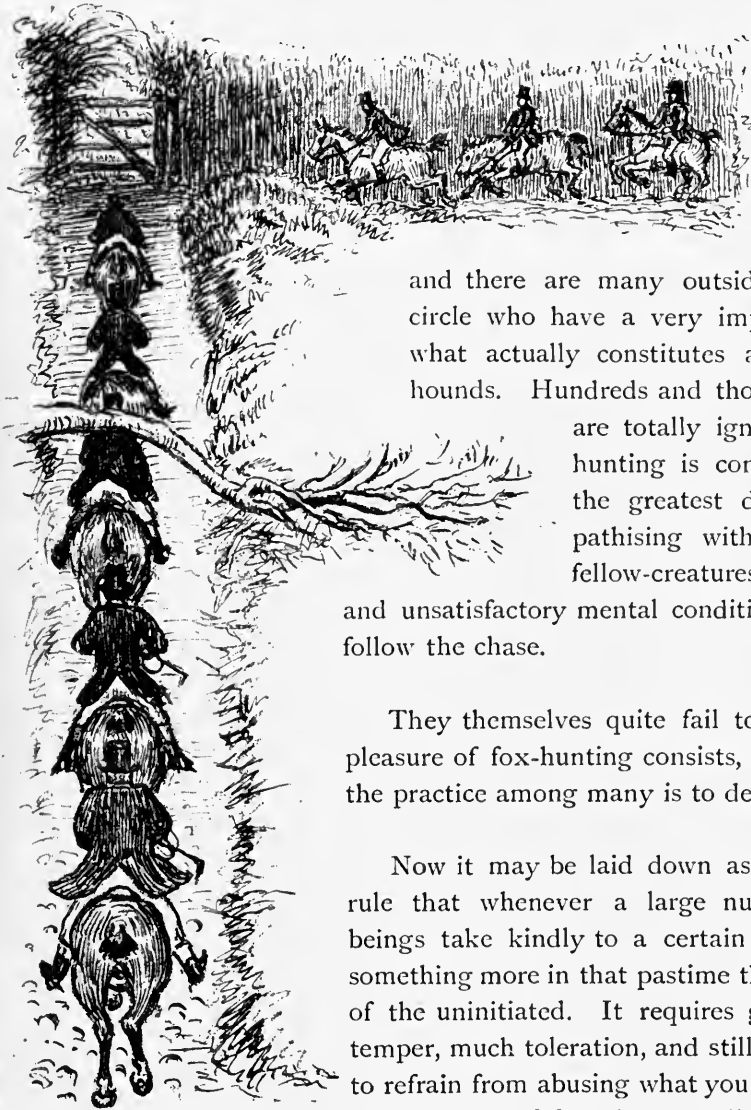
I have endeavoured in the foregoing pages to hint at a few of the most simple scientific and common-sense explanations which point to the germ of truth generally to be discovered in widespread popular beliefs, no matter how strange, superstitious, and even absurd, such may at first sight appear. The whole subject is a deeply interesting one, and its thorough investigation is much to be desired.

LAUDER BRUNTON.



FULL CRY. PERCY YEATHERD.

Hunting in the Midlands



ASHIONABLE as is the sport of hunting, it is necessarily confined to a limited class,

and there are many outside this fortunate circle who have a very imperfect notion of what actually constitutes a day with the hounds. Hundreds and thousands of people are totally ignorant as to how hunting is conducted, and find the greatest difficulty in sympathising with those of their fellow-creatures whose feeble

and unsatisfactory mental condition leads them to follow the chase.

They themselves quite fail to see wherein the pleasure of fox-hunting consists, and consequently the practice among many is to decry it.

Now it may be laid down as a pretty general rule that whenever a large number of human beings take kindly to a certain pastime, there is something more in that pastime than meets the eye of the uninitiated. It requires great calmness of temper, much toleration, and still more philosophy to refrain from abusing what you don't understand.

As a matter of fact, in an ordinary way, the less you understand the more you abuse. Men and women are endowed by nature with certain savage instincts, which centuries of continuous

progression have been unable to eradicate. They love to hunt something. In a large proportion of cases that love is increased when the hunted animal is smaller than themselves, and cannot inflict any bodily injury. The act of killing has also a pleasure for some, though happily not the majority. Ever there slumbers beneath the thin veneer imposed by advancing civilisation, the brute element which philanthropy tries so hard to quell, but which flames out periodically, only to hurl defiance at law and order.

As regards hunting, it is a legacy left to us by our barbaric ancestors—the men who waged war with flint implements against gigantic animals on whom they were more or less dependent for food. We of the nineteenth century have a great deal to thank them for, since we are indebted to them for a sport that is at once healthful, invigorating, and manly ; a sport, too, freed from the baleful element of perpetual money-making, which has gone far to degrade the present age. True, if we have any luck, we may every now and again buy or sell a good horse in the hunting-field, but we cannot well promote companies there, or get up syndicates, or dive into the miserable fluctuations of the Stock Exchange. For the time being we are cut off from these things. They fade away, thanks to a gallant hunter, the free air of heaven and the varied charms of nature. Very possibly your temper may be a little upset in the early morning. Trifles are given to impair its serenity, the trifles of course being to blame. Your boots, for instance, are tight, which naturally excuses any amount of ill-humour ; your breeches are not of that orthodox colour which stamps a man as belonging to ‘the right sort.’ Or you have a sad-faced daughter at home, wanting to get married on twopence-halfpenny a year, and who mentally dubs you a brute because you raise certain prudential objections to the match ; or, worse still, are the unenviable husband of a scolding wife, whose shrill tones send a cold thrill up your spine, though you make desperate efforts to appear wholly indifferent to her remarks. At any rate, you rise from bed irritable ; and being uncomfortably conscious of the fact, it does not tend to restore the equanimity on which you are given to pride yourself. Few men, however, can be expected to develop perfect amiability until after dinner. Nevertheless, in spite of all annoying causes, when a man mounts his smart hog-maned hack, and rides him some ten or twelve miles to covert, the source of his worries becomes dried up like a shallow stream in the summer-time. All temporary care disappears into the kindly abyss of oblivion, and Fortune once more begins to smile, with a shy but pleasant face. Before him lies a day of unmitigated

pleasure—at least in imagination ; the reality is subject to a few drawbacks, such as unpropitious weather, bad horses, scarce foxes, and broken bones.

Most people prefer riding rather than driving to the meet. It warms the circulation and sustains a faltering courage, likely to disappear altogether when subjected to cold east winds. There exists a certain division, however, who call themselves the sensible division, and whose comfort counts before everything else in the world. They are to be seen seated in a snug light brougham, with a hot-water tin at their feet—this is quite an indispensable article—their delicate persons enwrapped in huge fur-lined coats, and their fragile limbs carefully protected, first by a white linen apron over the snowy breeches that no stain must disfigure, then by a magnificent bear-skin rug. These gallant sportsmen of the modern time read their letters and newspapers, and indulge in a fragrant cigar before exposing their precious persons to the dangers and fatigues of the chase. Many of them ride like demons. Their small effeminacies disappear when in the field ; but they go on the principle—a very common one amongst the rising generation—of taking things easy as long as is possible.

The hardier, manlier, and (dare we say it?) the truer sportsman gets on his own nag at his own door, starts soon after breakfast—eleven being the usual time for the meet, except at the latter end of March, when an extra hour is generally conceded on account of the length of the days—and ambles leisurely along the sides of the roads. In most midland counties these are bordered by strips of turf, varying in breadth. They are cut up into regular brown and green lines, owing to the number of horses who pass along them, and whose frogs are thus not liable to be injured by the sharp flints that during the winter months of the year nearly always lie strewn about on the highways. A third section there is, mostly represented by young men of the moneyed class, who stay in bed till the last possible moment, make a careful toilet, supplemented by a still more deliberate breakfast, and then jump on to their hacks at least half an hour after everyone else has started. They now for the first time discover that they are desperately late, and, galloping without drawing rein, arrive at the rendezvous just as the hounds are moving off. The poor little distressed pony is left in charge of a groom to get his breath as best he may. These fortunate gentlemen have always two horses out a day, and not unfrequently they indulge in the luxury of a second hack to gallop home upon. At many of the crack centres this

is a method much in vogue. But the thorough sportsman of the old-fashioned type, who has been well carried by one horse all day, thinks that he, on his side, owes some slight debt of gratitude to his animal, and will not lightly part from the gallant steed who has served him so truly. However tired he may be himself and anxious to reach home, he jogs the good horse along in quiet, patient fashion. Sometimes he will put in for a few minutes at a country inn, and get for his mount a little chilled water.

It seems to the writer that there is in many instances a spurious love of sport springing up now-a-days which, in the honest sense of the word, is not love at all, but merely a hankering after excitement, emulation, danger, and display, without any reference whatever to the doings of huntsman and hounds. In reality the guilty parties put self first, sport afterwards. And this is a wrong spirit, which all true followers of the chase would do well to suppress. *Jumping* does not always mean *hunting*. It is a means to an end, not an advertisement, that in the words of little Jack Horner proclaims, 'See what a good boy am I!' The good boy may be a good boy in his own estimation, but he is often a very naughty one in that of the people whose run he has spoilt through his rash precipitancy.

Let us suppose the morning fine, with a clear sky overhead, looking as if a frost were not very far off. A gentle east wind blows, that sends the brown leaves fluttering softly to the ground. The air is keen and bracing, the hedges fast losing their autumnal decorations. Our friend the steady rider pats his horse's glossy neck, and utters a few soothing words as a pheasant starts up with a great flutter of wings, from a little coppice that almost borders the road. Flying off at right angles from the good steed, he causes that fresh and lively animal to whisk his tail, toss up his head, and execute a very creditable buck. Instead of jobbing him angrily in the mouth or digging in the spurs, as from temper or fright many sportsmen do under such circumstances, our imperturbable Nimrod again strokes his horse's firm crest, and does not regard as vice what is in truth but play. He cannot help admiring the quiet beauty of his surroundings—the turf-bound road, the shorn trees, whose delicate network of twigs is even more beautiful than when adorned by their summer foliage, the pale radiance of the wintry sun, and the wide expanse of green fields, broken here and there by the dark brown tints of ploughed land. He turns off the highway at a bridle road, entering it by a small hand-gate. Here he allows his eager steed to

break into a brisk canter, and lets him bound over ridge and furrow at his will. The grass rides light and elastic in spite of recent rain. It has lost the emerald hues of spring and now wears a thin dust-coloured veil, caused by the lingering eddish. Far as eye can reach it is intersected by dark fences looming purple in the distance. He continues his way, passing by many an old-fashioned homestead, whose red bricks have been toned down by age until they add a charmingly mellow dash of colour to the landscape—as do also the red midland cattle dotting the fields—and finally draws rein at a picturesque village which is the chosen fixture for the day. He is in good time, and consequently can admire at his leisure the lean well-bred hounds congregated in a small enclosure at the back of the chief publican's house. How well they look—ready to run for their lives! They follow every movement of the huntsman with luminous eyes, full of a touching mixture of pathos and intelligence. Their coats are like satin, so soft and smooth; but their feet are broad and powerful, their limbs strong, though not clumsy, and an expert can tell at a glance that they are bred for strength as well as pace. At present few connoisseurs have arrived, but the pack are encircled by a crowd of villagers. It is pleasant to see the interest which big burly labourers and women with children dragging at their cotton skirts take in the pack, and still more pleasant to see some small shy child put forth a little purple hand and pat the noble head of a friendly hound, or look down with a bright and innocent smile into its great liquid eyes. The honest folk love a meet. They see the 'quality' beautified by scarlet coats, and the smart ladies, and the horses and hounds, and in their artless pleasure show none of the envy and jealousy which assuredly most of us would do in their place. Although the meet is fixed for eleven, it is usual to allow stragglers the best part of thirty minutes' grace. Therefore somewhat about half-past the hour, the pack are trotted off to a famous covert a mile or two distant, known by the name of Foxholm Gorse. It lies on the slope of a sunny hill, and is planted with gorse, which foxes are known greatly to prefer to privet. Close by is a fine wood, and, living so near to the village, Master Reynard can pop out whenever he chooses and look for a nice tender young fowl. Anyhow, Foxholm is regarded as a sure find, and seldom indeed does it belie its reputation. But the ways of foxes are very similar to those of women—no man can understand them, not even he who studies their idiosyncrasies most.

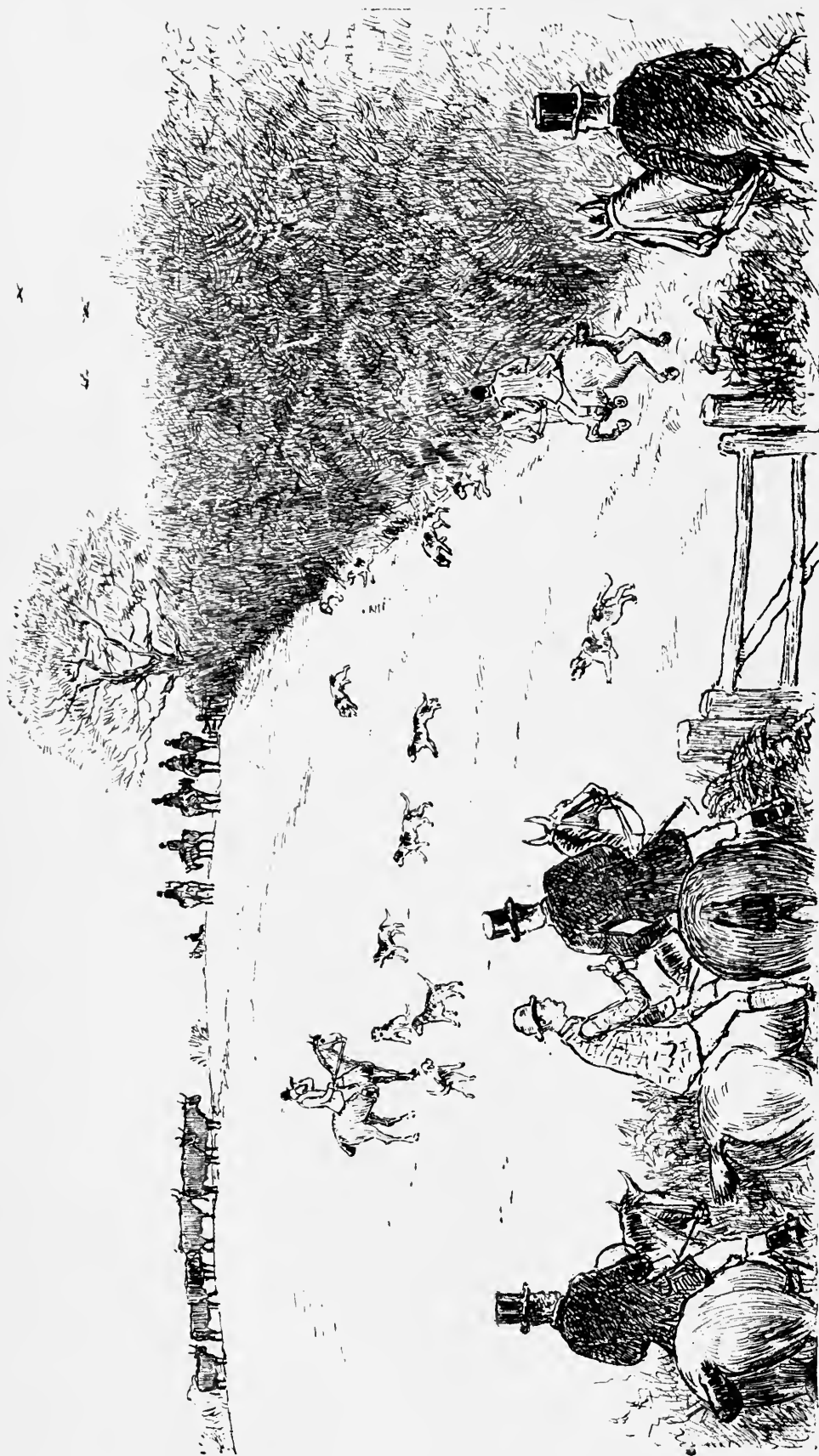
The hounds are put in without delay, and the whips stationed at their apportioned places, generally chosen with a view to preventing the fox from stealing away unperceived. The master, meantime, politely

or impolitely, according to his nature, seeks to keep the foot people within bounds and to persuade them not to surround the covert on every side. He modestly demands that just *one* should be left open, since he knows the uselessness of asking for more. The huntsman disappears within the gorse, where from time to time he is heard urging his hounds to effort in ringing tones and melodious dog-language, such as 'Huick there, huick,' or 'Yooi! yooi! over, my beauties,' &c.

As every huntsman has his special vocabulary, containing many choice, coined words, it is difficult to designate the different forms of expression used by the chieftain of each pack. The field take up their station, and the patter of the hounds' feet is distinctly audible as they scatter through the prickly gorse. They hunt patiently and perseveringly, and deserve great credit for the determined manner in which they seek to discover the required article. But no vulpine whiff, dear to canine nostrils, rewards their endeavours. A forest of waving sterns begins to show above the sharp-pointed gorse. First one head pops out, and then another, and looks uncertainly around. The young entry creep guiltily from the covert and are lashed into it again by the first whip. The huntsman in his hearty voice cheers them on. The heads reluctantly disappear, but others take their place, and at last a dreadful suspicion steals gradually over the field that Foxholm will prove blank. At first they refuse to believe so disastrous a fact, but when the huntsman emerges from the end ride it becomes confirmed. Then, standing

on the hillside, he blows his horn, blast after blast pealing out on the still air, until one by one the hounds come crawling meekly towards him with a wistful unhappy look, which seems to say, 'It was not our fault; indeed, indeed we tried our best to find him for you.' Now, between master, huntsman, and one or two leading members of the hunt, a consultation is held. By some evil chance the earths must surely be open. Foxholm blank! Why, such a thing has not been known for years. Shall they defy their ill-luck, chance the earths, and draw the wood now they are on the spot, or shall they prudently retire, so that the earths shall bear all the blame, and thus save their country from the stigma of being short of foxes? It is a knotty point, and seems likely to give rise to considerable discussion. There are many pros and





DRAWN BLANK. FERCY YEATHERD.

cons, all of which require consideration. The council is broken up in a most agreeable manner. The huntsman's sharp eye, never at rest, has been actively engaged in scanning the horizon, and suddenly it lights upon a small, red object trying to steal away unperceived from the very covert which they have only just finished drawing. Hurrah! Foxholm has sustained its reputation after all. Possibly the young hounds were a bit squeamish, and would not bear being pricked as did the old ones. They have done their part well, as seen by the blood-stained sterna which trail listlessly behind them. Despondency reigns supreme. All are equally depressed.

In a second the aspect of affairs becomes changed. The entire field is animated by a fresh spirit. Melancholy swiftly gives place to hope. Joy beams on every face, except on those of the notorious 'shirkers,' to whom a blank day is a day of delight. The huntsman leads his hounds to the precise spot where he had seen the fox slink off, and his keen vision receives a tribute to its accuracy by the manner in which a chorus of music immediately arises. Deep notes, stern notes, joyous notes, and confident notes, they mingle in a grand chorus of sound, dearer to the hearts of their enthusiastic followers than the finest Beethoven sonata. Helter-skelter, the field make for their point, which, being a gate, is a remarkably safe one. Here a mighty jam occurs. Horses kick, men swear, and a scene of confusion results. However, at last people get through, and can then take their choice whether to follow the hounds or gallop over a heavy ploughed field, and so reach the neighbourhood of another gate, which will land them safe and sound in a nice road, where they are not likely to meet with any horrid jumps. For, strange as it may appear to those ignorant of hunting, all those who follow the chase are by no means brave, except when they are seated in a comfortable armchair, before a comfortable fire, when of course imagination runs riot in a most astounding fashion. Whether they ride hard or the reverse, farmers are always capital fellows, and, as a rule, know every yard of the country. A body of jolly round-waisted men toil gallantly through the deep plough that leads to the road, and, having once gained this point of vantage, feel themselves more or less masters of the situation. They throw a rapid glance over the country, and announce, as if by magic, for which covert the fox is making. The whole army of roadsters then hurry off for the predicted spot. Like sheep they follow the leader, taking comparatively little notice of Pug's movements, and thinking nothing whatever of heading him.

That is too common an occurrence for the authorities to be able to censure the original offenders ; in fact, the offenders are so numerous that it is impossible to give to each his individual share of blame. Many of the finest runs are spoilt in this manner. Another source of constant trouble to master and huntsman is the persistent way in which certain members of the hunt override the hounds, dashing in upon them before they have even had a chance of settling to the line. A well-known and most popular M.F.H. was bewailing quite lately how constantly men who ought to know better ruined the sport by their undue eagerness for a start and desire of personal distinction.

Nothing shows the individual character of a person so much as fox-hunting. Mix with the throng, and, if possessing the smallest faculty of observation, human nature in a vast variety of phases will present itself to your notice. You will easily distinguish the man who rides hard because he is madly jealous of everyone else ; also the one who goes like a fiend, without sense or judgment, thanks to the brute passions aroused within him by the mere sight of a racing pack. Lastly, but by no means least, comes he who, like a gallant officer leading on his men to attack, heads the van because he is the fortunate possessor of that combination of qualities indispensable to those who aspire to cut out the work. He must have nerve, courage, and presence of mind, and, in addition to these, a kind heart and a light hand, both of which are in sympathy with his horse, and a quick eye that takes in every feature of the country at a glance. A good man to hounds, in the fullest sense of the word, ought to make a good general. They should both meet danger with a brave, determined front. Then there are the selfish people, and the noisy people, the bragsters and boasters, the impostors and 'funksticks'—in short, a whole legion. If one were to closely watch the movements of any single individual throughout an entire day, many are the revelations which would result. By evening-time you would be tolerably intimate with that individual, and have learnt as much of his private ways as if you had stayed a month in the same house with him.

Meanwhile the fox has stolen onwards, and the hounds, getting away close at his brush, are in full cry. Evidently there is a burning scent, since even the plough cannot do more than check them temporarily. It enables the horses, however, to trot up the fallows without stretching their girths. Thanks to the heavy land, Reynard gets what he rarely has the luck to obtain—a fair start. An opportune gate allows the

field to dash like an avalanche let loose into the green field beyond. What a pleasure it is to stride away on good sound turf after that choking clay! How merrily the horses extend themselves, and snatch at their bridles! This is much more to their minds than standing shaking and quivering at the covert side; for every animal worth his salt, or rather oats, loves a good run as much as does his rider, and even after he is spent and weary will continue to plod on in pursuit.

It is frequently stated that horses are wanting in capacity. Would human beings be very intelligent if they were shut up in a loose box year after year, and only visited at stated intervals? Arabs make pets and companions of their steeds, and seldom bring a charge of stupidity against them. As a matter of fact, an English hunter is a marvel of intelligence in the particular line in which his faculties have been cultivated. A horse accustomed to the chase knows the meaning of every whimper. At the first significant sound his heart begins to beat with great strong throbs. He turns with the hounds in covert of his own accord, often being guided by the ear alone, and, directly the fox steals a march, gallops off with willing spirit, and clears each fence cleverly, but in a different fashion, according to its requirements. Sometimes he will go with a rush; at others he pops over the hedges cunningly; and again makes some brilliant double at an awkward place, too big to be got over in his stride. Our field, in the interval, are spreading like buck-shot. The serried masses of horsemen and -women have broken their ranks; the bold forge their way to the front, the timid lose any place of vantage gained at starting, whilst the slow fumble placidly along in the rear, little caring whether they are first or last. The hard-riding division gallop furiously in advance, trying to keep on level terms with the pack. Forward they race, with mute and deadly purpose, their sterns extended, their backs bristling. Business they mean. With two-and-twenty couple of keen, well-bred hounds close at his brush, the fox's chance of life seems none of the best; but he is a crafty old veteran, full of subtlety, and evidently no stranger to the country.

So far, all has been fair



sailing ; but now a stiff stake-bound fence, with a wide ditch on the near side, looms ahead. The 'funksticks' immediately slacken rein, and by some curious coincidence the field widens out still more. Quite a small nucleus, comparatively, is left to perform the kindly office of boring holes for the discreet majority. It is nearly always the huntsman's office, on such occasions, to lead the way, since be with his hounds he must. Other people may decline to jump, and go cantering off in search of a timely gap, but the shortest road is, as a rule, the road for him. First at the fence he goes, and gets over cleverly, though his powerful grey hunter tips the binders with his fore-hoofs, after the fashion of many huntsmen's horses, who in course of time are apt to grow a bit slovenly in their performances, although they take good care not to come down. The thanks of the community would have been his had he but torn away the strong top binder running all along the fence ; but he is far too artful for this, and, with a grunt and a satisfied whisk of his bang tail, disappears from vision. And now people are forced to make up their minds as to whether they will jump or whether they won't. The bold don't hesitate for a second ; but the waverers are pitiful to behold. They remind one of Gretchen tearing off the daisy leaves to learn if her lover loves her or not. They will, they won't, they will, and unkind Fortune always ends up with—they won't! And they don't ; they simply ride away and lose their place in the run. They are fearfully unhappy over it. They go about in little bands dismally inquiring, 'Where are the hounds? Have you seen the hounds?' but the effort of making up their own minds as well as their horses' is altogether too great to be achieved. Besides, minds are apt to differ, as exemplified by the holy institution of matrimony. Your horse may wish to jump when you don't, and *vice versa*. Anyhow, the right combination is hard to hit off, and the waverers are real objects of compassion, for they intend great things and accomplish small. That insuperable difficulty which they experience of summoning up courage at the critical moment invariably proves fatal. They love sport, but then they don't like danger, and in fox-hunting the two are blended in really an alarming degree. You must be prepared to risk your neck over fences of every description—bullfinches, doubles, bottoms, brooks, walls, in short, all sorts of man-traps.

Patience, however, does wonders, and in many midland counties, but more especially the Shires, if you only wait long enough, the most formidable obstacle will end by being so much reduced in size that a clever pony can scramble over it. Unfortunately by

the time twigs and thorns have been crushed to this extent, the leaders are far ahead, and diminishing momentarily in the distance. Fence after fence the nimble horses fling gaily behind them with an ease frightfully deceptive to their successors. Occasionally, one makes a peck, rolls over, and disappears from the ranks, which adds to the satisfaction of those left upright, as long as it is ascertained that the prostrate hero has escaped injury. More and more select becomes the number of those with the hounds. Falls, bad luck, wrong turns, and a variety of minor mishaps combine to prevent the pack from being too closely pressed, as in the earlier part of the run. They race along with murderous zest, getting every moment on better terms with their prey. Here and there a ravenous hound drops a fierce attacking note, but mostly they run silent, stern, determined. Their beautiful white-and-tan bodies glance like a silver streak in the sunlight, which catches them at intervals as they glide over the green pastures. Half a field behind (he can get no nearer) comes the huntsman, accompanied by a select cluster of good men and true, with, perhaps, some fair Diana close at hand, and the first whip. Looking back, the meadows are 'dotted with scarlet and white.' The going is heavy, the pace great, and none but fast good-winded horses have been able to keep in front. Smaller and smaller grows the little band as the fun continues fast and furious. Certain misgivings begin to arise in the minds of a few of these valiant pioneers of the hunt. Each fence is rapidly becoming a source of apprehension. How long shall they be able to maintain their pride of place? Not many minutes. A timely check is ardently desired. Only let foxhounds travel at racing speed, and few are the hunters which can survive five-and-twenty minutes. Nothing tells so much as pace, and when you have pace in combination with a hilly country, then the very stoutest horse may fail you, unless a little opportune judgment is exercised. All young fox-hunters should study the art of easing their nags on occasion, else valour may very quickly degenerate into folly. One thing is certain; if there were no jumping, and consequently no danger, the pleasures of the chase would be seriously impaired, even if they did not disappear altogether. Hunting does not hold out the same attraction to all who indulge in the sport; but those whose hardy natures delight in difficulties to be overcome will echo the words of Whyte Melville, that 'the best of their fun they owe it to horse and hound.'

The fox before us is a good one, but being sorely pressed he plunges into the sheltering retreats of a large wood. Up to this point the run has lasted five-and-thirty minutes, and except for the brief hesitation at

starting over the plough there has been no check worth calling by the name. A stoppage is hailed with relief by the horses, for everywhere drooping heads, vaporous nostrils, streaming sides, and jerking tails tell a pitiful story. Most of them have reached the end of their tether. Men jump from the backs of their panting steeds, and turn their wet brows to the wind, after first examining limbs and thighs to see if any injuries have been inflicted. They mostly keep hold of the bridle, so as to be able to remount at a moment's notice ; but the luxurious sportsman, already mentioned as fond of his comforts, pays a yokel sixpence to walk his good hunter about whilst he indulges in a plentiful meal, consisting of *foie gras*, sandwiches, slices of plum pudding, cake, chocolate, gingerbread nuts, and similar delicacies. Whenever you find a man, no matter how humble his social position, who looks upon his mount as something more than a mere brute machine, you may take it for granted that he has the instincts of a true sportsman in him. Generous Saxon blood runs in his veins, and hunting is to him as the breath of life. Business may be neglected, wife and family left to their own devices, but an occasional ride with hounds he must and will have. It is the one thing he cares for, and often does he mourn the unkindness of fortune which prevents him from keeping a stable full of hunters. He is always on the look-out for a young horse, which, after having made, poverty forces him to sell. On the present occasion the master has noticed how magnificently a certain white-legged bay has carried throughout the run a personage belonging to the above order.

'That's a niceish horse of yours, Brown,' he observes casually, for an intending purchaser is seldom fulsome in his praise.

'Indeed he is, sir,' comes the enthusiastic reply. 'He's a real ripper. See him fly the brook?'

Then follows a long series of negotiations, which end in the bay finding a new master, who will probably 'do' him considerably better than the old.

'Now, Brown,' says his purchaser confidentially, 'I have bought the horse, and it can't make any difference to you one way or the other if you tell me the truth about him. I shall send your cheque by this evening's post. What I want to know is this : Is he a *bond-fide* animal?'

Brown scratches his honest head with an air of demure perplexity. Finally a smile steals over his somewhat stolid face.

‘Lord, sir! “Bone,” sir! Why, you’ve only to measure that horse’s forelegs. They’re nine inches round, and if that don’t satisfy you, I don’t know what will. As for the “fide” part of the business I don’t pretend to know anything about that sort of thing. Them fanciful Latin words is beyond me quite.’

The buyer hereupon gives up trying to elicit any further information from this decidedly baffling specimen of rural ignorance. No doubt the board school was after his time. The ‘bone’ is there. He feels he must content himself with it, and not be too curious as to the ‘fide.’

Whilst this transaction has been going on, stragglers keep pouring in as fast as tired horses will carry them. It may here be mentioned that a hunter for the midlands, and more particularly for those favoured regions designated as the Shires, must be a very superior animal. A well-known authority on such subjects states that two qualities are indispensable—namely, blood and bone. The more of the former the better, so long as it is not obtained at the expense of the latter. A naturally gallant disposition is also requisite. A horse deficient in courage has not the necessary nerve to fling himself over a Leicestershire oser or a Northamptonshire bottom.

Our hunted fox having found shelter in the thick undergrowth of the friendly wood, that gives him time to pause and consider. He creeps back, almost in the very teeth of the hounds—who in their eagerness flash over him—and sinks down with a beating heart into a small closed drain. But the clamouring voices of the enemy still ring in his ear, and with stiffening limbs and draggled brush he crawls cautiously inside the dark recesses of a hollow tree. The hounds sweep by without noticing him. He curls round and gives vent to a sigh of relief. His murderous foes have scented a fresh fox, whom they closely hunt up and down. They are mad to obtain blood, which, indeed, they have richly deserved. Reluctant as Pug No. 2 is to leave the wood, it becomes too hot to hold him. He slinks out, but makes an unfortunate choice, for from at least a score of human throats breaks forth the lusty cry of ‘Gane forrard! Gane forrard awa-ay!’ The hunts-





THE DEATH. PERCY YEATHERD.

man comes dashing down the centre ride, and for a few seconds stands at the edge of the wood, blowing his horn time after time, so as to get the hounds out of covert as quickly as possible. With astonishing speed they answer to his call, leaving a few stragglers to be brought on by the second whip. Useless to try and check them to-day, though the hunted fox was a stout old fellow, owning a white tag to his brush, and this one looks like a mangey cub. From the first he turns and twists, showing that his heart is not in the right place. Those who are foremost find themselves last, and *vice versa*; he leads them a curious dance over turnip fields, into allotments, and past villages. Finally, when his forces fail him, he places a huge blackthorn fence, guarded by a ditch on either side, between himself and his enemies. The hounds are like fiends. Nothing can stop them. They break into a fierce bloodthirsty chorus, bore their way through the fence, regardless of thorns, and race after the exhausted quarry. Partaking of the hounds' enthusiasm, and inspired by the same ferocious thirst for blood, the huntsman resolutely charges this formidable impediment which has forced even the boldest to look for a gate. Crash! He's down. No! Well done, he's up again, thanks to a pair of splendid shoulders, which just save a fall. He never even casts a backward glance, but gallops forward, cheering on the hounds, who are now within a few yards of the fox. Tally ho! Tally ho! The air resounds with joyful exclamations, and terrified Pug gives up the ghost. One savage snap from the foremost of his canine foes, and he rolls over and over on the green turf. His death is speedy, and comparatively painless in consequence. The worst feature about it is that it is premature. One man shoots a hundred pheasants, and it is reckoned a very smart and praiseworthy performance. One fox gives his life to amuse hundreds of sportsmen, to whom he probably owes that life in the beginning, and there is a hue and cry from the philanthropic, who can eat a tender little bird very comfortably at dinner, but who cannot reconcile their consciences to the cruelty of hunting. The huntsman leaps from his horse, and, dragging the dead body by main force from the clamouring hounds, proceeds to perform certain indispensable rites. This done, he holds the mutilated remains high aloft, whilst the pack swarm round it like mad things, each making frantic leaps to steal a toothsome morsel before his companions. The huntsman by his cheers incites them to greater greed, until at last, when their zest seems to have reached its culminating point, with a ringing cry he flings the carcass high into the air. In a moment hounds close in around it, and reduce to a few brown tatters what was once a living sentient creature. This is the least pleasant part to dwell

upon, and many rejoice in their hearts when a good fox escapes. For them the charm lies in the open air, the exhilaration of spirits, and the surmounting of difficulties.

It will be a bad day for England when fox-hunting ceases to exist. It trains our men—ay, and women too—to be prompt and self-reliant; accustoms them to danger, and fits them to fight bravely in the great battle of life. And if folk don't all think alike on the subject, why, perhaps it is a good thing. Diversity of taste is frequently a blessing in disguise. But opposition should always be met with deference and toleration. In these days those who gallop over other people's land



should regard it as a favour, not a right, and do everything to avoid entering into angry argument with the proprietors, which benefits neither party and only gives birth to a feeling of obstinate ill-will, hard to allay when once aroused.

The rich expect too much from the poor. How would *they* feel if their gates were unhinged, their young stock let loose, their fences broken down, and often themselves abused into the bargain? Farmers have had hard times to contend with. Ought not this to be remembered, now that the cry of wire is being raised in so many quarters? Why

should not those who can afford to hunt, pay for its being taken down? There is no more sporting nation in the world than Great Britain. Meet the people, the small landowners and farmers, in a conciliatory manner and with a fair and equable spirit; then most of the difficulties will disappear which, in this democratic age, begin to assail even the hound and the fox.

MARY E. KENNARD.



The Feast of Saturn

SHOULD we like to see sixty thousand people immensely happy? Could we resolve to do it without scolding or grudging? Could we rise to this, even if the president of the feast were to be a traditional villain of the children's story-books—one of those upon whom satire and tragedy, dabbling away in alternate streaks of black and white, happen to have put such a tarry smear as history will never get off? Even if the scene of the feast were a building raised with more blessings and ruined with more curses than any pile of stone in Europe? If so, let us have the pleasure of the spectacle. Let us go back just eighteen centuries. Let us suppose ourselves the subjects of that generous and popular prince (no irony) the Emperor Domitian. We are resident in the capital. It is the middle of December. Let us go to the Coliseum, some fifteen years old, shining white in the sun; let us forget (for to make this Roman holiday no one shall be butchered), let us forget for once to be inviting the Goths to glut their ire (at the cost of what little means of happiness the civilised races have painfully scraped together), and let us, under the guidance of the poets Statius and Martial, attend a revival of the Great Saturnalia.

We must first use our minds a little to the surrounding atmosphere, political, popular, and literary. We must dissociate all the objects round us from the thoughts which long habit has attached to them. We must teach ourselves the socialistic principles of the Roman populace, the true principles, as they held, of the Roman state, vindicated against the

rapacious oligarchy by the revolution which founded the Empire, vindicated again against a line of Cæsars, false to the democracy through which they rose, by the revolution which threw down the tyrant Nero. Through the work of Vespasian and his sons, particularly under the brilliant reign of the young Domitian, 'the Roman people' seemed to themselves to be entering again into their own. The magnificent buildings, most of them destined to popular use, with which the Flavian princes covered the city, were regarded by the citizens of the capital, through whose eyes we are proposing to look, not as bribes for their support, but simply as repayment to them of that 'property of the Roman people' which was theirs, but had been treacherously seized and misspent by the degenerate heirs of the deified Julius.

Most strongly, as was natural, did this feeling attach to the buildings and the festivals erected and celebrated within that great area of the city which Nero had occupied with his monstrous palace and park, within the site of the infamous 'Golden House.' In the midst of this area, as a crowning monument of popular pleasure substituted for selfish luxury, lay the great Flavian amphitheatre, known later, and by us, as the Coliseum.

It is scarcely possible for a modern to appreciate the sentiment with which this building was regarded at the time. That it should be praised as an all-surpassing 'wonder of the world' is intelligible. We can tolerate Martial when he writes :

Boast no more your builded mountains, Memphis ! Babylon, be dumb !
 Delos, hide your horn-built altar ; Ephesus, your conqueror's come.
 Mention not your Mausoleum, Caria, hanging in the sky.
 What is great ? The rest be silent. Says the Coliseum, ' I.'

But this is nothing. Martial distinctly speaks of the amphitheatre (the arena of the lions !) as a 'sacred' edifice. And he accompanies the word with explanations which, for the moment, we must try to make our own. It was the strong impression left on the Roman mind by the gigantic greed of Nero which made so keen the sense of renovation for the world when his grasp was unclosed and his prey recovered. Rome seemed at one and the same moment both to be given back to herself and also, by the closer union with the distant provinces, which was the effect of the improved Flavian administration, to become more universal, more worthy of her great enjoyments and splendid popular pomp. There is another piece of Martial which compresses into a few

lines the whole spirit of the Flavian age, and centres it upon its true centre, the amphitheatre. He supposes himself to stand on the site of the 'Golden' palace near the colossus of the Sun, and to be surveying the chief buildings of Domitian and his family.

Where midway in the street the scaffold climbs,
 Raising nigh heaven yon giant crowned with rays,
 One tyrant house devoured in other times
 The city round, and spread a baleful blaze.

One lake, one private water, yielded room
 For all that sacred Circle. Where you mark
 Yon swiftly-building Baths, there Nero's doom
 Made thousands homeless for a single park.

Last to the place of yon fair Colonnade
 He grasped, still craving.—Cæsar, thanks to thee,
 Rome is once more for Romans. Thou hast made
 The enslaver's pleasance free unto the free.

It was impossible that in any time which possessed a poet at all, or the capacity for poetic feeling, this union of the world should fail to kindle the imagination. If in the enumeration of Gibbon the long defile of races obedient to the Cæsars makes a stately and impressive show, what must have been the effect of actually seeing the vast unity, typified in the varied crowd of the streets, of the colonnades, and, above all, of the amphitheatre? Possibly this may be read by some who were present at the opening of the Great Exhibition in 1851. I was not there myself (for good reasons), but I have heard it said by men who were, and who are well entitled to speak on such a matter, that it was the most 'poetic' experience they had ever known or could easily conceive. I am not ashamed to say that I find our various 'Inventories' and 'Colinderies' in London more poetical than most poetry, and have always wondered a little that scarcely anything of the picturesque and imperial suggestiveness to be found there, and in modern London all over and at all times, has found its way into the later Victorian literature. It has not happened to suit the genius of those among us who have the faculty of expression. We have not for this purpose found our man. Rome did. Among the crowd in the Coliseum sat Martial, noting and translating, in a thousand sharp touches, the thoughts presented by the successive figures. It is true that the unity was much more real and the variety of surface much more striking than in the English 'empire' as represented in our capital. Through the same passage of the theatre would pass, in a few minutes, wild horsemen from

the Steppes, whose looks at least seemed to authenticate the grossest barbarisms recorded in Herodotus ; a group of majestic Arabians, excited for once into something like haste ; Germans who had but once seen the Rhine ; Africans who had possibly drunk the springs of the Nile—all more or less subjects of Rome, all entering at Cæsar's door, and sprinkled as they entered with his cloud of saffron perfume. Among them sometimes would be a mountaineer of Thrace, pale and pensive, who, seeing the press, takes from his wallet a little roll of parchment and holds it tight in his hand as he goes. Martial might well look at him and wonder. He is an ascetic, a brother of the Orphean mystery. He and his like have for centuries preached and practised strange precepts of self-suppression and renunciation. Their little river is at the very point to join and swell a mighty world-stream. What will it not sweep away ! Him and all did Martial note. Here is one scrap from his notebook.

Is there a race so rude,
So bare of art and nude,
That comes not, Cæsar, to thy glorious show ?
See yon Sarmatian ! Think !
He hath bled his horse for drink !
Yon Hæmian reads his Orpheus 'mid the snow.
This one, it may be, dips
In Nilus' fount his lips,
That hears the breakers of the encircling Main.
Arabia comes, not last,
Sabæa hastens fast,
Cilicia finds her saffron here again.
See the Sygambrian there,
Known by his knot of hair ;
The Æthiop, knotted too, but diversely.
A thousandfold their speech ;
Yet this attuneth each,
They hail a common father, Sire, in thee !

In a city and age presenting such rich material for the imagination in the walks of daily life, it is not strange that some should have regarded this material as exclusively proper for literature, and should have contrasted with it contemptuously what could be got by treating over and over again the well-worn topics borrowed from Greece. This was the choice : for to the faculty of invention scarcely any school of Roman poetry would pretend, certainly none of those which divided the city under Domitian. The difference of tendency rose to the height of a formal controversy, and is represented to us chiefly by the names of Martial and Statius. But into this controversy we must not now enter

very far, nor shall we attempt to estimate the merits of Statius' work on the traditional Greek lines, his epic upon the orthodox epic subject of Thebes. It has had some effect at various times, and may have again. At the present moment, though slightly alive in the schools, in the world it is practically dead, and it has been in this condition for a great part of its existence. A work whose whole motive is borrowed from times in which the writer had only a fictitious interest has generally something unhealthy in its constitution. There are plenty of English parallels ready to hand. Martial had no doubtful opinion on the subject. He held that, under the Flavian dynasty at all events, the proper subject for Romans was Rome. Despite of civilities, there was evidently friction between Martial and Statius; and the matter is of interest to us here because we are presently to have before us, from the gallery of Statius, perhaps the largest picture remaining of a Flavian festivity. Now this picture is evidently a challenge-piece. It is the chief of Statius' essays in the manner of the rival school, and probably owes some energy to the writer's eagerness in proving that he too, when he chose, could touch off the humours of the town. A glance, therefore, at these rivalries is a proper prelude to the subject. Martial offers satire in abundance; of which here is a specimen. It should be remembered, as a help to fixing the point, that the legends of Thebes and Argos, typified by the names of *Ædipus* and *Thyestes* respectively, make the whole of Statius' 'Thebais,' and that Statius was, beyond comparison, the chief writer of his school.

Thyestes and *Ædipus*, folly all that is!

Your Scyllas, Medeas, what good do they do?

What's Hylas, or Parthenopæus, or Attis?

Endymion sleeping, what says he to you?

The pinions of Icarus melted, the slighting

Of amorous rivers by swains they pursue,—

What help can you get from such pure waste of writing?

Here's verse to which Life may write under 'Tis true!

No Centaurs, no Gorgons, will here be presented,

No Harpies! 'Tis man, sir, man only that speaks.

If you don't like your portrait, and feel discontented

At seeing yourself, sir—why, go to the Greeks!

A sharp cast of the literary javelin this, at a time when the favourite poet of culture had 'fixed, O Muse, the barrier of his song at *Ædipus*.' It is clear that to turn aside these and other like missiles was one object of Statius when, imitating ostentatiously the manner of Martial, he wrote his very interesting piece on 'The Saturnalian Feast of Domitian.'

Of all the feasts by which, as it was held, the 'sovereign people' enjoyed their own, the most widely popular, the most typical, was the feast of the *Saturnalia*, held in mid-December, and lasting, in the time of Domitian, five days, of which one was principal. The connection of the feast with *Saturn*—the Italian god of the field, honoured when the seed was sown, that in due time he might give the increase symbolised by his sickle—had of course long before Flavian times become merely nominal. To suit the facts of the time the Sowing festival of Rome must have then been adapted to the agriculture of Egypt, Pontus, and where not? But the old winter-feast of the farmers fell, for Rome and Italy, at a time of year very well suited to public merry-making. It is otherwise with us. Our Christmas, closely connected in history with the *Saturnalia*, is made miserable, three years in four, by the weather, and for united public festivals on a large scale it is quite impossible. Our real *Saturnalia* have long ago migrated to Easter, and from Easter tend constantly to fix themselves practically in our brief summer and delightful autumn. But at Rome, as everyone knows, there is a really enjoyable Christmas for the general public, and there was a really enjoyable *Saturnalia*. As at our Christmas so at the *Saturnalia*, public manners required of everyone to make those in his power as easy and comfortable as might be during the five days. Particularly, as with ourselves, this remission was claimed on behalf of the poor and the oppressed. The State contributed to the general rejoicing a relaxation, which is to us odd enough and affords a lesson to the historic imagination. Of gambling the business-like and economical Roman felt a great horror; and at ordinary times both law and public sentiment repressed all games of chance with an extravagant and doubtless self-defeating severity. But both gave way to the imperative desire that everyone in his own fashion should be happy at the *Saturnalia*, and for five days the Roman might get drunk (which for the most part he did not want to do) and might shake the dice-box (which he wanted very badly indeed), without fear of interference from the *ædiles*. The sentiment, indeed, of the graver sort held out when law had given way. It is laughable, a fine instance of the local humours of Puritanism, to read that Augustus, half a century earlier than our Flavian period, and when the Roman Empire, the 'corrupt,' the 'dissolute,' &c. &c., was already established, incurred grave reproach because he, being the guardian of public morals, and bound to set a good example, went so far in *Saturnalian* licence as to join in a round game for points with his family! *Pro pudor inversique mores!*

To the Roman mind, therefore, a general permission to play in public for stakes seemed to be the seal and assurance of general liberty, and the Feast of Saturn is seldom mentioned without some allusion to this characteristic mark. And it is mentioned often. To Martial, in particular, as a caterer for amusement, the season was especially dear. There is some evidence that for a time he published regularly at the Saturnalia—by way of Christmas numbers as it were—special volumes of light verse suited to the holiday reader. He is always pleading the general absolution of the feast as an excuse both for offences against the moral taste, which, to say the truth, are frequent, and for supposed laxities of literary workmanship, which are pretended merely, as a show of humility; for a more exact artist never put stylus to wax. Very delicate and graceful are his excuses for rudeness, and very various; this, for example, where he ingeniously deduces from Saturn's sickle, once used for other purposes, a suggestion of fleeting life and an injunction to make the most of our time:—

When the greybeard with the scythe
Bids the dice to keep us blythe
Days five-fold :
Merry Mob-cap, Madam Rome,
Poets for a careless tome
Scarce you 'll scold.

Will you? No! your smile replies.
We may write without disguise.
Care's man's curse!
Freedom! Let the casual thought,
As it ought not, as it ought,
Just run verse.

I have myself taken here a certain Saturnalian liberty (as perhaps elsewhere) in the rendering of *pileata Roma*; for to call the *pileus*, properly the *cap of liberty*, a *mob-cap*, might well be stigmatised by the severe as nothing more than a bad pun. But I appeal to the poet. Martial if any one must listen to the excuse that 'Christmas comes but once a year.' We will quote yet two more of his preludes to the Saturnalia. Nowhere is better seen the spirit of the Hellenised imperial festival—common, nay gross, humanity, frank and unashamed, exposing itself in forms of singular severity, the heritage of Greece, and leniently rebuked by public conscience, the great gift of Rome. Here is a strange little piece. The tune (if I could catch it) is the tune of Milton. The thought is—well, not exactly Miltonic. (It will be seen that the date is after Domitian, but that does not matter.)

Hence, sullen Frown, stern rustic heritress
 Of Cato and Fabricius, come not nigh !
 Go, mask of Pride and mannered Moralness,
 All things that fall from us in darkness, fly !¹
 ' Hail, Feast of Saturn ! ' 'Tis a happy cry
 And honest (Nerva giving leave and cause).
Grave airs, I give you warning. It is I.
 Leave me ; and read your *Digest of the Laws*.

And here is the other mood, the Roman thought. Who 'Varro' was, whether he really existed, is no matter. He serves here for a mere type of the mind to which the holiday is an offensive interruption, and its harmless game of forfeits an unpardonable expense of working hours. Impertinent in the former piece, here Martial chooses to be respectful. The two moods please.

Varro, whom Sophocles had not disowned
 For tragedy, nor Horace for the lyre,
 Lay work aside awhile ; be Farce postponed,
 Trim Elegy her hair forget to tire.
 The verse I send, to a December taste,
 May pass, when smoke and folly seem the rule :
 Regarded, *Varro*, simply as a waste
 Of time, you cannot find them *worse than pool*.

Freedom then for those who would enjoy, compulsion almost, if need be, for those who would not, was the key-note of this formidable merry-making. But the general good-will signified itself in one way, which, as a *corruptio optimi*, is perhaps the very worst nuisance which ancient or modern man has wilfully invented—a mutual giving of presents. It is true that in Rome, as among ourselves, a certain convention was found, whereby the extreme of tiresomeness was mitigated. Tablets and napkins (both doubtless decorated with various 'designs') supplied in Flavian Rome the place of Christmas cards ; and the methods of lighting in use permitted as a third simple usage the handing about of presentation-tapers. It was thought scarcely fair to send tablet, napkin, or taper at any other time. But, as may be supposed, the ingenuity of human beings in self-annoyance was not to be so easily balked ; and all sorts of other objects, as well as these three, continued to circulate from house to house, to flow in with absurd abundance upon those who were worth courting, and to flow out (for the Romans managed the matter

¹ *Quidquid et in tenebris non sumus, ite foras*, an epigram, in its kind, not to be surpassed in Latin or otherwise.

after their fashion, plain and business-like), to flow out again to the class from which they came, as a cheap kind of liberality, everyone knowing the whole process, and all secretly willing to get as much or give as little as they could. Endless are the varieties of humour which this pernicious and long-lived custom (for it goes on merrily) furnished to the painter of Flavian society. I quote one or two, not for themselves, but because, in order to appreciate the great scene we are presently to see, we must figure to ourselves first the Saturnalia as specially the season of 'presents all round.' Here is one of many variations on the same fertile theme of the disappointed giver. Very comic when written down in black-and-white are the natural reflections of the hunter for 'presents' who has missed his game, and receives, instead of repayment with interest, only satirical assurances that the patron would have been delighted to pass on any little thing he had received, only that, his supply of 'gifts' having failed, his generosity is without means. It is the best of the joke, that the man does not in the least feel the absurdity of his anger :—

I sent you a trifle ; and, alack !
 Ne'er a trifle has it brought me back.
 Now the Feast is over. Times are bad,
 Say you. Ne'er a present have you had.
 Ne'er a client brought a pot of pickle,
 Coif, or kerchief, pennyweight of nickel ?
 Ne'er a grumbler, to assist his suit,
 Backed it with sardines or candied fruit,
 Case of shrivelled figs or olives rotten ?
 You're so sorry I should seem forgotten !
 Keep this cheap benevolence for those you
 Still can cheat—and not for ONE WHO KNOWS YOU.

Here is another tragedy of the same type, but less deeply moving. A gentleman, to whose finances this commerce of society is important, has failed in his speculation upon the accustomed bounty of a certain lady, and ungallantly promises himself to make things straight next first of March, the Ladies' Day of the Roman Year :—

Now ushers call the unwilling lad
 From nuts and marbles back to school.
 The gambler, if his luck be bad,
 Chased from the public, drunk and sad,
 Tempts the police again, poor fool !
 The Five Days gone ! Yet, Galla, you
 Have sent me nothing. Less I had
 Foreseen. But *nothing*, Galla ! Phew !

Ah, well ! December 's for the men,
And March for women. Wait till then.
How shall you like it, Galla, when
You get your *nothing* back again ?

But though the presents might be tiresome enough, and though Martial, as his business is, may gaily turn out this and that seam on the inner side of the popular motley, the Saturnalia represented feelings real, deep, and sacred. Then, as at Christmas now with us, was the assembly of the family for the prearranged evening of festivity, doubtless difficult sometimes to make 'go,' but not to be sneered out of the grateful memory of any people who know the meaning of 'family' and of 'home.' What store the Romans set by it is well seen in a device of their great historian, or rather tragedian, Tacitus, apt for our present purpose as if it was made for us. The popular brilliance of the Flavian house is constantly shown to us against a background of Neronian horror. It was seen so by contemporaries. And the blackest of the Neronian horrors is the horror of murder—that chain of *parricides* which began when the Emperor's rival, cousin, and heir, the orphan son of Claudius, was taken off with poison. And how does Tacitus think best to make us feel the unkind murder of the boy Britannicus ? By dating the inception of it from the family feast of the Saturnalia.

At the supper of the imperial family, Nero, Britannicus, and other young friends were met. The dice, the dice of the Saturnalia, having raised Nero to a temporary throne as 'king of the forfeits,' he laid upon each guest his playful duty to perform, observing nevertheless the respect due to each. But when he came to Britannicus he commanded the lad to sing, thinking that he could not but come off ill, having little experience in gaiety, and in drinking still less. However, the boy put him out of countenance, for he came forward, nothing daunted, and sang a sad song enough, showing how he who sang was put out of his own, and oppressed, and had no help. Whereat the company were much moved (and ashamed, we will hope), as was easily seen, for the wine made them free of their looks and words. But the poor wretch paid dearly for showing his spirit ; for the tyrant, alarmed and angry, resolved to be rid of him without delay. And so it was. Such had been the family feast of the Emperor Nero, and such a story was Tacitus telling about the time of the particular festival to which we now proceed.

We have now in our minds the chief facts and thoughts which Statius supposes us to bring to the reading of his 'Great Saturnalia.'

We are ready, putting ourselves in the place of the average Roman at the time, to see in the Emperor not a bloody tyrant and persecutor but the liberator of the people, in the Coliseum not a torture-chamber for martyrs but the revered monument of the great liberator, in the Saturnalia not a soft name for an orgy of beasts, but a specially humane ordinance of public religion, commanding general gladness, wide benevolence, and summing up, like its successor in modern times, the charities of the family life. We can for the moment persuade ourselves to see how appropriate it was that on the great day of the Five the 'common father' of nations should gather the people to a common table in the great amphitheatre and scatter to them his indiscriminate gifts. We can feel why on such an occasion the poet of artificial Hellenism should have quitted his Parnassus. It is worth while to make the effort of imagination, for whatever may be the merits of the verse, very seldom upon earth has been witnessed a scene more splendid than Statius has to describe, seldom one more interesting to a sympathetic mind, not often one more pleasant to an understanding heart.

Apollo, Pallas, let me play ;
 Ye strict and stern, not yours the day.
 Grave Muses, with the opening year
 Return, but leave us. Now and here
 Assist me, Saturn, fetter-free,
 And gay December, deep in wine.
 Help, wanton Wit and grinning Glee,
 To picture how our prince benign
 Kept, morn to evening, long and late
 His public Saturnalian state.

The hospitality offered by this giant monarch to his colossal court was nothing less than to feed and amuse, from dawn until far beyond the end of the winter's day, 'the people of Rome,' that is to say a representative gathering selected from all ranks, which must have numbered some fifty or sixty thousand at the very least. The scene of the entertainment was the amphitheatre, to which the company were doubtless admitted as usual by distributed tickets. How the building was arranged for the particular occasion cannot be ascertained in detail. It is a problem of the antiquary how at ordinary times the awnings were fixed and moved over its vast internal oval of (roughly) 500 feet by 400 feet. But we shall see that for this particular festival the lighting of the building after dark in the manner described would require temporary internal structures on an extensive scale, useful also for other purposes; nor can the expense of such structures, great as it must have been,

have told for much in such a 'Christmas bill' as must have been presented to Domitian when the feast was over. The assembling and placing of the multitude began in early morning, and must itself have occupied some hours. Meanwhile they were kept in good humour by the scattering of confectionery, itself in its variety a symbol of the power which commanded the whole resources of the world from far east of the Bosphorus to far west of Gibraltar.

The day broke showery—such a pour
Of sweetmeats ne'er was seen before.
Nuts! All the nuts that Pontus knows,
All kinds that Idumæa grows;
Fruits of Damascus, grafts of price,
Force-ripened sweetness of the cane
From Ebusus, the choice, the nice
Of East and West, a liberal rain;
And all that 's baked beneath the sun
Of comfit, biscuit, cake, or bun.

Dates fell as thick, as if unseen
Some palm-tree overhead had been.
Not Pleiads shed so loose a shower,
Nor Hyads in their wildest hour,
As then from skies unclouded broke
Upon the vast theatric throng.
The storms of Jove, for Roman folk,
May waste the earth, yet do no wrong,
While such peculiar bounties flow
Provided by our Jove below.

Amid these agreeable preliminaries, with much crunching and munching, doubtless also much pushing, squeezing, and 'Where are you a-shoving to?' the circle was filled, the arena remaining empty for a future use. The dinner which followed, Statius expressly tells us, was the same for all; we are, no doubt, to understand that the various ranks were distinguished as usual by their places, and the Emperor's own immediate circle seated on his private platform. The uniformity of the repast is a guarantee that it was good, amazingly good for the quantity. Many illustrious senators must have been cross enough at having to come there at all (for they hated his Majesty), but I would not waste on them one grain of sympathy. The Emperor could not have served them with anything but decent wine, and what he served to them he served to all—not a bad example of taste in a society which is constantly represented as the type of vulgarity.

The seats are full, in every rank,
 From floor to crown, no single blank ;
 When, lo ! the attendants mount the tiers,
 And twice as great the crowd appears.
 Like Ganymedes for gest and grace,
 The cates, the napkins white and fine,
 The viands choice for all they place,
 And freely pour the mellowed wine.
 Like the round world, this princely treat
 Like that is vast, like that complete.

The 'Ganymedes' we are to figure dressed in respectable white, the Roman equivalent for the swallow-tail and shirt front ; the company in all the garments worn within the four corners of the earth, even the aristocracy togeless, for the toga was a bore and gladly cast aside, so that the discarding of it is frequently mentioned as an assurance of Saturnalian freedom. Where was Martial ? There, for certain ; perhaps in the Emperor's party, enjoying himself greatly, and making endless mental notes of figures, costumes, remarks—sighing, perhaps, a little for native Spain and some quiet rustic pig-sticking, and an evening by the fire telling Celtic stories under the mistletoe. Well, he would have it all soon. Where was Statius ? In the imperial party, for certain, from his complacent manner of assuring the public at large that they were equally well off ; not enjoying himself, I suspect, as much as Martial, though he does seem on this day to have been shaken into an unusual state of genuine excitement. That simile of the world is very good ; at least, it stirs me strongly. And his next is better.

Gigantic Trade of modern time,
 Feigned plenty of the golden prime,
 All, all are in conception less
 Than this concentrated bounteousness.
 Rome at one feast ! Sex, ages, ranks
 Unclassed ; none more, none less than free ;
 And last, to beggar prayers and thanks,
 The giver's sacred majesty ;
 That so the least of us may say,
 ' I with the Prince have dined to-day.'

 Not sated yet with new delight,
 Taste passes sudden into sight—

We have finished our victuals and wine, we in the outer rows ; a good deal better (as the poet elegantly but not altogether gracefully reminds us) than most of us get every day. We have gone back to our dates, figs, ratafias, 'cakes of Ameria squashy in the middle,' &c., of

which in the hours of waiting we collected a little heap, being good at catching. We ruminare peacefully upon these joys; till suddenly even 'cakes of Ameria' no longer keep our attention—

For, lo! the arena fills. A horde,
By nature soft, and for the sword
Not formed or fashioned, here forget
To fear like women, and display
Their Amazon battalions, set
In order for a manly fray.
Hippolyta could scarce have sent
Such lasses to a tournament.

Now we are Romans; and it is not one century yet from the birth of Christ. We should not be horrified if these trained girls fell on and did real execution with their swords and javelins. But they are not going to do anything very bloody. From the account of the poet it is clear that this army of women, and the army of dwarfs (amazing proof of organisation, when we come to think of it) which enters presently, are sham armies, and that the whole contest is no more than a contest *pour rire*—a laughable Saturnalian parody of those only too real encounters which this gorgeous circle has seen. It is an elaborate mockery of gladiators' performance. They act all the incidents of battle, and the joke of the thing lies in the incongruity of these soft limbs and stunted forms with the horrors and feats which they recall to the imagination. Not a refined pleasure, but for this time not brutal; and such were the spectacles of Rome more often than is sometimes supposed.

These challenge next a tiny sort,
Whom nature, knotting them too short,
Finished as dwarfs. Heroic rage
Urges the minions to engage.
Great is the show of little strokes,
Small deaths, and miniature despairs.
Mars laughs; his grisly partner jokes;
While wondering at such pygmy airs
The cranes above them (see the sequel)
Allow the pygmy for their equal.

Of these 'wondering cranes,' who seem to have prompted Statius with a learned comparison between the dwarfs and the crane-fighting Pygmies of Homer, the poet in the sequel gives an explanation not too clear for our modern understandings, and assuredly not made much clearer by the modern expositors. We shall come to it in a moment,

and must hasten on : for the dinner, the dwarfs, and the Amazons have occupied some time, and already the winter light is fading.

Now, for the day was closing in,
 'Twas time the scramble should begin.
 'The scramble !' At the exciting call
 Enter the famous beauties, all
 Whose charms of person or of art
 Possess the stage ; the rounded forms
 Of Lydia here, and there apart
 Lithe limbs of Spain with timbrels ; swarms
 Of Syrians, coming still and coming,
 Exclaiming, clapping, dancing, drumming.

The 'scramble' was exactly what the name implies to our ears—a scattering of gifts among a crowd, partly for the benefit of the receiver, partly for the amusement of the lookers-on. But what a scene ! What a moment, when the hollow ellipse of brilliant and varied colours was filled by a centre of greater brilliance, variety, and beauty ! The beauty of the world, literally chosen, gathered, and collected ! For mere splendour, for popular splendour (the most admirable sort and the most useful), the world has seen nothing like it before or since.

Complete at length the motley rout,
 Supers and match-girls not left out.
 All on a sudden from the sky
 Birds, flocks of birds unnumbered, fly !
 The fowls of every climate known,
 From sacred Nile to freezing Phasis,
 Blown southward from the frigid zone,
 Blown northward from the warm oasis,
 (All kinds but one—no birds of prey,
 Lest they should take the rest away).

These birds, whatever they may have been to the ladies, are a very considerable surprise to us, and a puzzle too. The commentators are nowhere, so to speak. They tell us that these birds were only tickets, scattered among the crowd, each representing a specimen of game or poultry, and entitling the possessor, on application at some place indicated, to the actual bird. Such a method was certainly practised in these amphitheatrical scrambles—the bird, as Martial puts it, preferring the hazard of the ticket to the certainty of being torn in pieces. But it is simply impossible that what Statius here describes was a mere scattering of tickets, convertible into chickens ! To say nothing of the absurd irrelevance of his imagery, the question is clinched and settled,

so far, by the foregoing reference to the *cranes*. The cranes, says the poet in plain terms, plainer even than my version shows, were some of the *birds* which descended in the scramble, and these 'cranes' were astonished to see the exploits of the pygmy paladins in the arena below. And yet these cranes were only *tickets*? Not a bit of it. The reader, knowing his or her Statius, has no doubt a solution of the puzzle. But 'birds' of some sort these birds must have been, and of course not real, or many a lady would have been slain on the spot. Privately I guess them to have been some sort of toy-birds made of rag, tow, and what not, suspended above, lowered at the proper time near to the arena, and then allowed to flutter down. Nothing would make a better scramble or a more amusing. To each would be attached the emperor's gift, that is either the 'ticket' for it or, much more likely, the gift itself. Objects highly attractive to the assembled fair, and quite costly enough for a distribution by hundreds and thousands, could be easily attached to a toy-bird.

Now all content compare their gains ;
 No pocket empty, none complains.
 Then all at once the myriad throats
 Join in one shout their countless notes.
 'Hail to the Prince,' their sound proclaims,
 'And Feast of Saturn, princely-free !
 'Hail to his name, to all his names,
 Our Prince—our Master !' 'Nay,' said he,
 And put the flattering phrase away,
 'What else ye will ; but *master*—nay !'

It is hard that, in spite of this, Domitian—who has fared worse for less reason than almost any character in history, and who is frequently abused from pulpits and otherwise by people who hardly care to know whether he was or was not the same as Diocletian—that Domitian should be scolded for the servility of address which he permitted. He was a hard master to the Roman nobility, who perhaps wanted one ; but he was a real king and not a fool. After this last interchange of compliments between him and his company, he had doubtless had quite enough of the proceedings and withdrew, we may presume, by his private passage to a well-earned evening without any round game, the *grandees* generally following suit. Nor is it likely that the fastidious Statius, though the fun was but just beginning, saw very much more of it. The arena was lighted up (how, it is hard to learn from the raptures of the bard), and a sort of Bartholomew Fair, with shows, stages, and drinking-bars free, seems to have gone on there *ad libitum*. Hours afterwards Statius

declares himself too sleepy with the Emperor's wine to tell any more. He had more probably worked himself out over a first draft of his poem ; which if the reader does not allow to have some real fire and flavour in it, let the fault be mine and not the Roman's ; for in the original I find a great glow of pleasure and glory. And thankful to remember, in this air of mud and smoke, that ever a multitude was so bright, so happy, so splendid, as were these sixty thousand Romans in the year Ninety-blank *Anno Domini*, I would conduct the poet, in Roman fashion, most respectfully to his bed :—

Scarce night begins to mount the sphere,
 When—see a sun of flames appear !
 Brighter than Ariadne's crown,
 Through gathering shades it settles down
 In mid arena. Heaven is thick
 With fires, and darkness banished quite.
 Dull sleep and sloth fled, strangely quick,
 To other cities at the sight,
 Perceiving that this sun portended
 A feast not easy to be ended.

But how describe the enormous jest
 Of shows and farces and the rest ?
 The suppers heaped, the streams of drink—
 I cannot sing, I cannot think.
 Spare, generous Prince, and let me sleep ;
 The memory of this wondrous day—
 Not while thy Rome and river keep
 Their places shall it pass away ;
 Not till, new given to man by thee,
 Yon Capitol shall cease to be !

A. W. VERRALL.

Beauty and Evolution

ALMOST all the actions of animals are unconsciously directed either towards their own conservation, or towards the propagation of their kind; and these also are the unconscious ends of the various vital activities of plants. The beautiful form which foliage leaves exhibit, and the more or less symmetrical arrangement of the branches which sustain them, may very often be traced to their need of obtaining, under the varied conditions to which different species are subjected, as much sunlight and air as they can, that they may be able the better to breathe and grow. The various tints of many flowers, their simple or complex shapes, their perfume and their nectar, frequently serve to attract different insects, the visits of which are useful or indispensable, as the case may be, for enabling them to 'set their seed.' No one pretends that these phenomena of plant-life are accompanied by any distinct feelings. No one can affirm that even the wonderful actions of Venus's fly-trap (*Dionæa*) are attended or preceded by 'feelings;' for nothing exists in it, or in any other plant, like that peculiar living substance—nerve—the presence of which, so far as we know, is indispensably necessary in order that any creature should 'feel.' Animals, however, evidently possess sensations and also appetites, and have instinctive preferences which they seek to satisfy. The plumage of the humming-bird and the song of the nightingale are said to be due to the competition of countless generations of suitors rivalling each other in brilliance of tint or melody of tone. That such is the case we ourselves do not believe, although we freely grant that pleasurable feelings are occasioned in one sex by the display of such qualities and powers in the other. But however great may be the sexual charm of note or feather, no one pretends that beasts or birds are conscious of such beauties, as beauties. They are attracted and influenced; but never advert to the attractiveness or influential character of the characteristics which attract them.

The feelings, instincts, and appetites of animals generally, lead to acts which are 'good' for them as individuals, or 'good' for their race, and some of the characters just referred to would generally be allowed to be 'beautiful.' But animals perform such acts no more on account of any perception they have of their 'goodness,' than of their 'beauty,' but simply through a blind impulse which would be an end in itself, if such creatures had any conscious end in view at all—if they could deliberately determine to perform any act for any consciously foreseen reason.

The instincts of animals are not absolutely invariable, but, within narrow limits, may be modified by circumstances. Such modifications may be seen in the nest-building of captive birds and in the actions of wood-peckers which have migrated to regions where there is no wood to peck.

Acquired instincts and preferences may also be sometimes inherited. This is manifest from the different actions of the different breeds of domestic dogs. They are various and have been variously acquired; but they are nevertheless inherited.

Man, whatever may have been the precise mode of his origin, is as much an animal as any other, and has a body possessing powers and tendencies essentially similar to those of his irrational fellow-creatures and showing structural characters which are such as would accompany his bodily evolution from them. We cannot doubt but that our lower feelings and preferences may, like those of other animals, slightly vary, and that such slight variations may be inherited. However much we may wish to 'let the ape and tiger die,' we must ever continue to share in the conditions necessary for animal life. We must feel the remote effects of an organisation possessing instinctive impulses like those of brutes, and experience various tendencies and solicitations founded upon those which are common to the animals which most nearly resemble us in structure.

Yet everyone must concede that, somehow or other, we have got the idea of 'beauty;' whatever that idea may really signify. Not a few facts seem to imply that it can really mean very little. The great amount of difference which exists between men as to matters of taste is proverbial, and is abundantly illustrated by our constantly changing fashions, not only in points of dress but even in matters of art. But if the differences of sentiment which exist, and have existed, between ourselves and other civilised communities seem difficult to account for, how much greater the difficulty seems of accounting for the much

more marked differences of taste which have existed, or exist, between men of widely different cultures, races, and epochs, if there is a reality in beauty beyond our conventional likings!

What is the rational lesson to be learnt from such divergences? Are we deluded in thinking there is a distinct reality in 'beauty'? May it not be said that all loveliness is but in the fancy of him who admireth, and that all positive, absolute, objective beauty is but a dream? The doctrine of evolution may appear to answer this question decisively and to give an unquestionable triumph to those who deny that beauty has, or can have, any objective value. It may seem to follow, as a matter of course, that human feelings can but minister in us (as they do in the lower animals) to individual or tribal preferences of instinct, appetite, or desire.

But fully affirming all that has been affirmed in the beginning of this article, as to our kinship with the brutes and the essential similarity of our feelings with theirs, it by no means follows therefrom that we cannot have sure evidence that beauty is more than a feeling, if we have another side to our being—if, in addition to our animal nature, we have also another nature fundamentally different in kind. That we have such another nature we claim to have elsewhere¹ shown. We claim to have shown that, though each of us is, as our consciousness tells us, really but one being, yet our one being has, so to speak, two very different sides. Each side of our nature has its specially appropriate faculties, and we have thus a lower and a higher set of psychical powers, a due appreciation of the distinction between which is one of the most indispensable requisites of a sane philosophy. The higher side of our nature is more than animal, and can never have been evolved. It is able to form abstract ideas. It is able to apprehend true things *as* 'true,' good things *as* 'good,' and we believe, also, beautiful things *as* 'beautiful.' Thus it is that, as before said, 'somehow or other we have got the idea of "beauty."' If the validity of this apparent intuition of 'beauty' can be justified, we shall thereby gain strong additional ground for affirming that a fundamental difference of kind exists between man and all other animals. In order to appreciate what may be the real value of our idea, 'beauty,' let us first briefly consider the two other cognate ideas above adverted to—namely, 'goodness' and 'truth.' Through them we may be able to throw sufficient light, for our present purpose, upon the problem whether beauty can be known to us as

¹ See the *Nineteenth Century*, August 1884, 'A Limit to Evolution.'

existing objectively—that is, independently of the mere tastes which individuals or communities of men may happen to possess.

That ‘truth’ at least exists as a real quality of statements and beliefs, must be admitted by all who have not some eccentric theory to maintain. Were this not the case, it is plain that science could make no progress. ‘Truth’ is the agreement of ‘thought’ with ‘things’—of the world of ‘beliefs’ with the world of ‘external existences.’ It is subjective when regarded as the quality of his own thought by him who thinks it. It is objective when regarded as the quality of the thought of anyone else. Every Theist must also admit that there is another conformity between thought and things, namely, their conformity with the thought which is Divine.

There is one characteristic of ‘truth’ which it will be worth our while to note. It essentially expresses the idea of a relation between two distinct things. Nothing is or can be ‘true’ in itself, but only in relation with something else to which it conforms. ‘Truth’ is this one kind of ‘conformity.’ The essence of all truth consists in ‘likeness.’ But what is ‘conformity’ or ‘likeness’? We can only reply that such words express an ultimate idea which can neither be defined nor explained. The terms ‘likeness’ and ‘unlikeness’ express so simple a perception that reasoning in exposition would be thrown away on anyone who could not understand them. It is clear that everything cannot be explained. However long we may go on reasoning, we must at last come to what, as simple and ultimate, carries its own evidence with it, being ‘self-evident.’ Unless we can attain to self-evident truths, nothing can ever be proved, and all science becomes impossible. On such ideas all reasoning reposes, and the idea of ‘likeness,’ which is the essence of ‘truth,’ is one of such.

Let us next consider the ‘goodness’ of things we call ‘good.’ To ‘act well is to ‘follow the right order.’ If it be asked, ‘Why should we do so?’ the only answer is that we are morally bound so to do. If any ethical proposition is not self-evident, it can only be proved by self-evident propositions which themselves are ethical. It thus becomes clear that the idea of ‘goodness’ is, like that of ‘likeness’ (which, as we have seen, constitutes the essence of ‘truth’), something ultimate, absolute, and incapable of analysis.

Is it possible for us to form any conception of objective goodness altogether apart from human actions or human thoughts—except so far

as they may recognise it? Some religious persons will probably say that the 'goodness' of anything depends upon the will of God—that that is right which He commands because He commands it. But in our perceptions of duty and moral obligation, we recognise that it addresses conscience with an essentially absolute and unconditional imperative-ness. We must acquiesce in the declaration of Malebranche that a cruel and unjust deity can be no true god, but only a frightful spectre. But if 'goodness' is not and cannot be dependent on the will even of God, if the commands of conscience are absolute and supreme, if it is impossible even to conceive of an evasion of its universal and unconditional authority, then the ethical principle must be rooted, as it were, within the inmost heart, in the very foundation, so to speak, of the universe which it pervades. That it pervades it is evident, since no unimaginable remoteness of space or time could ever make a bad action a good one. The principles of the moral law must be at least as extensive and enduring as are those starry heavens which shared with it the profound reverence of Kant.

The absolute, necessary, and universal character of the moral law is expressed by theologians in a dictum which declares that morality pertains not to God's 'Will,' but to His 'Essence.' The phrase may seem obscure, or even unmeaning, to some persons to whom it may be new; but we must confess that we have met with no other expression which so well conveys to us the profoundest possible conception of the fundamental and supreme character of the ethical principle.

The goodness of actions is evidently twofold. They may be 'good' in themselves as actions, or 'good' as things done with a good intention by those who perform them. Thus 'goodness,' like 'truth,' must be both subjective and objective. It is subjective when regarded as a quality of the mind of anyone entertaining a good volition. It is objective, regarded as that quality of an object or action whereby it conforms, in its degree, to the eternal law of right which manifests itself to our intellect as inherent in the universe, because it is inherent in us.

'Goodness,' like 'truth,' especially implies a relation. As nothing can be true save by its conformity or likeness to something else, so nothing within our powers of observation or imagination can be 'good,' save by its harmony with an eternal law, by concordance with which it follows the right order.

Thus everything which exists, in so far as it exists and so follows

the law of its being, must be more or less 'good.' If by defect it deviates from a higher good, it thereby becomes a more or less good thing of an inferior order; as a marble statue broken into fragments ceases to be 'good' as a statue, and becomes so many pieces of marble; 'good' in their degree and apt for various inferior ends. It is impossible to deny that even the lowest 'goods' are 'good' in their various degrees.

Armed with these reflections about 'truth' and 'goodness,' let us next consider the objectivity of 'beauty.' As before said, we actually possess the ideas of 'beauty' and the 'beautiful,' whatever may have been the mode by which we came by them. Unlike the lower animals, we are not only attracted by what is charming, but we can recognise both the fact of being charmed and the qualities which charm us. But nothing can be considered beautiful which conveys to us any notion of discord, deficiency, or redundance amongst its parts or attributes. It cannot be beautiful if it impresses us with any sense of imperfection, through its incomplete development as a whole or in any of its constituent portions, or through over-development, or through want of harmonious arrangement or adjustment of the same. It must, then, be admitted that whatever strikes us as pre-eminently beautiful is regarded by us, consciously or unconsciously, as approaching perfection of its kind.

Beauty as apprehended by the ear is eminently a harmony, and is the more beautiful according as that harmony approaches perfection. The beauty of even single notes of sweetness is, we now know, due to *timbre*, which is a special and, as it were, minute kind of harmony. The same thing may be said of the charm of certain human voices, though they may gain an additional charm from the perfection with which they exhibit some shade of character, or give expression to some dominant emotion. The other senses of taste and smell may give us impressions, which may be said to possess a certain inferior kind of beauty; but it is only when objects convey to us the notion of a more or less harmonious and perfect blending of qualities, that they ordinarily arouse in us a perception of the kind.

But apart from sensuous perceptions, the intellect very keenly apprehends beauty of character and action—moral beauty. As to such beauty it will not be disputed that those acts and characters in which it is most apparent are deemed by us to most nearly approximate to our notions of perfection. The same may be said of the intellectual beauty

of a discourse, a poem, or a problem. Whichever of such things may strike us as being the most beautiful, is that which most nearly agrees with our idea and ideal of perfection according to its kind. We have used the terms 'idea' and 'ideal' advisedly, for objects we admire but which very seldom fully satisfy us. We can almost always conceive of an ideal beauty beyond them. Our perceptions of beauty, though aroused by the impressions of external objects, are not limited by them, but, like the rest of our higher apprehensions, are the result of our intellectual faculty, which attains, through sensitivity, that which is altogether beyond sensitivity—like the ideas of being, possibility, necessity, and cause.

From the foregoing brief review of the objects which excite our admiration, it results that our intellectual apprehension of beauty may be explained as a perception of ideal perfection more or less realised. But this explanation may be deemed, by some persons, not altogether satisfactory and final, because just as it may be asked, 'What is the good of following the right order?' so also it may be asked, 'What is the beauty of perfection?' But to this question there is, we are confident, no reply beyond the assertion, 'Perfection is beautiful.' If so, then it must be admitted that the idea of 'beauty,' like the ideas 'goodness' and 'truth,' is an ultimate idea—one capable of apprehension but not of analysis.

'Beauty,' like 'goodness' and 'truth,' must also be both subjective and objective. It is subjective regarded as a quality perceived by our own mind, and objective regarded as an intrinsic quality whereby anything approximates to perfection according to its kind.

But there is one great difference whereby 'beauty' differs from both 'truth' and 'goodness.' The latter are, as we have seen, predicated of objects essentially on account of relations they bear to something else; but 'beauty' is especially intrinsic, and relates, at least primarily, to a thing considered in and by itself, and the relations it implies are internal relations.

When anything is said to be beautiful on account of its fitness to secure some end, the word is used only in an analogical sense, for what is really denoted thereby is not 'beauty' but 'appropriateness' or 'utility'—an analogical goodness of a certain kind.

The qualities which accompany such different kinds of beauty may

be, and often are, related to utility. It is not, however, their utility, but the perfection with which they correspond with an ideal of some given kind, which makes them beautiful. Nevertheless, an object may acquire a certain relative beauty by augmenting, or being augmented by, the beauty of some other object. Thus a picturesque castle may derive additional beauty from its situation on some mountain side or summit; or a mountain may derive an added beauty from the castle which clings to its steep flanks, or is artistically perched upon its crest.

Can we form any conception of objective beauty altogether apart from human feelings? If the beauty of any object is the same thing as its perfection, then, evidently, those who are convinced that, upholding and pervading the Universe (even if the Universe be eternal), there is and must be an Eternal Cause, are compelled to affirm that objective beauty really exists. Such a First Cause must be the author of every creature, with all its powers and perfections, and the Author and Creator of all perfection cannot be deemed to be Himself imperfect. Of such a Being, perfection, and therefore beauty, must not only be eminently the attribute, but that Being must be the prototype of all beauty. 'Beauty,' like 'goodness,' must be of His essence, and the 'truth' of all things, as we have seen, also depends on His essence and His power. Thus 'power,' 'beauty,' 'truth,' and 'goodness,' are most closely inter-related. For that which is most 'good' must be perfect of its kind, and therefore 'true'; that which is perfect must be 'good' and must also be 'true'—as truly responding to the end of its being; and that which is 'true' must be perfect in the way last mentioned, and therefore also 'good.' While no form of 'goodness,' and therefore no truth, can exist except through the activity of some force or 'power,' yet power, beauty, goodness, and truth are not identical; they may be said to constitute different forms of energy, of one ineffable whole, and exist, so to speak, as a sort of trinity in unity.

Of this trinity, 'power' may be regarded as fundamental, while 'the good' and 'the true,' as each implying an extrinsic relation, may be said to proceed from 'power,' beauty being the attribute of the whole with its profound internal relations.

All the various perfections, all the beauties—material, intellectual, and moral—of the whole creation, whatever man most admires or aspires after, as well as what he is least capable of appreciating the beauty of, must, like all that is good and all that is true in the Universe, be reflected and derived from the Prototype of all perfection and of all goodness. The

beauty of objects must also vary in degree, according as the perfection to which they severally approximate resembles, by a more or less immeasurably distant analogy, the perfection of their First Cause. Since, again, everything which exists more or less approaches, however distantly, a perfection of some kind or order of existence, everything which exists must have a beauty of its kind and in its degree, just as it must be more or less good. But if everything is thus more or less beautiful, what is to be said about 'ugliness,' which is so often far more obtrusive than beauty?

If everything has some degree of beauty, then evidently nothing can be absolutely 'ugly.' 'Ugliness,' like 'coldness,' can have no positive existence, and must be but a relative defect and negation; as 'coldness' is but a deficiency of 'warmth.' Nothing, therefore, can be simply ugly in itself, but only in relation to something else, and it may be (as things so often are) very ugly in relation to something else. For as one thing may, as we have seen, gain beauty by augmenting the beauty of another object, so a thing which is even perfect of its kind, and therefore beautiful in its degree, may be relatively ugly through the injury it inflicts, or the destruction it occasions to the beauty of something of a nobler and higher kind which it, by its existence, deforms from perfection and tends to destroy. Thus some diseased growth may have a beauty of its own very inferior order—a beauty which the biologist and pathologist can appreciate, as, for example, that of a villous tumour. Yet a diseased growth will be none the less relatively hideous if by its growth it mars the beauty of a human body, and still more if it becomes the occasion of deforming the moral beauty of a mind.

We are blinded to the real objective beauty of many objects by the fact that they are essentially hurtful to us. But such want of appreciation does not diminish their objective perfection. We are constantly blinded to the beauty of natural objects, or of their modes of action, by reason of our inveterate tendency to anthropomorphism; that is, to regard things from a specially human point of view. We often feel disgust or horror at objects and actions, or even regard them with a sort of fierce reprobation, because of an unconscious mental association formed between them and imaginary human actions of a similar kind. But the feelings which arise in us, the sentiments inspired by the aspect of such things, are essentially human, and human only. In themselves objects so abhorred by us may have a beauty of their own such as we elsewhere readily recognise, though their beauty is at first hidden from us through our human prejudices. It is surely quite conceivable that an

incorporeal, spiritual being, uninfluenced by human sensibilities, would recognise their beauty and might smile, so to speak, at the childishness of the notion that there could be anything really unlovely in what to us men causes such feelings of repulsion. Anthropomorphism necessarily attends all our conceptions. We cannot help regarding things with human eyes and prejudices. But our reason should make us aware of this, and should teach us to make due allowance for it in our estimate of all things, however high or however low.

What light do the various foregoing considerations throw upon the origin of differences of taste and changes in the appreciation of the beautiful? Does the theory of evolution enable us to understand how all sorts of divergences as to matters of taste—mere feelings of liking and disliking—can co-exist with a gradually increasing accord with respect to an intellectual appreciation of beauty? To like and feel attracted towards objects is one thing, but to perceive their beauty is another and very different thing. The perception of beauty and perfection is an act of the higher and purely intellectual side of our nature. Feelings of attraction and repulsion, likes and dislikes (apart from acts of judgment), belong to the lower or sensitive side of our nature—the side we share with the brutes about us.

The faculty of apprehending beauty is a power which may be greatly increased by culture. Brutes have, as before said, no perception of it, however much they may be attracted by it, and the faculty is rudimentary or dormant in the lowest savages and young children.

Amongst the many processes of evolution going on around us, few are more noteworthy than that evolution of perceptions of beauty which, generally unnoticed, is continually taking place. Progress in culture also calls forth more and more agreement with respect to perceptions of the kind, both as regards the region of art and the domain of nature. Admiration for the beauty of rugged mountain masses is a modern development of taste. But in addition to the æsthetic beauties now discovered to exist in scenes which before were deemed savage and horrible, the advance of science has given to the geologist the power of perceiving harmonies previously undreamed of. Thus the study of nature gradually makes known to us new fields of beauty which ignorance had before hidden from our gaze. The evolution of the cosmos progressively reveals to us ever new ideals; and doubtless forms and modes of beauty which no man now suspects the existence of, yet lie hidden, and will only be made known to those who shall come after us.

All these forms of perception belong, as we have said, to the higher side of our being.

We may next glance at the tastes and preferences of our animal nature, and the conditions which modify and change them. It is unquestionable that we may have likings and dislikings, and feel attracted or repelled (by odours, savours, sounds, or sights) without having a distinct perception of any real beauty, or want of beauty, in the things which thus attract or repel us. Such preferences or aversions may be due in us, as in brutes, to the action of heredity (inherited tendencies), to various associations of feelings established in early life, or to the action upon us of our social environment and the contagiousness of custom. It is, most probably, an inherited association of the kind which has induced in mankind, as in some other animals, that horror of serpents just referred to, the bite of which still causes each year so many thousand deaths in India alone. There are also curious idiosyncratic aversions. We have ourselves known persons whose reason has been quite unable to overcome dislikes of the kind—dislikes felt from early childhood. The social feeling about us—the sentiment of the family, the tribe, or the nation—notoriously gives rise to likes and dislikes altogether distinct from intellectual apprehensions of beauty, whether moral or physical. Thus may be explained the preferences which exist for various bodily deformities amongst different peoples, such as the Botacudos, Peruvians, Chinese, and even ourselves. Such aberrations are the effect of custom, and are felt as welcome and agreeable by different tribes, just as a conventionally correct costume produces a sense of fitness amongst members of the same social stratum of a civilised community, though no one would pretend that the feeling is due to a perception of a high ideal of beauty realised in the garments so approved of.

But no doubt some persons really think they see beauty in objects which are distasteful to more cultured minds, while others are blind to perfections which are evident enough to those more qualified to judge. There seems thus to be an absence of certainty as to the beautiful, not merely through an occasional defect of power to appreciate it, but also through a tendency to appreciate the beauty of some objects too highly. Thus there sometimes seems to be an active and positive tendency to error, as well as an occasional passive inability to perceive. How can these divergent, erroneous tendencies be accounted for?

The solution of this difficulty appears to us to lie in a correct appreciation of the essential unity of the human personality—a unity

of which consciousness and common sense combine to assure us instant by instant. No sane man doubts that he is the same person who is at the same time both appreciating the charm of an eloquent discourse and also feeling a pain in some limb or a current of air disagreeably affecting him. We must ever recollect that the being of each of us, though consisting of two natures, is a true unity. It follows from this, that in our every vital energy both natures are present, and act and react on each other in a variety of ways, our animality limiting and soliciting our intellect, and our intellect overflowing into, as it were, and more or less transforming the feelings of, our animal nature.

Even the most abstract conception cannot be present to our minds without being accompanied by some group of feelings which serve as its symbol (actually perceived or revived by the memory of the imagination), even though that symbol be but a written or a spoken word or a voiceless gesture. On the other hand, a dim intellectual consciousness of our existence, and of such ideas as 'being,' 'truth,' and 'cause' (however little such ideas may be adverted to), accompanies the mere exercise of our faculty of sensuous cognition, and even such merely animal actions as those of eating and drinking.

Thus even our purest and most exalted perceptions of beauty must be ministered to and accompanied by feelings and sense-perceptions which are indispensable to all the intellectual acts of our complex unity. So, likewise, our mere feelings of liking and attraction are the feelings of an essentially intellectual being, and are, therefore, more or less consciously possessed by us. The fact that such feelings are necessarily accompanied by intellectual consciousness causes them to possess a certain resemblance to intellectual perceptions of beauty, because it enables such mere feelings to be reflected upon and intellectually recognised.

These facts suffice, we think, to account for all the varieties of tastes and feelings which exist amongst mankind, and make it plain that the existence of such diversity of tastes in no way conflicts with the truth that real objective beauty exists in the cosmos as a whole and in every part of it. These facts account for the mixing up with our intellectual perceptions of beauty those sensuous likings which may be keenly or but slightly felt, but which mar the distinctness of each such intellectual perception, as a perception of abstract beauty. They also account for the mixing up of a tendency to find more beauty than they merit in things which give us sensuous impressions which are delightful to our

feelings and which attract our lower nature, however little we may allow them to be of any high order of beauty when our judgment is fully exercised in their regard.

Those persons who may be inclined to wonder greatly at the fact that so many are now attracted by, and feel a preference for, objects and actions which are repulsive to the æsthete or to those zealous for moral perfection, should recollect that everything has a beauty of its kind and in its degree.

As men always seek a good, though not by any means the highest good, so whatever attracts them attracts them by a beauty of some kind, though by yielding to its attraction they may be diverted from seeking some far nobler and higher beauty. As we have seen that it is impossible to deny that even the lowest 'goods' are 'good,' so likewise there is a real, however inferior, beauty in the objects which attract our most animal or most perverted appetites, and in the actions to which even the lowest natures amongst us are thereby induced; though, like the pathological growths before referred to, they may be relatively revolting and hideous on account of the deflections from nobler beauties of feeling and of will which such attractions may induce or occasion.

That man should be able to turn away from his own chosen ideal, to follow what, even in his own eyes, is immeasurably less lovely, is the sad penalty of his unique privilege of freedom. That he should be able to diverge from what he himself clearly perceives to be 'the right order,' far more widely than brutes do, which yet have no perceptions of the kind, is the penalty of his possessing intellect combined in one personality with an unequivocally animal nature.

As he is free to direct his activity along elevated ways which are necessarily quite inaccessible to the brute creation, so, likewise, it is his very possession of intellect which enables him to direct his imagination and his actions into more devious paths than the feelings of brutes would ever lead them to enter upon.

To sum up shortly what we have here endeavoured to express: We think it may be confidently affirmed that such a being as man, replete with animal feelings and desires and dim, unconscious reminiscences of ancestral brute experiences, but with an intellect endowed with a perception of truth, goodness, and beauty, could hardly fail to show, in his tastes and perceptions, just those mingled and more or less discordant

and varying mental phenomena which we find mankind do exhibit. We find present, in fact, those very conditions of thought and feeling which the theory of evolution would lead us to expect. We find first what the theory would lead us to anticipate when it is applied to explain not only the genesis of our animal nature, but also the perfecting and development of that intellectual nature of ours which, ages before the twilight of history, first made its unnoticed and mysterious appearance in the world through some Divine action different in kind from that which created the irrational universe. Underlying or accompanying the multifarious and conflicting changes of taste and feeling due to heredity, association, and environment, we find that progressively clearing perceptions of true beauty have been gained, the manifestation of beauty in fields where it was before invisible having again and again taken place for us through the progressive development of our faculties by culture, while these perceptions ever tend to be obscured, and are almost always more or less disguised for us, by the effects of our animal organisation.

This it is which seems to have made tastes differ. They differ because we human, intellectual animals vary as to the peculiar influences we have received from parents, family, and tribe, from the diverse association of feelings to which we have been severally exposed, and from the action upon us of the tastes and feelings of our friends and fellow-tribesmen. As to such matters of mere feeling, there will probably ever be a wide divergence of tastes.

On the other hand, we agree largely as to our intellectual perceptions of beauty, and we tend to agree more and more, because of our possession of an intellectual nature, which is fundamentally one and the same in all men, and has the power of perceiving, more or less perfectly, objective 'beauty,' as well as 'truth' and 'goodness.' Education, and above all religious education, will enable us to emerge, by more and more successful struggles, out of the obscuring influences of animality, towards as clear a vision of these highest qualities as may be possible for the future of our race in this world, and for ourselves individually in that life in a world to come, which the highest existing religion sets before us, and about which even unbelievers, though they may with truth say they have necessarily no power to imagine it, yet must admit that reason by no means forbids them to entertain a fruitful and confident hope.

ST. GEORGE MIVART.

Un Soir

LE *Kléber* avait stoppé, et je regardais de mes yeux ravis l'admirable golfe de Bougie, qui s'ouvrait devant nous. Les forêts kabyles couvraient les hautes montagnes ; les sables jaunes, au loin, faisaient à la mer une rive de poudre d'or, et le soleil tombait en torrents de feu sur les maisons blanches de la petite ville.

La brise chaude, la brise d'Afrique, apportait à mon cœur joyeux l'odeur du désert, l'odeur du grand continent mystérieux où l'homme du Nord ne pénètre guère. Depuis trois mois, j'errais sur les bords de ce monde profond et inconnu, sur le rivage de cette terre fantastique de l'autruche, du chameau, de la gazelle, de l'hippopotame, du gorille, de l'éléphant et du nègre. J'avais vu l'Arabe galoper dans le vent, comme un drapeau qui flotte et vole et passe ; j'avais couché sous la tente brune dans la demeure vagabonde de ces oiseaux blancs du désert. J'étais ivre de lumière, de fantaisie et d'espace.

Maintenant, après cette dernière excursion, il faudrait partir, retourner en France, revoir Paris, la ville du bavardage inutile, des soucis médiocres et des poignées de mains sans nombre. Je dirais adieu aux choses aimées, si nouvelles, à peine entrevues, tant regrettées.

Une flotte de barques entourait le paquebot. Je sautai dans l'une d'elles, où ramait un négriillon, et je fus bientôt sur le quai, près de la vieille porte Sarrazine, dont la ruine grise, à l'entrée de la cité kabylo, semble un écusson de noblesse antique.

Comme je demeurais debout sur le port, à côté de ma valise, regardant sur la rade le gros navire à l'ancre, et stupéfait d'admiration devant cette côte unique, devant ce cirque de montagnes baignées par les flots bleus, plus beau que celui de Naples, aussi beau que ceux d'Ajaccio et de Porto, en Corse, une lourde main me tomba sur l'épaule.

Je me retournai et je vis un grand homme à barbe blonde, coiffé d'un chapeau de paille, vêtu de flanelle blanche, debout à côté de moi, et me dévisageant de ses yeux bleus.

— N'êtes-vous pas mon ancien camarade de pension ? dit-il.

— C'est possible. Comment vous appelez-vous ?

— Trémoulin.

— Parbleu ! Tu étais mon voisin d'études.

— Ah ! vieux, je t'ai reconnu du premier coup, moi.

Et la barbe blonde se frotta sur mes joues.

Il semblait si content, si gai, si heureux de me voir, que, par un élan d'amical égoïsme, je serrai fortement les deux mains de ce camarade de jadis, et que je me sentis moi-même très satisfait de l'avoir ainsi retrouvé.

Trémoulin avait été pour moi pendant quatre ans le plus intime, le meilleur de ces compagnons d'études que nous oublions si vite à peine sortis du collège. C'était alors un grand corps mince, qui semblait porter une tête trop lourde, une grosse tête ronde, pesante, inclinant le cou tantôt à droite, tantôt à gauche, et écrasant la poitrine étroite de ce haut collégien à longues jambes.

Très intelligent, doué d'une facilité merveilleuse, d'une rare souplesse d'esprit, d'une sorte d'intuition instinctive pour toutes les études littéraires, Trémoulin était le grand décrocheur de prix de notre classe.

On demeurait convaincu au collège qu'il deviendrait un homme illustre, un poète sans doute, car il faisait des vers et il était plein d'idées ingénieusement sentimentales. Son père, pharmacien dans le quartier du Panthéon, ne passait pas pour riche.

Aussitôt après le baccalauréat je l'avais perdu de vue.

— Qu'est-ce que tu fais ici ? m'écriai-je.

Il répondit en souriant :

— Je suis colon.

— Bah ! Tu plantes ?

— Et je récolte.

— Quoi ?

— Du raisin, dont je fais du vin.

— Et ça va ?

— Ça va très bien.

— Tant mieux, mon vieux.

— Tu allais à l'hôtel ?

— Mais oui.

— Eh bien, tu iras chez moi.

— Mais ! . . .

— C'est entendu.

Et il dit au négrillon qui surveillait nos mouvements :

— Chez moi, Ali.

Ali répondit :

— Foui, moussi.

Puis se mit à courir, ma valise sur l'épaule, ses pieds noirs battant la poussière.

Trémoulin me saisit le bras, et m'emmena. D'abord il me posa des questions sur mon voyage, sur mes impressions, et, voyant mon enthousiasme, parut m'en aimer davantage.

Sa demeure était une vieille maison mauresque à cour intérieure, sans fenêtres sur la rue, et dominée par une terrasse qui dominait elle-même celles des maisons voisines, et le golfe et les forêts, les montagnes, la mer.

Je m'écriai :

— Ah ! voilà ce que j'aime, tout l'Orient m'entre dans le cœur en ce logis. Cristi ! que tu es heureux de vivre ici ! Quelles nuits tu dois passer sur cette terrasse ! Tu y couches ?

— Oui, j'y dors pendant l'été. Nous y monterons ce soir. Aimes-tu la pêche ?

— Quelle pêche ?

— La pêche au flambeau.

— Mais oui, je l'adore.

— Eh bien, nous irons, après dîner. Puis nous reviendrons prendre des sorbets sur mon toit.

Après que je me fus baigné, il me fit visiter la ravissante ville kabyle, une vraie cascade de maisons blanches dégringolant à la mer, puis nous rentrâmes comme le soir venait, et après un exquis dîner à l'orientale nous descendîmes vers le quai.

On ne voyait plus rien que les feux des rues et les étoiles, ces larges étoiles luisantes, scintillantes, du ciel d'Afrique.

Dans un coin du port, une barque attendait. Dès que nous fûmes dedans, un homme dont je n'avais point distingué le visage se mit à ramer pendant que mon ami préparait le brasier qu'il allumerait tout à l'heure. Il me dit :

— Tu sais, c'est moi qui manie la fouine. Personne n'est plus fort que moi.

— Mes compliments.

Nous avons contourné une sorte de môle et nous étions, maintenant, dans une petite baie pleine de hauts rochers dont les ombres avaient l'air de tours bâties dans l'eau, et je m'aperçus, tout à coup, que la mer était phosphorescente. Les avirons qui la battaient lentement, à coups

réguliers, allumaient dedans, à chaque tombée, une lueur mouvante et bizarre qui traînait ensuite au loin derrière nous, en s'éteignant. Je regardais, penché, cette coulée de clarté pâle, émiettée par les rames, cet inexprimable feu de la mer, ce feu froid qu'un mouvement allume et qui meurt dès que le flot se calme. Nous allions dans le noir, glissant sur cette lueur tous les trois.

Où allions-nous ? Je ne voyais point mes voisins, je ne voyais rien que ce remous lumineux et les étincelles d'eau projetées par les avirons. Il faisait chaud, très chaud. L'ombre semblait chauffée dans un four, et mon cœur se troublait de ce voyage mystérieux avec ces deux hommes dans cette barque silencieuse.

Des chiens, les maigres chiens arabes au poil roux, au nez pointu, aux yeux luisants, aboyaient au loin, comme ils aboient toutes les nuits sur cette terre démesurée, depuis les rives de la mer jusqu'au fond du désert où campent les tribus errantes. Les renards, les chacals, les hyènes, répondaient ; et non loin de là, sans doute, quelque lion solitaire devait grogner dans une gorge de l'Atlas.

Soudain, le rameur s'arrêta. Où étions-nous ? Un petit bruit grinça près de moi. Une flamme d'allumette apparut, et je vis une main, rien qu'une main, portant cette flamme légère vers la grille de fer suspendue à l'avant du bateau et chargée de bois comme un bûcher flottant.

Je regardais, surpris, comme si cette vue eût été troublante et nouvelle, et je suivis avec émotion la petite flamme touchant au bord de ce foyer une poignée de bruyères sèches qui se mirent à crépiter.

Alors, dans la nuit endormie, dans la lourde nuit brûlante, un grand feu clair jaillit, illuminant sous un dais de ténèbres pesant sur nous la barque et deux hommes, un vieux matelot maigre, blanc et ridé, coiffé d'un mouchoir noué sur la tête, et Trémoulin, dont la barbe blonde luisait.

— Avant, dit-il.

L'autre rama, nous remettant en marche, au milieu d'un météore, sous le dôme d'ombre mobile qui se promenait avec nous. Trémoulin, d'un mouvement continu, jetait du bois sur le brasier qui flambait éclatant et rouge.

Je me penchai de nouveau et j'aperçus le fond de la mer. A quelques pieds sous le bateau il se déroulait lentement, à mesure que nous passions, l'étrange pays de l'eau qui vivifie, comme l'air du ciel, des plantes et des bêtes. Le brasier enfonçant jusqu'aux rochers sa vive lumière, nous glissions sur des forêts surprenantes d'herbes rousses, roses, vertes, jaunes. Entre elles et nous une glace admirablement transparente, une glace liquide, presque invisible, les rendait féériques, les reculait dans un

rêve, dans le rêve qu'éveillent les océans profonds. Cette onde claire, si limpide qu'on ne distinguait point, qu'on devinait plutôt, mettait entre ces étranges végétations et nous quelque chose de troublant comme le doute de la réalité, les faisait mystérieuses comme les paysages des songes.

Quelquefois les herbes venaient jusqu'à la surface, pareilles à des cheveux, à peine remuées par le lent passage de la barque.

Au milieu d'elles, de minces poissons d'argent filaient, fuyaient, vus une seconde et disparus. D'autres endormis encore flottaient suspendus au milieu de ces broussailles d'eau, luisants et fluets, insaisissables. Souvent un crabe courait vers un trou pour se cacher, ou bien une méduse bleuâtre et transparente, à peine visible, fleur d'azur pâle, vraie fleur de mer, laissait traîner son corps liquide dans notre léger remous ; puis, soudain, le fond disparaissait, tombé plus bas, très loin, dans un brouillard de verre épaissi. On voyait vaguement alors de gros rochers et des varechs sombres, à peine éclairés par le brasier.

Trémoulin, debout à l'avant, le corps penché, tenant aux mains le long trident aux pointes aiguës qu'on nomme la fouine, guettait les rochers, les herbes, le fond changeant de la mer avec un œil ardent de bête qui chasse.

Tout à coup, il laissa glisser dans l'eau, d'un mouvement vif et doux, la tête fourchue de son arme, puis il la lança comme on lance une flèche, avec une telle promptitude qu'elle saisit à la course un grand poisson fuyant devant nous.

Je n'avais rien vu que le geste de Trémoulin, mais je l'entendis grogner de joie, et, comme il levait sa fouine dans la clarté du brasier, j'aperçus une bête qui se tordait traversée par les dents de fer. C'était un congre ; après l'avoir contemplé et me l'avoir montré en le promenant au-dessus de la flamme, mon ami le jeta dans le fond du bateau. Le serpent de mer, le corps percé de cinq plaies, glissa, rampa, frôlant mes pieds, cherchant un trou pour fuir, et, ayant trouvé entre les membrures du bateau une flaque d'eau saumâtre, il s'y blottit, s'y roula presque mort déjà.

Alors, de minute en minute, Trémoulin cueillait, avec une adresse surprenante, avec une rapidité foudroyante, avec une sûreté miraculeuse, tous les étranges vivants de l'eau salée. Je voyais tour à tour passer au-dessus du feu, avec des convulsions d'agonie, des loups argentés, des murènes sombres tachetées de sang, des rascasses hérissées de dards, et des sèches, animaux bizarres qui crachent de l'encre et faisaient la mer toute noire pendant quelques instants, autour du bateau.

Pendant je croyais sans cesse entendre des cris d'oiseaux autour de nous, dans la nuit, je levais la tête, m'efforçant de voir d'où venaient

ces sifflements aigus, proches ou lointains, courts ou prolongés. Ils étaient innombrables, incessants, comme si une nuée d'ailes eût plané sur nous, attirées sans doute par la flamme. Parfois ces bruits semblaient tromper l'oreille et sortir de l'eau.

Je demandai : ' Qui est-ce qui siffle ainsi ?—Mais ce sont les charbons qui tombent.' C'était en effet le brasier semant sur la mer une pluie de brindilles en feu. Elles tombaient rouges ou flambant encore, et s'éteignaient avec une plainte douce, pénétrante, bizarre, tantôt un vrai gazouillement, tantôt un appel court d'émigrant qui passe. Des gouttes de résine ronflaient comme des balles ou comme des frelons et mouraient brusquement en plongeant. On eût dit vraiment des voix d'êtres, une inexprimable et frêle rumeur de vie errant dans l'ombre tout près de nous.

Trémoulin cria soudain :

— Ah . . . la gueuse !

Il lança sa fouine, et quand il la releva, je vis, enveloppant les dents de la fourchette, et collée au bois, une sorte de grande loque de chair rouge qui palpitait, remuait, enroulant et déroulant de longues, et molles, et fortes lanières, couvertes de suçoirs, autour du manche du trident. C'était une pieuvre.

Il approcha de moi cette proie, et je vis les deux gros yeux du monstre qui me regardaient, deux yeux saillants, troubles et terribles, émergeant d'une sorte de poche qui ressemblait à une tumeur. Se croyant libre, la bête allongea, lentement, un de ses membres dont je vis les ventouses blanches ramper vers moi. La pointe en était fine comme un fil, et dès que cette jambe dévorante se fut accrochée au banc, une autre se souleva, se déploya pour la suivre. On sentait là-dedans, dans ce corps musculeux et mou, dans cette ventouse vivante, rougeâtre et flasque, une irrésistible force. Trémoulin avait ouvert son couteau, et d'un coup brusque il le plongea entre les yeux.

On entendit un soupir, un bruit d'air qui s'échappe ; et le poulpe cessa d'avancer.

Il n'était pas mort cependant, car la vie est tenace en ces corps nerveux, mais sa vigueur était détruite, sa pompe crevée, il ne pouvait plus boire le sang, sucer et vider la carapace des crabes.

Trémoulin, maintenant, détachait du bordage, comme pour jouer avec cet agonisant, ses ventouses impuissantes, et, saisi soudain par une étrange colère, il cria :

— Attends, je vas te chauffer les pieds.

D'un coup de trident il le reprit et, l'élevant de nouveau, il fit passer contre la flamme, en les frottant aux grilles de fer rougies du brasier, les fines pointes de chair des membres de la pieuvre.

Elles crépitèrent en se tordant, rougies, raccourcies par le feu ; et j'eus mal jusqu'au bout des doigts de la souffrance de l'affreuse bête.

— Oh ! ne fais pas ça, criai-je.

Il répondit avec calme :

— Bah ! c'est assez bon pour elle.

Puis il rejeta dans le bateau la pieuvre crevée et mutilée qui se traîna entre mes jambes jusqu'au trou plein d'eau saumâtre, où elle se blottit pour mourir au milieu des poissons morts.

Et la pêche continua, longtemps, jusqu'à ce que le bois vint à manquer.

Quand il n'y en eut plus assez pour entretenir le feu, Trémoulin précipita dans l'eau le brasier tout entier, et la nuit, suspendue sur nos têtes par la flamme éclatante, tomba sur nous, nous ensevelit de nouveau dans ses ténèbres.

Le vieux se remit à ramer, lentement, à coups réguliers. Où était le port, où était la terre, où était l'entrée du golfe et la large mer ? Je n'en savais rien. Le poulpe remuait encore près de mes pieds, et je souffrais dans les ongles comme si on me les eût brûlés aussi. Soudain, j'aperçus des lumières ; on rentra au port.

— Est-ce que tu as sommeil ? demanda mon ami.

— Non, pas du tout.

— Alors, nous allons bavarder un peu sur mon toit.

— Bien volontiers.

Au moment où nous arrivions sur cette terrasse, j'aperçus le croissant de la lune qui se levait derrière les montagnes. Le vent chaud glissait par souffles lents, plein d'odeurs légères, presque imperceptibles, comme s'il eût balayé sur son passage la saveur des jardins et des villes de tous les pays brûlés du soleil.

Autour de nous, les maisons blanches aux toits carrés descendaient vers la mer, et sur ces toits on voyait des formes humaines couchées ou debout, qui dormaient ou qui rêvaient sous les étoiles, des familles entières roulées en de longs vêtements de flanelle et se reposant, dans la nuit calme, de la chaleur du jour.

Il me sembla tout à coup que l'âme orientale entra en moi, l'âme poétique et légendaire des peuples simples aux pensées fleuries. J'avais le cœur plein de la Bible et des Mille et une nuits ; j'entendais des prophètes annoncer des miracles et je voyais sur les terrasses de palais passer des princesses en pantalons de soie, tandis que brûlaient, en des réchauds d'argent, des essences fines dont la fumée prenait des formes de génies.

Je dis à Trémoulin :

— Tu as de la chance d'habiter ici.

Il répondit :

— C'est le hasard qui m'y a conduit.

— Le hasard ?

— Oui, le hasard et le malheur.

— Tu as été malheureux ?

— Très malheureux.

Il était debout, devant moi, enveloppé de son burnous, et sa voix me fit passer un frisson sur la peau, tant elle me sembla douloureuse.

Il reprit après un moment de silence :

— Je peux te raconter mon chagrin. Cela me fera peut-être du bien d'en parler.

— Raconte.

— Tu le veux ?

— Oui.

— Voilà. Tu te rappelles bien ce que j'étais au collège : une manière de poète élevé dans une pharmacie. Je rêvais de faire des livres, et j'essayai, après mon baccalauréat. Cela ne me réussit pas. Je publiai un volume de vers, puis un roman, sans vendre davantage l'un que l'autre, puis une pièce de théâtre qui ne fut pas jouée.

Alors, je devins amoureux. Je ne te raconterai pas ma passion. A côté de la boutique de papa, il y avait un tailleur, lequel était père d'une fille. Je l'aimai. Elle était intelligente, ayant conquis ses diplômes d'instruction supérieure, et avait un esprit vif, sautillant, très en harmonie, d'ailleurs, avec sa personne. On lui eût donné quinze ans, bien qu'elle en eût plus de vingt-deux. C'était une toute petite femme, fine de traits, de lignes, de ton, comme une aquarelle délicate. Son nez, sa bouche, ses yeux bleus, ses cheveux blonds, son sourire, sa taille, ses mains, tout cela semblait fait pour une vitrine et non pour la vie à l'air. Pourtant elle était vive, souple et active incroyablement. J'en fus très amoureux. Je me rappelle deux ou trois promenades au jardin du Luxembourg, auprès de la fontaine de Médicis, qui demeureront assurément les meilleures heures de ma vie. Tu connais, n'est-ce pas, cet état bizarre de folie tendre qui fait que nous n'avons plus de pensée que pour des actes d'adoration. On devient véritablement un possédé que hante une femme, et rien n'existe plus pour nous à côté d'elle.

Nous fûmes bientôt fiancés. Je lui communiquai mes projets d'avenir qu'elle blâma. Elle ne me croyait ni poète, ni romancier, ni auteur dramatique, et pensait que le commerce, quand il prospère, peut donner le bonheur parfait.

Renonçant donc à composer des livres, je me résignai à en vendre, et j'achetai, à Marseille, la Librairie Universelle, dont le propriétaire était mort.

J'eus là trois bonnes années. Nous avions fait de notre magasin une sorte de salon littéraire où tous les lettrés de la ville venaient causer. On entrait chez nous comme on entre au cercle ; et on échangeait des idées sur les livres, sur les poètes, sur la politique surtout. Ma femme, qui dirigeait la vente, jouissait d'une vraie notoriété dans la ville. Quant à moi, pendant qu'on bavardait au rez-de-chaussée, je travaillais dans mon cabinet du premier, qui communiquait avec la librairie par un escalier tournant. J'entendais les voix, les rires, les discussions, et je cessais d'écrire parfois, pour écouter. Je m'étais mis en secret à écrire un roman—que je n'ai pas fini.

Les habitués les plus assidus étaient M. Mentina, un rentier, un grand garçon, un beau garçon, un beau du Midi, à poil noir, avec des yeux complimenteurs, M. Barbet, un magistrat, deux commerçants, MM. Faucil et Labarrègue, et le général marquis de Flèche, le chef du parti royaliste, le plus gros personnage de la province, un vieux de soixante-six ans.

Les affaires marchaient bien. J'étais heureux, très heureux.

Voilà qu'un jour, vers trois heures, en faisant des courses, je passai par la rue Saint-Ferréol et je vis sortir soudain d'une porte une femme dont la tournure ressemblait si fort à celle de la mienne que je me serais dit : 'C'est elle !' si je ne l'avais laissée, un peu souffrante, à la boutique, une heure plus tôt. Elle marchait devant moi, d'un pas rapide, sans se retourner. Et je me mis à la suivre presque malgré moi, surpris, inquiet.

Je me disais : 'Ce n'est pas elle. Non. C'est impossible, puisqu'elle avait la migraine. Et puis, qu'aurait-elle été faire dans cette maison ?'

Je voulus cependant en avoir le cœur net, et je me hâtai pour la rejoindre. M'a-t-elle senti ou deviné ou reconnu à mon pas, je n'en sais rien, mais elle se retourna brusquement. C'était elle. En me voyant elle rougit beaucoup et s'arrêta, puis, souriant :

— Tiens, te voilà ?

J'avais le cœur serré.

— Oui. Tu es donc sortie ? Et ta migraine ?

— Ça allait mieux, j'ai été faire une course.

— Où donc ?

— Chez Lacaussade, rue Cassinelli, pour une commande de crayons.

Elle me regardait bien en face. Elle n'était plus rouge, mais plutôt un peu pâle. Ses yeux clairs et limpides,—ah ! les yeux des femmes !— semblaient pleins de vérité, mais je sentis vaguement, douloureusement, qu'ils étaient pleins de mensonge. Je restais devant elle plus confus, plus embarrassé, plus saisi qu'elle-même, sans oser rien soupçonner, mais sûr qu'elle mentait. Pourquoi ? je n'en savais rien.

Je dis seulement :

— Tu as bien fait de sortir si ta migraine va mieux.

— Oui, beaucoup mieux.

— Tu rentres ?

— Mais oui.

Je la quittai, et m'en allai seul, par les rues. Que se passait-il ? J'avais eu, en face d'elle, l'intuition de sa fausseté. Maintenant je n'y pouvais croire ; et quand je rentrai pour dîner, je m'accusais d'avoir suspecté, même une seconde, sa sincérité.

As-tu été jaloux, toi ? oui ou non, qu'importe ! La première goutte de jalousie était tombée sur mon cœur. Ce sont des gouttes de feu. Je ne formulais rien, je ne croyais rien. Je savais seulement qu'elle avait menti. Songe que tous les soirs, quand nous restions en tête à tête, après le départ des clients et des commis, soit que nous allions flâner jusqu'au port quand il faisait beau, soit que nous demeurions à bavarder dans mon bureau s'il faisait mauvais, je laissais s'ouvrir mon cœur devant elle avec un abandon sans réserve, car je l'aimais. Elle était une part de ma vie, la plus grande, et toute ma joie. Elle tenait dans ses petites mains ma pauvre âme captive, confiante et fidèle.

Pendant les premiers jours, ces premiers jours de doute et de détresse, avant que le soupçon se précise et grandisse, je me sentis abattu et glacé comme lorsqu'une maladie couve en nous. J'avais froid sans cesse, vraiment froid, je ne mangeais plus, je ne dormais pas.

Pourquoi avait-elle menti ? Que faisait-elle dans cette maison ? J'y étais entré pour tâcher de découvrir quelque chose. Je n'avais rien trouvé. Le locataire du premier, un tapissier, m'avait renseigné sur tous ses voisins, sans que rien me jetât sur une piste. Au second habitait une sage-femme, au troisième une couturière et une manicure, dans les combles deux cochers avec leurs familles.

Pourquoi avait-elle menti ? Il lui aurait été si facile de me dire qu'elle venait de chez la couturière ou de chez la manicure. Oh ! quel désir j'ai eu de les interroger aussi ! Je ne l'ai pas fait de peur qu'elle en fût prévenue et qu'elle connût mes soupçons.

Donc, elle était entrée dans cette maison et me l'avait caché. Il y avait un mystère. Lequel ? Tantôt j'imaginai des raisons louables, une bonne œuvre dissimulée, un renseignement à chercher, je m'accusais de la suspecter. Chacun de nous n'a-t-il pas le droit d'avoir ses petits secrets innocents, une sorte de seconde vie intérieure dont on ne doit compte à personne ? Un homme, parce qu'on lui a donné pour compagnie une jeune fille, peut-il exiger qu'elle ne pense et ne fasse plus rien sans l'en prévenir avant ou après ? Le mot mariage veut-il dire re-

noncement à toute indépendance, à toute liberté ? Ne se pouvait-il faire qu'elle allât chez une couturière sans me le dire ou qu'elle secourût la famille d'un des cochers ? Ne se pouvait-il aussi que sa visite dans cette maison, sans être coupable, fût de nature à être, non pas blâmée, mais critiquée par moi ? Elle me connaissait jusque dans mes manies les plus ignorées et craignait peut-être, sinon un reproche, du moins une discussion. Ses mains étaient fort jolies, et je finis par supposer qu'elle les faisait soigner en cachette par la manicure du logis suspect et qu'elle ne l'avouait point pour ne pas paraître dissipatrice. Elle avait de l'ordre, de l'épargne, mille précautions de femme économe et entendue aux affaires. En confessant cette petite dépense de coquetterie, elle se serait sans doute jugée amoindrie à mes yeux. Les femmes ont tant de subtilités et de roueries natives dans l'âme.

Mais tous mes raisonnements ne me rassuraient point. J'étais jaloux. Le soupçon me travaillait, me déchirait, me dévorait. Ce n'était pas encore un soupçon, mais le soupçon. Je portais en moi une douleur, une angoisse affreuse, une pensée encore voilée—oui, une pensée avec un voile dessus—ce voile, je n'osais pas le soulever, car, dessous, je trouverais un horrible doute . . . Un amant . . . n'avait-elle pas un amant ? . . . Songe ! songe ! Cela était invraisemblable, impossible . . . et pourtant . . .

La figure de Montana passait sans cesse devant mes yeux. Je le voyais, ce grand bellâtre aux cheveux luisants, lui sourire dans le visage, et je me disais : ' C'est lui.'

Je me faisais l'histoire de leur liaison. Ils avaient parlé d'un livre ensemble, discuté l'aventure d'amour, trouvé quelque chose qui leur ressemblait, et de cette analogie avaient fait une réalité.

Et je les surveillais, en proie au plus abominable supplice que puisse endurer un homme. J'avais acheté des chaussures à semelles de caoutchouc afin de circuler sans bruit, et je passais ma vie maintenant à monter et à descendre mon petit escalier en limaçon pour les surprendre. Souvent, même, je me laissais glisser sur les mains, la tête la première, le long des marches, afin de voir ce qu'ils faisaient. Puis je devais remonter à reculons, avec des efforts et une peine infinis, après avoir constaté que le commis était en tiers.

Je ne vivais plus, je souffrais. Je ne pouvais plus penser à rien, ni travailler ni m'occuper de mes affaires. Dès que je sortais, dès que j'avais fait cent pas dans la rue, je me disais : ' Il est là,' et je rentrais. Il n'y était pas. Je repartais ; mais à peine m'étais-je éloigné de nouveau, je pensais : ' Il est venu, maintenant,' et je retournais.

Cela durait tout le long des jours.

La nuit, c'était plus affreux encore, car je la sentais à côté de moi, dans mon lit. Elle était là, dormant ou feignant de dormir ! Dormait-elle ? Non, sans doute. C'était encore un mensonge ?

Je restais immobile, sur le dos, brûlé par la chaleur de son corps, haletant et torturé. Oh ! quelle envie, une envie ignoble et puissante, de me lever, de prendre une bougie et un marteau, et, d'un seul coup, de lui fendre la tête, pour voir dedans ! J'aurais vu, je le sais bien, une bouillie de cervelle et de sang, rien de plus. Je n'aurais pas su. Impossible de savoir ! Et ses yeux ! Quand elle me regardait, j'étais soulevé par des rages folles. On la regarde, elle vous regarde. Ses yeux sont transparents, candides—et faux, faux, faux ! et on ne peut deviner ce qu'elle pense derrière. J'avais envie d'enfoncer des aiguilles dedans, de crever ces glaces de fausseté.

Ah ! comme je comprends l'inquisition ! Je lui aurais tordu les poignets dans des manchettes de fer.

— Parle . . . avoue . . . Tu ne veux pas . . . attends . . . Je lui aurais serré la gorge doucement . . . Parle, avoue . . . tu ne veux pas . . . et j'aurais serré, serré, jusqu'à la voir râler, suffoquer, mourir . . . Ou bien je lui aurais brûlé les doigts sur le feu . . . Oh ! cela, avec quel bonheur je l'aurais fait ! . . . Parle . . . parle donc . . . Tu ne veux pas ? Je les aurais tenus sur les charbons, ils auraient grillé, par le bout . . . et elle aurait parlé . . . certes ! . . . elle aurait parlé . . .

Trémoulin, dressé, les poings fermés, criait. Autour de nous, sur les toits voisins, les ombres se soulevaient, se réveillaient, écoutaient, troublées dans leur repos.

Et moi, ému, capté par un intérêt puissant, je voyais devant moi, dans la nuit, comme si je l'avais connue, cette petite femme, ce petit être blond, vif et rusé. Je la voyais vendre ses livres, causer avec les hommes que son air d'enfant troublait, et je voyais dans sa fine tête de poupée les petites idées sournoises, les folles idées empanachées, les rêves de modistes parfumées au musc, s'attachant à tous les héros des romans d'aventures. Comme lui je la suspectais, je la détestais, je la haïssais, je lui aurais aussi brûlé les doigts pour qu'elle avouât.

Il reprit, d'un ton plus calme :

— Je ne sais pas pourquoi je te raconte cela. Je n'en ai jamais parlé à personne. Oui, mais je n'ai vu personne depuis deux ans. Je n'ai causé avec personne, avec personne. Et cela me bouillonnait dans le cœur comme une boue qui fermente. Je la vide. Tant pis pour toi.

Eh bien, je m'étais trompé, c'était pis que ce que j'avais cru, pis que tout. Ecoute. J'usai du moyen qu'on emploie toujours : je simulai des absences. Chaque fois que je m'éloignais, ma femme déjeunait dehors. Je ne te raconterai pas comment j'achetai un garçon de

restaurant pour la surprendre. La porte de leur cabinet devait m'être ouverte et j'arrivai, à l'heure convenue, avec la résolution formelle de les tuer. Depuis la veille je voyais la scène comme si elle avait déjà eu lieu, j'entrais, une petite table couverte de verres, de bouteilles et d'assiettes la séparait de Montana. Leur surprise était telle en m'apercevant qu'ils demeuraient immobiles ; et moi, sans dire un mot, j'abattais sur la tête de l'homme la canne plombée dont j'étais armé. Assommé d'un seul coup, il s'affaissait, la figure sur la nappe ; alors je me tournais vers elle, et je lui laissais le temps—quelques secondes—de comprendre et de tendre les bras vers moi, folle d'épouvante, avant de mourir à son tour. Oh ! j'étais prêt, fort, résolu, et content, content jusqu'à l'ivresse. L'idée du regard éperdu qu'elle me jetterait sous ma canne levée, de ses mains jetées en avant, du cri de sa gorge, de sa figure soudain livide et convulsée, me vengeait d'avance. Je ne l'abattrais pas du premier coup, elle ! Tu me trouves féroce, n'est-ce pas ? Tu ne sais pas ce qu'on souffre. Penser qu'une femme, épouse ou maîtresse, qu'on aime, se donne à un autre, se livre à lui comme à vous, et reçoit ses lèvres comme les vôtres ! C'est une chose atroce, épouvantable. Quand on a connu un jour cette torture, on est capable de tout. Oh ! je m'étonne qu'on ne tue pas plus souvent, car tous ceux qui ont été trahis, tous, ont désiré tuer, ont joué de cette mort rêvée, ont fait, seuls dans leur chambre ou sur une route déserte, hantés par l'hallucination de la vengeance satisfaite, le geste d'étrangler ou d'assommer.

Moi, j'arrivai à ce restaurant. Je demandai : 'Ils sont là ?' Le garçon vendu répondit : 'Oui, monsieur,' me fit monter un escalier, et me montrant une porte : 'Ici !' dit-il. Je serrais ma canne comme si mes doigts eussent été de fer. J'entrai.

J'avais bien choisi l'instant. Ils s'embrassaient, mais ce n'était pas Montana. C'était le général de Flèche, le général qui avait soixante-six ans !

Je m'attendais si bien à trouver l'autre que je demeurai perclus d'étonnement.

Et puis . . . et puis . . . je ne sais pas encore ce qui se passa en moi . . . non . . . je ne sais pas. Devant l'autre, j'aurais été convulsé de fureur . . . devant celui-là, devant ce vieil homme ventru, aux joues tombantes, je fus suffoqué par le dégoût. Elle, la petite, qui semblait avoir quinze ans, s'était donnée, livrée à ce gros homme presque gâteaux, parce qu'il était marquis, général, l'ami et le représentant des princes. Non, je ne sais pas ce que je sentis, ni ce que je pensai. Ma main n'aurait pas pu frapper ce vieux ! quelle honte ! Non, je n'avais plus envie de tuer ma femme, mais toutes les femmes qui peuvent faire des

choses pareilles ! Je n'étais plus jaloux, j'étais éperdu comme si j'avais vu l'horreur des horreurs.

Qu'on dise ce qu'on voudra des hommes, ils ne sont point si vils que cela. Quand on en rencontre un qui s'est livré de cette façon, on le montre au doigt. L'époux ou l'amant d'une vieille femme est plus méprisé qu'un voleur. Nous sommes propres, mon cher. Mais elles, elles, des filles, dont le cœur est sale. Elles sont à tous, jeunes ou vieux, pour des raisons méprisables et différentes, parce que c'est leur profession, leur vocation et leur fonction. Ce sont les éternelles inconscientes et sercines prostituées qui livrent leur corps sans dégoût, parce qu'il est marchandise d'amour, qu'elles le vendent ou qu'elles le donnent, au vieillard qui hante les trottoirs avec de l'or dans sa poche, ou bien pour la gloire au vieux souverain lubrique, au vieil homme célèbre et répugnant.

Il vociférait comme un prophète antique, d'une voix furieuse, sous le ciel étoilé, criant, avec une rage de désespéré, la honte glorifiée de toutes les maîtresses des vieux princes, la honte respectée de toutes les vierges qui acceptent de vieux époux, la honte tolérée de toutes les jeunes femmes qui cueillent, souriantes, de vieux baisers.

Je les voyais, depuis la naissance du monde, évoquées, appelées par lui, surgissant autour de nous dans cette nuit d'Orient, les filles, les belles filles à l'âme vile qui, comme les bêtes, ignorant l'âge du mâle, furent dociles à des désirs séniles. Elles se levaient, servantes des patriarches, chantées par la Bible, Agar, Ruth, les filles de Loth, la brune Abigaïl, la vierge de Sunnan qui, de ses caresses, ranimait David agonisant, et toutes les autres, jeunes, grasses, blanches, patriciennes ou plébéiennes, irresponsables femelles d'un maître, chair d'esclave soumise, éblouie ou payée.

Je demandai :

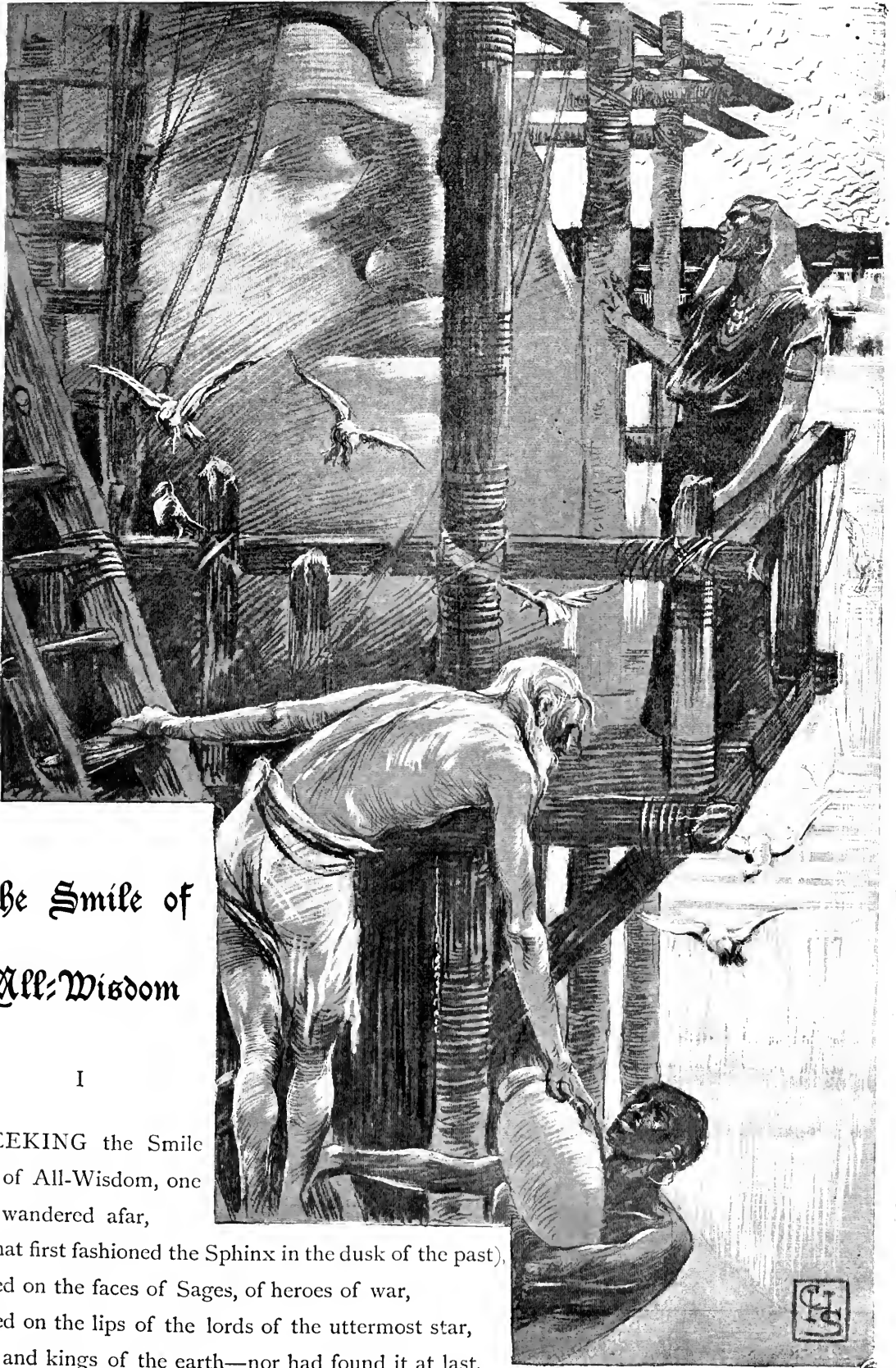
— Qu'as-tu fait ?

Il répondit simplement :

— Je suis parti. Et me voici.

Alors nous restâmes l'un près de l'autre, longtemps, sans parler, rêvant ; mais j'ai gardé de ce soir-là une impression inoubliable. Tout ce que j'avais vu, senti, entendu, deviné, la pêche, la pieuvre aussi peut-être ; et ce récit poignant, au milieu des fantômes blancs, sur les toits voisins, tout semblait concourir à une émotion unique. Certaines rencontres, certaines inexplicables combinaisons de choses, contiennent assurément, sans que rien d'exceptionnel y apparaisse, une plus grande quantité de secrète quintessence de vie que celle dispensée dans l'ordinaire des jours.

GUY DE MAUPASSANT.

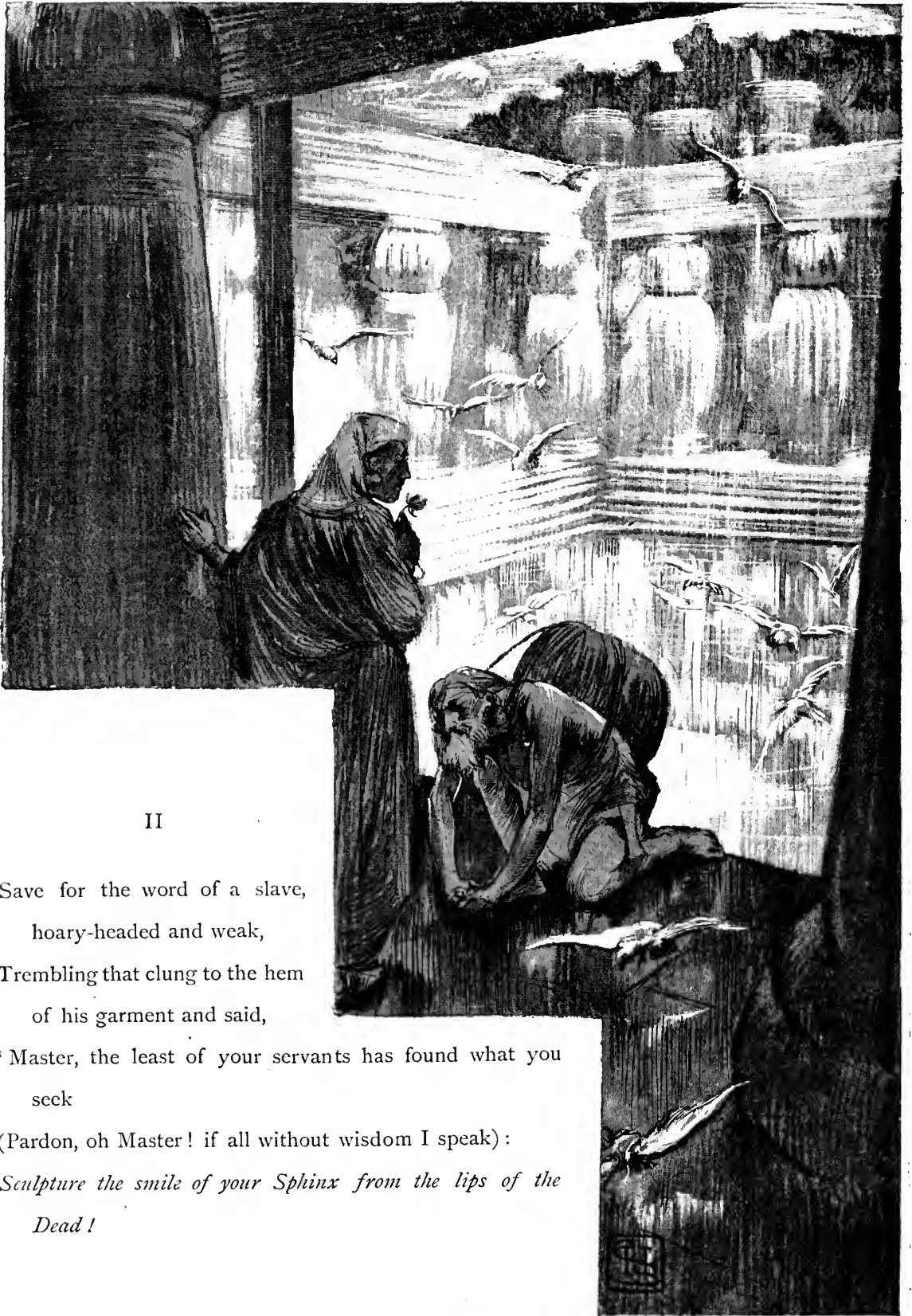


The Smile of
All-Wisdom

I

SEEKING the Smile
of All-Wisdom, one
wandered afar,

(He that first fashioned the Sphinx in the dusk of the past),
Looked on the faces of Sages, of heroes of war,
Looked on the lips of the lords of the uttermost star,
Magi, and kings of the earth—nor had found it at last,



II

Save for the word of a slave,
hoary-headed and weak,
Trembling that clung to the hem
of his garment and said,

‘Master, the least of your servants has found what you
seek

(Pardon, oh Master! if all without wisdom I speak):

*Sculpture the smile of your Sphinx from the lips of the
Dead!*



III

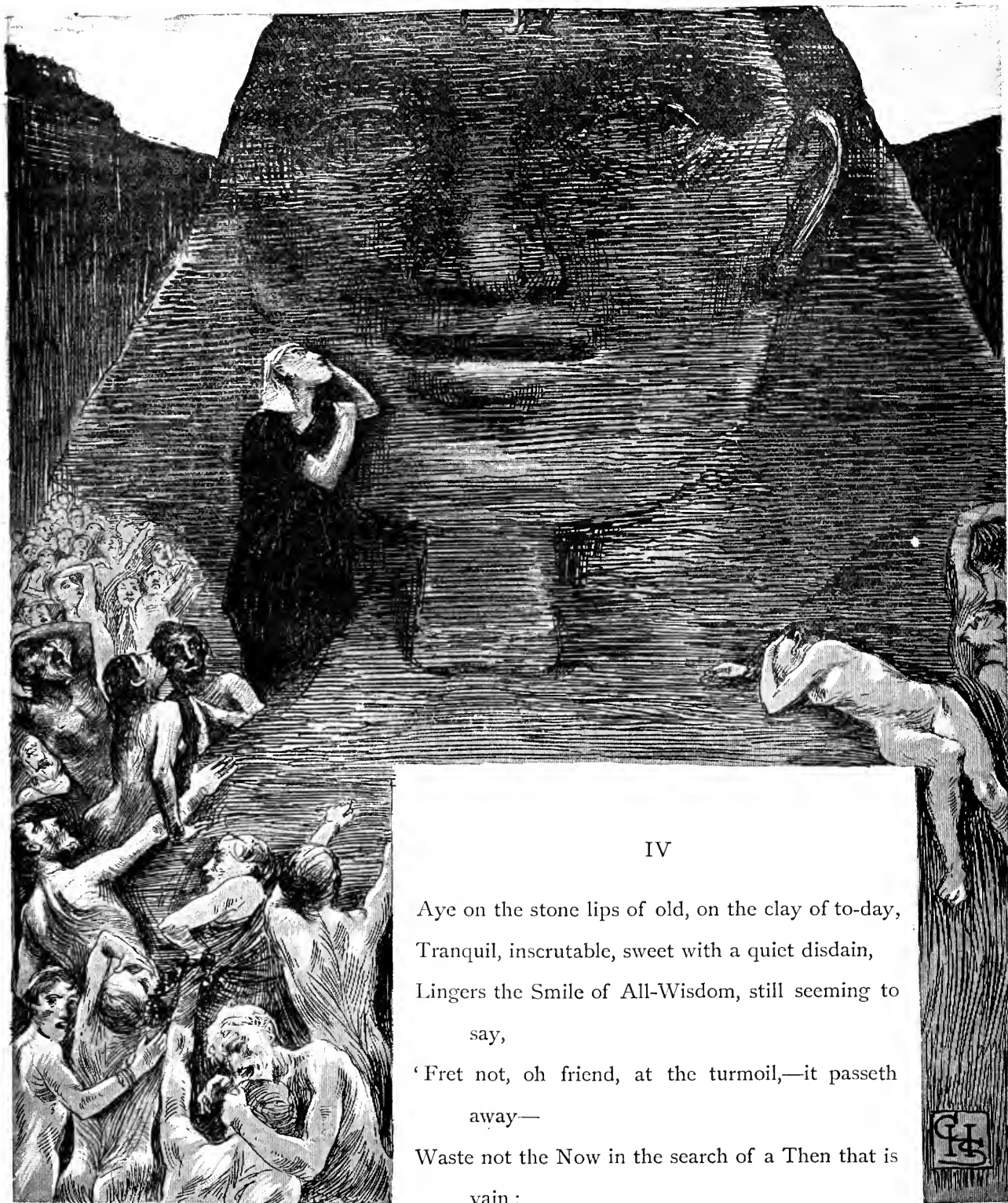
Rising, he followed the slave to a hovel anear,
Lifted the mat from the doorway and looked on
the bed ;

‘Nay, thou hast spoken aright, thou hast nothing
to fear,

That which I sought thou hast found, friend, and
lo! it is here ;

Surely the Smile of the Sphinx is the Smile of
the Dead.’



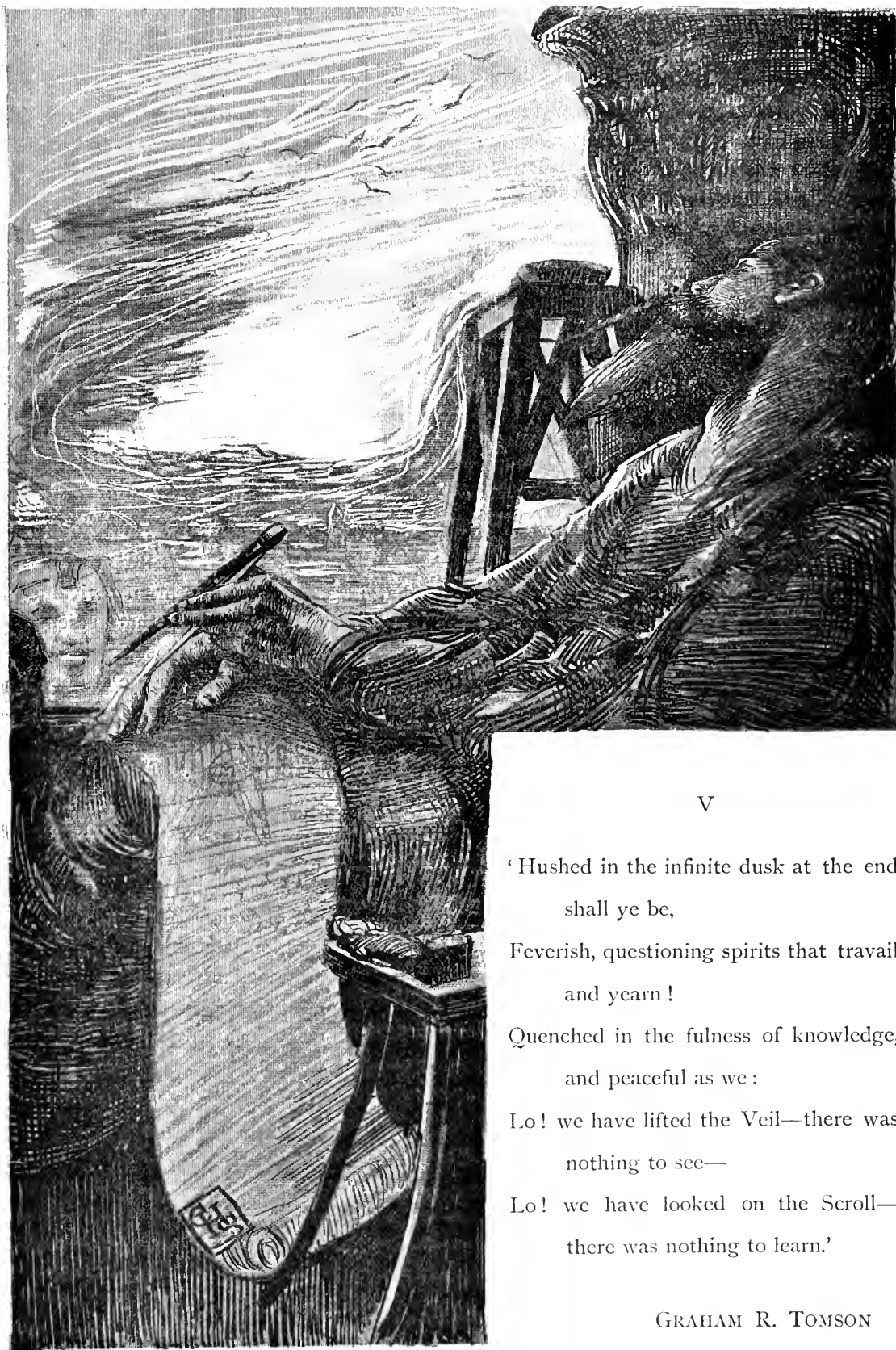


IV

Aye on the stone lips of old, on the clay of to-day,
Tranquil, inscrutable, sweet with a quiet disdain,
Lingers the Smile of All-Wisdom, still seeming to
say,

‘Fret not, oh friend, at the turmoil,—it passeth
away—

Waste not the Now in the search of a Then that is
vain ;



V

‘Hushed in the infinite dusk at the end
shall ye be,
Feverish, questioning spirits that travail
and yearn !
Quenched in the fulness of knowledge,
and peaceful as we :
Lo! we have lifted the Veil—there was
nothing to see—
Lo! we have looked on the Scroll—
there was nothing to learn.’

GRAHAM R. TOMSON

• Macbeth • at the Lyceum

IT is a fact worthy of note that, in such a Shakespearian revival as this of the 29th of last December, the chief thing that audience and manager are agreed respectively to demand and to supply, is the *elaborateness* of the mounting. Stranger still, the critics are at one in commendation on this single point. For quite a long time before the play's production there have twinkled like stars, in all corners of the firmament of journalism, the words, 'Lyceum . . . Macbeth . . . mounting . . . elaborate . . . unprecedented.' Extra *elaborateness* of mounting was promised and expected, not extra *quality*. On the programme appear the names of the same excellent scenic artists who have beautified the Lyceum stage on many previous occasions ; doing as well then as now, *only not so elaborately*. How far this elaborateness is a real gain to the stage may be worth our consideration later on. Mr. Irving's earlier embodiment of Macbeth lingered in the memory as a strange and interesting performance that, if less powerful than the renderings of Salvini and Rossi, at least suggested things beyond anything achieved by that brace of robust signors. The announcement of Miss Terry's Lady Macbeth whetted the edge of anticipation to its keenest.

The power that in Shakespearian parts alone includes Beatrice and Viola, Portia as well as Ophelia, is no narrow one ; all our sympathies were with the courageous artist who preferred essaying a bold stroke to moving in the grooves of assured success. If Miss Terry succeeded in Lady Macbeth she would do something the like of which she had never

done before; something that would be as without precedent in her artistic career as a failure. This at least was certain: her impersonation would have nothing in common with the slow-syllabled, beetle-browed, brawny-armed, broad-braceleted virago who has misrepresented Lady Macbeth on so many stages. By the time of its completion, Miss Terry's performance of Lady Macbeth had turned for us into a certainty a growing conviction that we have in her the best interpreter of Shakespearian character on the stage. For her the [bard needs neither cutting nor strained interpretation. Miss Terry touches Shakespeare with one hand, and her audience with the other. Her Lady Macbeth was as natural as the nineteenth century heroine of *New Men and Old Acres*. To follow her combination of domestic tenderness and crime we must realise that in a disturbed time assassination is a measure of precaution as often as of aggression. Had Duncan, as he purposed, left the castle of Inverness on the morrow, and then learned that he had recently fulfilled the second third of a prophecy, whose completion pointed at the death of himself and his sons, it is likely that Macbeth's career would have been a brief one. The cruel incidents of the Wars of the Roses were, to a Shakespearian audience, too familiar a memory for this to need pointing out to them. Banquo, a markedly devout man, knowing of Macbeth's first crime, does not condemn it to the point of refusing to break bread with him.

Broadly viewed, Miss Terry's reading of Lady Macbeth is this: she is a wife devoted to her husband and his interests, who views the removal of those who stand in his upward path as the shepherd does the killing of beasts of prey. It may be painful, distasteful, and dangerous to do; but the interests of the flock are alone of any moment. When the dangers daily thickening around her husband have shattered her health, it is not remorse that afflicts her; for in imagination she comforts her husband with the fact of Banquo's death. The accidentals, not the essentials, of the crimes she has shared in, disturb her peace. That the sleeping Duncan resembled her father; that the quantity of blood he shed when murdered exceeded her expectation; that she had difficulty in cleansing her hand from it; that, in a general massacre, Macduff's wife was needlessly slain—such details as these alone trouble her in sleep. Had she heard, as she waked, tidings that Malcolm, Donalbain, and Macduff were prisoners to her husband, he and she would have been of one counsel as to the disposal of them.

On these broad lines did Miss Terry elaborate a part whose details

were as dramatic and suggestive as the main conception was true to nature and to Shakespeare. The nervousness, inevitable on a first night, interfered slightly with her delivery of the more rhetorical portions of her part, but her intentions were never doubtful. Her Lady Macbeth was as completely mediæval in feeling as in appearance. And a wonderful representation it was of the strange mediæval mind, in which tender domesticities could lie side by side with plans of murder without one modifying the other; as in another phase of the same temper the consigning of heretics to unspeakable torments in this world and the next could coexist with a saintly habit of personal life. It was a touch of deep intuition in Miss Terry to make Lady Macbeth rise from the study of a book of saintly histories and emblems to still her husband's apprehensions from Banquo and Fleance with the suggestion—

In them nature's copy's not eterne.

That was the woman precisely!

The devotee of the day, in Macduff's words—

Off'ner upon her knees than on her feet
Died every day she lived.

This kind of sanctity being impossible to her, Lady Macbeth, like many mediævals, sinned, meaning to repent, and repented according to rule, intending to sin again. According to Miss Terry, she took her good book to soothe her mind, as she took medicine to heal her body. She invokes the powers of ill, having the same practical belief in their response as she has in the power of wine to help her over her disinclination to the details of murder. We must remember that the conception of the spirit of evil as magnificent was a puritan one, that owed its shape to Milton's love of the Greek drama. The Devil to Lady Macbeth was no winged Titan, but a blackened satyr. The powers to which she appealed were grotesque, and even homely; of the calibre of the witches, in a word. A key may be found to Miss Terry's reading, in her emphasis on the words—

These deeds must not be thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

Such fancies are not unknown to her, but her practical mind firmly rejects them.

A curious parallel to the man's enthusiastic generalisations in this scene, and to the woman's practical detail, is to be found in another play of Shakespeare's telling of a different pair.

The breaking of bounds to watch a beloved's window was as familiar to Romeo as the fact of destroying life was to Macbeth. It was as new to Juliet to speak with a stranger from her balcony, as it was to Lady Macbeth to be personally concerned with blood-shedding; yet in each case the woman grasps all the practical bearings of the case and the man idealises.

'The orchard walls are high, and hard to climb,' says Juliet.
 'With Love's light wings,' says Romeo.
 'If they do see thee, they will murder thee,' says Juliet.
 'There lies more peril in thine eye
 'Than twenty of their swords,' returns Romeo.

So in the scene under consideration :—

Macbeth. There's one did laugh in his sleep and one cried *murder!*
Lady. There are two lodged together.
Macbeth. Still it cried, *Sleep no more!* to all the house.
Lady. Who was it that thus cried?
 Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
 They must lie *there*.

It would take too long to show in detail how many points of this play that lay dormant whilst Lady Macbeth was acted as a modernised Clytemnestra have come to light at Miss Terry's touch. The above parallel is given to show not only that her reading is a true one, but that it is in the broadest sense Shakespearian.

Saying quite definitely that Mr. Irving's present Macbeth cannot count as a success, we append the statement that the standard we judge him by is of his own raising. It may be further added that this play affords no opportunity for the vein in which Mr. Irving has scored his most marked successes.

In the fiendishly ironical comedy of 'Richard III.' he was at his best, and Mr. Irving's best is not to be beaten. Variations on the same theme helped to secure the successes of 'Louis XI.,' of 'The Lyons Mail,' of his Mephistopheles, and his Iago. There was a grimmer touch of the same ironical humour in Mathias' interview with Christian in 'The Bells,' a tenderer one in Hamlet's speeches to Polonius. For this side of his genius Macbeth gives him no scope. The new rendering is inferior to the earlier one; the direction in which the actor has

moved since he first handled Macbeth may be discerned by a comparison of his present and past readings of the speech that begins—

The Prince of Cumberland ! That is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap.

Formerly that was given (as it is in the text) as an *aside*. Having taken leave of Duncan, Macbeth paused, with his weapon on his shoulder, to utter the words, before departing to take horse for Inverness, and then the scene went on to its conclusion. Now the last speech of the scene is cut out; Duncan and the rest file off by a side entrance, Macbeth rushes out at the main door, returns, and, clutching the door-curtain, delivers the *aside*, with violent facial emphasis, as a *soliloquy*.

It is always open to a great actor to read the part he plays in any way not inconsistent with the text. The fault of Mr. Irving's Macbeth is not at all that it is not the view of the part that would commend itself to the best critics, but that it is as a whole ineffective. The murder of Duncan being a familiar thought to his Macbeth, the prompting of the witches loses almost all its point. Again, the frenzied despair of his attitude at Dunsinane has been so continually anticipated in the earlier portions of the play as to be lacking in emphasis when exhibited in its right place. Granting to the actor-manager considerable latitude when adapting a play more than two hundred and fifty years old to the stage of to-day, a strong protest must be entered against him when he alters important passages of the author, with the result of making an effective scene ineffective, as is the final one of the Lyceum revival.

To realise how well constructed for the stage this scene is, as Shakespeare wrote it, we must look at it as a succession of effects.

Macbeth, convinced that he is invulnerable, wears his armour from its habitual association with the fact of war, but carries his shield slung behind him. This attracts the attention of the audience to his conviction that 'No man of woman born shall harm Macbeth.' Thus unprotected he fights with and kills young Siward, who, though brave, is a mere youth. For himself he has thus brought prophecy to the test and proved it; the audience plainly see it is only the skilled fighter giving odds to the unskilled and beating him in spite of them. Meeting Macduff he avoids him; certain of success he does not wish his soul to be burdened with Macduff's death. Macduff assaults him. An alarum arrests the fight when scarce begun, and Macbeth tells his adversary that a charm protects his own life. Then Macduff reveals

himself as the one man to whom the words of the charm do not apply. The fear engendered by this revelation makes Macbeth refuse the combat, until the bitter taunts of Macduff, acting as a tonic, bring his mind back to its natural mood of military courage. Then throwing his shield before his body he dies fighting sanely. Nothing in Shakespeare is better adapted for the stage than this as it stands: the changes of mood are indicated in a masterly way by broad effects. The episode with young Siward is most artistic in the effect it produces and in the moment at which it is introduced.

What have we of all this at the Lyceum? Not only does Macbeth come into battle bareheaded and shieldless, but Macduff, who has carried a massive headpiece, a heavy shield, and a particularly business-like battle-axe all the way from England to Scotland, leaves those trifles behind him the first time he goes into action. If Shakespeare had not made Macbeth allude to his shield and the crest of his helmet, it would be a conceivable view of the matter that, thinking himself invulnerable, he should go incompletely armed into battle. But what of Macduff? If there is any point in Macbeth's fighting bareheaded, it is spoiled by Macduff's doing the same. After this it is not surprising that the important scene with young Siward is cut out; that Macbeth, fighting when he knows he may be wounded, does so in the same way as when he believed himself invulnerable; and that his noble last speech is mutilated by the words—

Before my body
I throw my warlike shield—

being cut out of it. The other parts in the play were well filled. As Malcolm, Mr. Webster struck a pleasant note early in the evening by the natural cordiality and grace of his greeting to the wounded soldier who had helped him in the battle. He and Mr. Alexander (Macduff) made a fine piece of art of a difficult scene by sympathetic and restrained acting. The general level of the Thanes was one of high excellence, and Banquo (Mr. Wenman) was (whilst still in the flesh) notably impressive.

To return to the mounting of the play: the tendency to make this part of a dramatic exhibition too prominent has a respectable antiquity of over two thousand years. Aristotle says, speaking of tragedy:— 'The decoration has also a great effect, but of all the parts is most foreign to the art. As to those poets who make use of the decoration to produce the marvellous only, their purpose has nothing in common with that of tragedy.' In the present revival our sense of reality is perpetually obliged to change its focus. In one scene the stage is encrusted with solid buildings whose steps will support unmoved the descent of a

crowd ; in another the whole side of a room visibly quivers when Mr. Irving clutches a curtain. The illusion of the court-yard scene would be almost perfect were it not destroyed by an unaccountable illumination that follows the faces of the principal actors. In that scene the solid building so encroaches on the small stage, that the dagger speech, usually a processional one, has to be taken circuitously. A couple of ' Tarquin's ravishing strides ' would have taken Macbeth from his starting-place to his goal.

Even those who applaud the mounting of the play murmur at the fact that, whilst Banquo's ghost ascends from his trap-door, the banqueting-hall is plunged in darkness of which the banqueters are unconscious. It has been suggested that the ghost should be imagined, and not represented at all. I have seen this done on the stage, and it has the advantage that there is no suggestion of the ludicrous about it. The mention of Banquo's 'gory locks' is more impressive than any stage representation of them. Only this view is in absolute opposition to Shakespeare's. Banquo's ghost is an apparition, not a fancy like the 'air-drawn dagger.' It is as incorrect to leave out the one as to represent the other. The best representation in late years of this phantasm was also the simplest. Banquo's ghost entered silently in the full light, in his habit as he had lived ; and, scarcely noticed by the audience, and not at all by the feasters, seated himself on Macbeth's stool with his back to the auditorium. Macbeth, seeking a seat, took him for one of his guests, until Lennox, to whom he was invisible, pointed out the 'place reserved.' Then Banquo turned on Macbeth his blood-stained, deathly-white countenance.

A genuine charm is added to the play by Sir Arthur Sullivan's musical setting. Always beautiful and appropriate, it is subordinated to the drama with such a delicacy of taste as to be rather felt than heard.

In withholding from this revival of Macbeth a fuller measure of approbation, we would remind the reader that it is not the nakedness of the land that we have pointed out to him, but its overgrowths. The multitude of ways by which he strives to raise his theatre to his own idea of perfection would entitle Mr. Irving to reply to any criticism in a paraphrase of the words of his latest impersonation :—

Who can be actor, manager, archæological and sympathetic,
Real and romantic in a moment? No man.

H. ARTHUR KENNEDY.

The World in January

THE Bismarcks assuredly sacrifice little to the Graces, and Count Herbert's letter to Sir Robert Morier (which is the incident of the moment at which these lines are written) is an almost perfect specimen of the retort uncourteous—the big boy's contemptuous 'Shut up, or I'll hit you.' For what are the facts of the case? The *Kölnische Zeitung*, generally known to be in receipt of official information and specially to reflect the views of Count Bismarck himself, makes charges of a most calumnious character against Sir Robert Morier. Sir Robert Morier, recognising the official nature of the paper, and having the knowledge that Count Bismarck when in England last July had hinted at similar charges, promptly gives them the most conclusive disproof possible (in the form of a letter from Marshal Bazaine), and requests Count Bismarck to insert an official contradiction; to which the Count simply replies that he shall do nothing of the kind, and so, without even a recognition of the truth of our Ambassador's statement, goes on his way rejoicing.

The incident will be ten days old before these lines see the light, and, as time goes fast nowadays, probably nearly forgotten; but, coming as it does as a sort of sequel to Lord Sackville's treatment at Washington, it certainly throws a strong light on the flimsy character of diplomatic courtesies. That one of the foremost statesmen of a friendly power should be able, without fear of results, to sanction, or at least to permit, the publication of such a statement about a British official, and when the statement is disproved should coolly ignore his responsibility, shows almost as much indifference to truth and justice as the American President's action towards Lord Sackville showed to the requirements of courtesy. Both incidents, curiously, have their origin in journalism; and it is worthy of grave consideration whether the direct responsibility of a Minister for the statements professing to be based upon official sources of information should not be more directly recognised than is at present the case.

Instances are not wanting in our own country to show that this is desirable, and that the line requires to be drawn firmly between the responsibility of a journal for what it affirms with its own sanction, and that which it states on behalf of the Government of the day.

Confuse the issues as much as possible, believe in the impartiality of

the judges as heartily as we may, it is still difficult to deny that the Parnell trial, as it is generally called, is substantially a case in which a newspaper and the Government are on one side and the Irish members on the other. No doubt the responsibility is not so direct as in the case of the *Kölnische Zeitung*, but it exists to no small degree; the political antagonist strikes his foe through an unsigned editorial, and if the wound be not a mortal one, it can be repeated indefinitely as occasion serves, and, as matters now stand, with almost perfect impunity.



The address of General Boulanger to the electors of the Seine is remarkable only for the occasion on which it appears and its reiterated disclaimer of all dictatorial ambitions. The occasion, however, is so important that the result of the election may well turn the wavering scale on the rise or fall of which depends the peace of Europe; for, without going so far as to assert with the *Spectator*, that whichever side wins war must probably result, it is certain that if General Boulanger be elected he will owe his success, in a very considerable degree, to the influence of M. Rochefort and the readers of *L'Intransigeant* and *La Lanterne*, and that influence is not likely to tend towards peace either at home or abroad. The great difficulty of the anti-Boulangists at the present moment is the selection of a candidate whose name shall carry sufficient weight, and whose personality shall yet be sufficiently comprehensive to unite the various sections of their party. In any case, the election is one of immense importance, not only to France, but the whole of Europe, and the indifference to it shown in English newspapers is simply unaccountable.



The keenest patriot (Lord Wolseley excepted) must, we think, have felt some little doubt as to whether the recent 'victory' at Suakim was a matter on which to dilate very copiously. Somehow one does not fancy that it was a very English way of fighting, to sit in the trenches and fire comfortably at the enemy while we sent the Egyptian battalions to storm their position; and considering that the enemy ran away when the Egyptians got within two hundred yards of them, and that the whole affair took (official time) three minutes, we feel tempted to echo Mr. Labouchere's criticism, that, if 'this be a feat of arms over which John Bull is to crow and pat himself on the back, it is pretty clear to my mind that John's fighting days are over.'



A word must be said here, late though it be, of regret for the death of Laurence Oliphant, diplomatist, spiritualist, author, and 'man of the world.' Enough has been said in the daily and weekly journals of this man's strange experiences and stranger beliefs, and it only remains here to pay a tribute to his powers as a writer. These were of a very peculiar kind, of which, perhaps, the most salient feature was a combination of enthusiasm and cynicism difficult to define, and still more difficult to understand. Aristocratic writing, in ordinary London sense of that most degraded word, Oliphant's certainly was; pregnant with allusions scarcely disguised to Lord this and Lady that, and full of knowledge of those byways, those *culs-de-sac* of Society, the itinerary of which is so coveted by a certain section of the outside public.

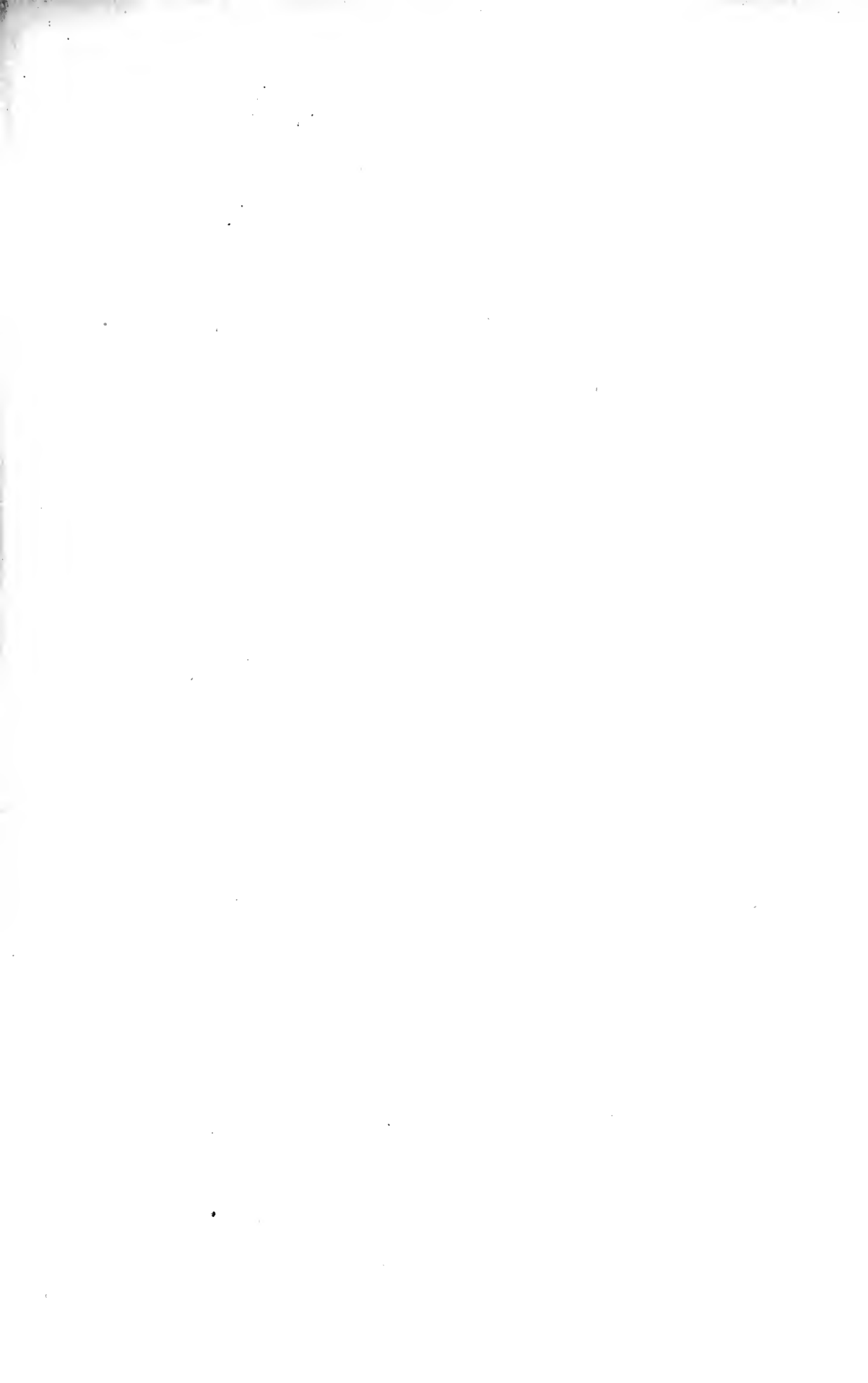
But there was more to distinguish them than this knowledge. The writing was not only bright, sparkling, witty, and *à la mode*, it was marked with a delicate disdain of the very doings which alone the writer cared to chronicle, and its wit played lambently over the doings of Society, while it ignored the ways, deeds, and emotions of those who were 'outside the radius.' His name will not live, for his influence was essentially a personal one; but to the small section of what is called 'the upper classes' who profess literature, his memory will long be dear, for he was a survival of that almost extinct class, the aristocratic man of letters. A cynic with a kind and brave heart, a *persifleur* with a purpose, a man of action, and a dreamer, a diplomatist and a devotee, a recluse and a man of fashion, and, above all, a writer, speaker, and thinker of daring originality and almost unequalled fascination, Oliphant combined the most opposing characteristics; and that with such capacities he only wrote a couple of amusing Society novels and an unreadable treatise on an impossible religion is but the one fine contradiction which completes his story.



The recent production of 'Macbeth' by the Lyceum company has been criticised pretty freely, and I believe in another portion of this number, but it is worth while here to protest with some emphasis against the fulsomeness with which several of the papers have belauded Mr. Irving—not for his acting, but for the amount of money he has spent on mounting the play. We have taken some trouble to read all the 'get-at-able' criticisms of the present revival, and there is to the best of our belief not a single one which deals fairly and honestly, or at all adequately, with what is after all the main question, namely, 'How the play is acted.' Disquisitions, futile and stupid to the last degree, of whether the torches should be turned up or down at a certain moment; elaborate

discussions as to the flight of the witches, or the archæology of Macbeth's chairs and tables ; compliments to Miss Terry's back-hair, and rejoicings over the divine wrath of Mr. Irving when he found his Brummagem armour had been sent up burnished instead of dull ; gentle lectures to Sir Arthur Sullivan on the character of his music, and flaming accounts of the unprecedented labours of Mr. Hurst the box-keeper in booking seats for the next six-and-twenty years—more or less—on one and all of these subjects, and many another, which would take us too long to enumerate, do the daily papers show great energy and display extraordinary knowledge. But the play is (apparently) not the thing on which it is decent to express an opinion. We 'must not pump spring water unawares upon a gracious public full of nerves,' and how much less must the critics speak evil or even whisper genuine criticism of the great theatrical Panjandrum. It is easy to laugh at such a state of things, but it is—oh, how pitiable! What chance is there for the advance of good art either in acting, painting, or literature, when every word which our teachers say is loaded with partiality or weakened by fear. These flunky raptures about the cost of a robe or the elaborateness of a scene are unworthy of the name of criticism ; they are, and should be, regarded (even if they are not paid for) as advertisements ; for the subjects with which they are concerned have nothing to do with the art of acting, and the only justification for the existence of a theatrical criticism is its giving the public trustworthy information whether any given theatrical production is a good play or a bad one. The truth of the matter is very simple, and may as well be stated plainly once more : and that is, that there are certain managers whom the theatrical critic, even if he desire ever so much to be honest, dare not offend ; they (the managers) in the old phrase 'carry too many guns,' and the nearest approach to fault-finding with which they will put up, is objection to one or two minor points. But the remedy for this is in some degree in the hands of the public. Newspaper managers are keen to find out the popular opinion on any subject, and once let the public cease to gloat over the *entourage* of the actor, once let them consider him only as a man or woman *paid to act well*, and only deserving of approbation or interest in as far as he performs his contract—once let this happen, the critic will soon be instructed not to write eulogiums upon the manager's munificence or the thousand accessories of the piece, but to say plainly : 'This is a good play' ; or, 'This is a bad one.' And when that happens we shall be approaching a real revival of the drama, and no longer be misled by those who should guard us from incompetent work.

THE EDITOR.





They could not sit at meals but feel how well
It soothed each to be the other by. KEATS.

THE ISABELLA SUPPER. Sir John Millais, R.A.

The Isabella Supper

THERE are few problems in art criticism more difficult to solve than this. In the case of great artists what is the right measure of the blame or praise to be bestowed upon later work in which there may be noted a great difference of merit? A difference for which not only the technical performance is responsible, but in which the aim of the painter, his imaginative conception, his intellectual and emotional capacities, are all concerned.

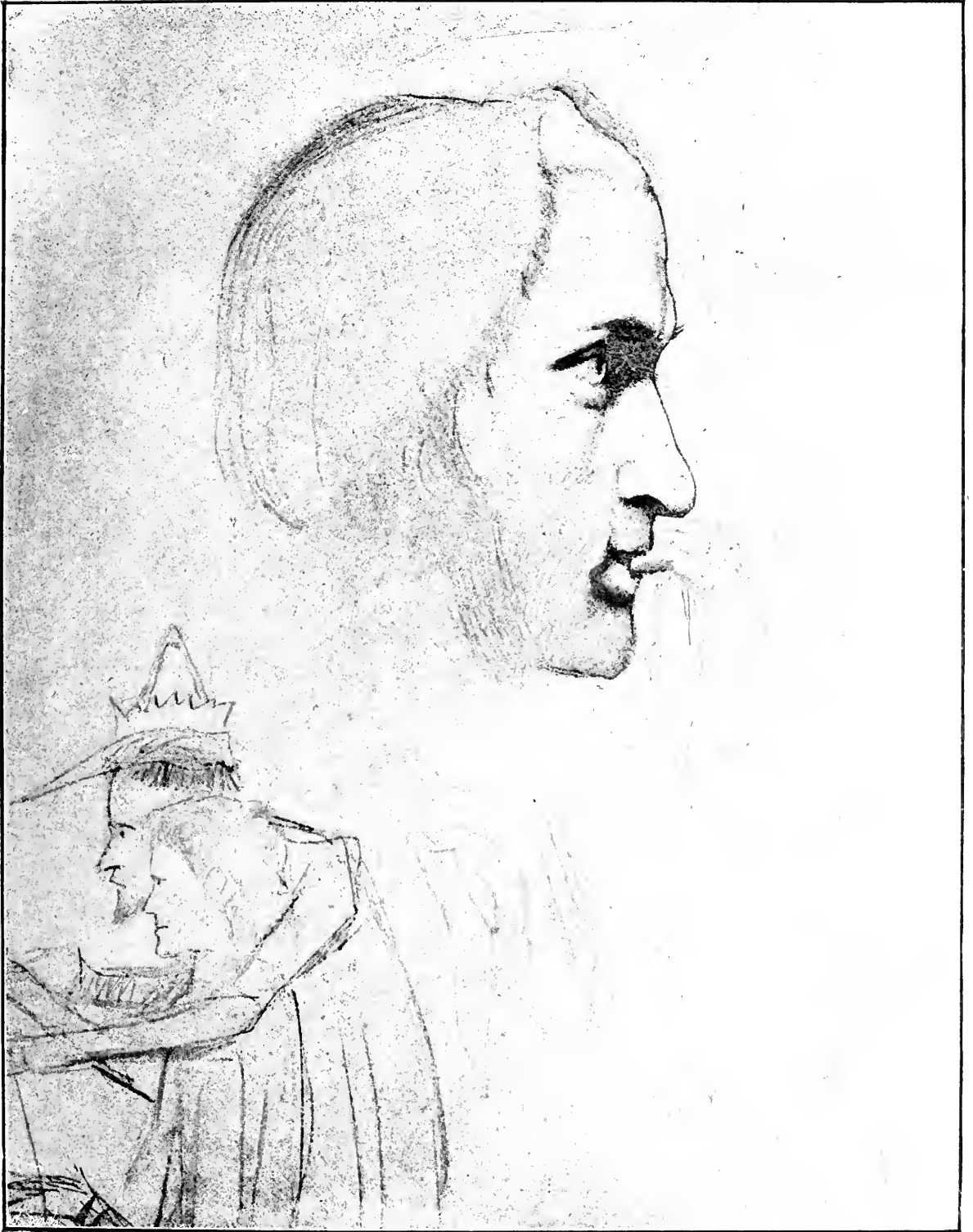
The question is beset with difficulties of which one or two may be briefly noted. For instance, the critic if he would be just in such an instance must strive to discover how far the change of aim, deficiency of purpose, or lack of thorough work is the necessary result of the development of the painter's individual character, and how far it is due to the circumstances of his life, to the habits and influence of the generation in which he lives—how far, in fact, he is personally responsible or irresponsible. We have clearly no right to expect artists to be superior to temptations to which ordinary people habitually succumb, and because a man possesses the artistic faculty we should not therefore conclude that he must needs be a saint in morals, or an ant in diligence, or wholly indifferent to the merits of wealth and position, or always bending that bow which Apollo himself is said occasionally to slacken. But we may fairly ask him, as we ask any other workman, to habitually give us his best work, to paint as well as he can—not only as well as Jones or Brown; in short, to maintain while his powers are still in their prime the level to

which he has attained. For though we owe our great artist much, he too owes us something. We have (*ex hypothesi*) recognised his greatness, we have rejoiced in it and him, we have, after perhaps many hesitations, pinned our faith to his performances not only in the past but the future. His obligation to us is an unwritten one, but not therefore less imperative, and if it be not discharged we are morally defrauded; we feel not only that we have parted with our sympathy and approbation hastily, but almost as if they had been obtained from us under false pretences.

Probably no artist of to-day has excited such keen feelings of disappointment amongst his warmest admirers as the painter whose picture forms our frontispiece. Between the artist of the 'Isabella Supper,' as the picture is generally and colloquially designated, and the Sir John Millais of such fancy portraits as 'Portia,' 'Cinderella,' 'Caller Herrin,' &c. &c., what a gulf does there not apparently yawn! How perilous must have been that razor bridge by which the artist passed! Perhaps in the nakedness of outline in which this drawing has been executed the change in the character of Sir John Millais's work is even more apparent than in the picture itself, or any finished light and shade reproduction.

There are slight differences in the background and some of the heads between this outline and the finished oil picture, and this fact leads me to believe that the drawing as here shown was executed before the oil, and subsequently to all the studies for the various heads, one of which is given on the following page; the object of the extreme care and finish of the pen-and-ink work being not to settle the composition, but to mark the intended character of the heads and expressions while the conception was still fresh and living in the painter's mind. It seems as though Mr. Millais¹ had feared to lose the vision of his 'Isabella,' as if he did not feel entirely secure until it was set down in these unfaltering beautiful lines in which there is not a stroke which is hurried or careless, blundering or timid. I hardly know where in modern work there is to be found an instance of such pen-and-ink work as this; perhaps the nearest approach would be in Retzsch's outlines, in which there is an equal severity, an equal decision and reticence. But the nationality of this picture is not German but Italian in character, and its spirit has no trace of the Gothic asceticism of the German painters, but is, through but a slight disguise, sensuous and sentimental.

¹ He was, of course, *Mr.* Millais then.



STUDY FOR HEAD IN THE ISABELLA SUPPER. Sir John Millais, R.A.

Indeed the contrast between the execution of this drawing and the spirit in which it has been conceived is not the least of its many remarkable qualities. It is as though the conception of a heart on fire had been executed by a hand of ice, or rather as though the composition of the picture with its thought and emotion had been supplied to the artist, who had received them faithfully bit by bit, and set each quality down in exact proportion as he received it, with the cold brilliant reflection of a mirror. Was it indeed so? Was there another mind which conceived this supper at the house of Isabella, and worked upon Millais to paint it, not in the artist's own manner, but in that of the seer? This may have been so, and when we remember the earlier drawings of Rossetti, and the great influence his art and his personality exercised over the P. R. Brotherhood, it is not difficult to know whose was the influence. To those who are acquainted with Rossetti's work, not in its later stages of decline, or in its magnificent prime of richest colour and luxuriant beauty of human form and profusion of mystic detail, but in its early purity and almost ascetic spirit, there is, indeed, no doubt possible as to the fact of Millais having painted the picture in question under the inspiration of his half-Italian comrade, and it is possible that the caricature in the corner of the studies here reproduced represents Rossetti teaching Millais how to design such a subject. The curious headgear of the master here is worthy of notice: apparently it represents a crown slipped over a fool's cap, and the projecting piece in front under the crown is not unlike one of the mediæval Italian head coverings.

The study of the man's head here given seems to me extremely interesting for several reasons, especially when it is taken in connection with the completed outline. The study was, of course, intended for the second of the wicked brothers—the one who is holding up a glass of wine to the light. The delicacy and beauty of the original pencil drawing is very great, but much of this is unfortunately lost in the reproduction. The entirely natural modern character of the study is, however, clearly visible, and the efforts of imagination which ultimately transformed this serious amiable, modern gentleman into the cruel mediæval Italian of the picture is remarkable. In no other instance with which I am acquainted has Millais shown this power of transforming his model into 'something new and strange'; nor is there evident in his pictures, as far as I have studied them, sufficient intellectual insight, sufficient understanding of subtle phases of emotion, to effect such a transformation. To my great regret (owing to lack of time to get a satisfactory block made, the first having failed) I am forced to omit here the study for the

head of Isabella, which is (in the original) on the same large sheet of paper with the male head, but this shows an equal change from the head in the outline and the finished picture.

I cannot help thinking that the true explanation of the matter may be that the original of this reproduction we give in outline was executed by Millais in order to set down clearly some suggestions as to the composition, expressions, and characters appropriate to the scene, which had been made to him by Dante Gabriel Rossetti; perhaps on different occasions in isolated sketches, perhaps in one rough outline of the whole proposed picture. This supposition may, of course, be wholly wrong. I have no ground whatever for it save those I have indicated, and one or two little details of the composition which I need not dwell upon. But if the supposition be erroneous and there is no actual suggestion from Rossetti in the picture, the work remains a most extraordinary specimen of an artist (English in character and modern in feeling) jumping into another painter's 'intellectual and emotional skin' and producing a picture which is in subtlety of imagination, in penetration of character, in nationality, and in general spirit, entirely alien to his genius, his birth, and his intellectual capacity.

HARRY QUILTER.

Taxation and Finance

HAVING been practically conversant with financial subjects for the best part of half-a-century, I am naturally disposed to look at the questions of the day a good deal from the point of view of financial policy. It is clear to me that we are approaching a grave crisis as regards this policy. The necessity of placing the defences of the country in a state in which we can contemplate the enormous armaments of foreign nations and the menacing contingencies of European wars with tolerable security, has become so apparent that a very large expenditure is inevitable in order to bring up the army and navy to a standard below which they never should have been allowed to fall. This of itself necessitates a departure from the principles on which Chancellors of the Exchequer have been accustomed to frame Budgets, viz. to pare down estimates, pay off National Debt, and, if possible, reduce taxation: in a word, to make immediate popularity with the House of Commons and the country the primary condition in the art of Budget-making.

It is evident that this is incompatible with the necessity of making a large and immediate expenditure on our armaments, and this of itself makes a new departure in finance inevitable.

To make a new departure we must also take into account the growing power of a vastly enlarged public opinion and electorate, which insists on applying rules of common sense and natural equity to all

institutions and all subjects of national policy, and will no longer be contented with authority and tradition. Finance, being a subject which comes home to everyone in the unpleasant form of taxation, cannot escape from this influence ; and if the country is called upon to incur larger expenditure, it will insist on two things : first, that it gets money's worth for its money ; and, secondly, that the requisite taxation is levied fairly as between different classes.

Having thought much on these subjects, I have attempted, in the following article, to define some of the principal points which will have to be considered, and to indicate the lines upon which Budgets, suited to the altered circumstances of the times, will have to be framed. My conclusions may be right or wrong, but at any rate they are not those of a mere amateur, but of one who has in his time prepared two Indian, and assisted in preparing two English Budgets.

It has been said ' Give me a good foreign policy and I will give you good finance.' There is much truth in this saying, for our foreign policy is responsible for a large portion of the national expenditure. Without going back to the great wars of the last century, or the struggle against the French Republic and Napoleon, respecting which opinions may differ, and confining ourselves to recent history, we may affirm with confidence that the Crimean, the Abyssinian, and the Afghan wars were diplomatic wars, and that our expenditure in Egypt, the Soudan, and South Africa is to a great extent attributable to a vacillating and unwise foreign and colonial policy. The surest test of the wisdom or unwisdom of a policy is to ask ourselves whether, if we had to do the thing over again, we should do it as it was done, or differently. Assuredly, in the cases above mentioned, we should not do it as it was done ; and it is within the mark to say that at least 100,000,000*l.* has been spent without necessity, without result, and with a loss rather than a gain of reputation.

At the same time there is a reverse to the medal, and it may be asserted with equal truth that bad finance often makes bad foreign policy. When I say bad finance I mean bad in the sense of neglecting the cardinal maxim that true economy is based on efficiency, and that a ' penny-wise and pound-foolish ' policy succeeds no better with a State than with an individual. Extravagance, rather than economy, is the certain result of living in a condition oscillating between periodical panic and periodical parsimony.

If we inquire what has been the cause of this state of things, the answer must be that we have felt ourselves to be unprepared, and being unprepared we have been nervous and afraid. Afraid of what? Practically there are only two Powers from whom any serious danger can be apprehended, Russia and France. The danger from Russia is remote, for she could neither invade our shores, nor contest our naval supremacy. It resolves itself into the single apprehension that she might attack our Indian Empire. Now as to this, it is by no means certain that Russia would menace India if England abandoned the policy of bolstering up Turkey and thwarting Russia at every point in Eastern Europe. The Turkish rule in Europe is surely and speedily decaying, and the disposal of the inheritance is very much more the affair of Austria and Germany than of England. Any extension of the Russian Empire in this direction would tend to diminish rather than increase the chances of her undertaking a great war of aggression against India. But suppose the Russophobists are right and that Russia really does entertain such a project, what is required to make our Indian frontier, humanly speaking, absolutely secure? Simply that we should be able to send there at a short notice 30,000 or 40,000 additional English troops fully equipped and ready for immediate service. With such a reinforcement added to the English and Native armies already there, and the command of the frontier passes, no one but an amateur strategist planning campaigns on small-scale maps can suppose that Russia would undertake such a tremendous enterprise as that of sending an army hundreds of miles from its base across the rugged mountains and warlike tribes of Afghanistan to attack us.

But the possibility of sending such a force in case of need to India is a question of English finance, for we cannot throw the cost exclusively on India without provoking widespread discontent, both by the sense of injustice and by the pressure of additional taxation.

The Indian question is, however, only one branch of the much larger question of the naval and military defence of the empire. To feel secure, we ought to be in a position where we can command the seas and repel invasion from any probable enemy. If it is asked, from what possible or probable enemy? the reply must be—from France. France alone is in a position to menace our shores with invasion, or to contest our naval supremacy. It may be said that the interests of the two countries in preserving peace are so identical, and the consequences of war to both would be so disastrous, that a rupture between them is a remote contingency.

So it is, no doubt, as far as England is concerned, but unfortunately the history of France leads to a different conclusion. The wars of Louis XIV. and of Napoleon were wars opposed to the true interests of France, and ended in disaster; but yet, in quite recent times, we have seen France engaged in four wars—the Crimean, the Italian, the Mexican, and the German, of each one of which it may be distinctly said that it was a dynastic war, undertaken for no substantial object affecting the well being or safety of the French nation, but, on the contrary, involving a certain heavy sacrifice of treasure and blood for no sufficient reason, and with the net result of lowering the place of France in the scale of nations. They were wars undertaken in defiance of common sense, for the sole purpose of consolidating the throne of a political adventurer.

What has happened once may happen again. Administration is so centralised in France that whoever gets hold of the War and Foreign Offices in Paris can plunge the nation into war almost without its knowing it and against its wish. The temptation to do so for a weak Government is always very great, for although the majority of sober and sensible men and of rural electors might be opposed to war, there is always a turbulent and restless minority in Paris, the large towns, and the press, whose influence is more immediately felt, with whom any measure appealing to the national Chauvinism and promising *la gloire* would for the moment be popular. The strong feeling of patriotism also, which is one of the honourable traits of the French character, would, for a time, induce all parties to lay aside their differences and support the Government of the day when once engaged in war.

There is always a danger, therefore, that under any form of government the man or men at the head of affairs might, if driven to extremities, follow the example of Louis Napoleon, and seek an escape from domestic difficulties by involving the country in war. Nor is there any security that if Germany and her allies seemed too strong to be attacked, England might not be selected as affording a less dangerous antagonist. The interests of France and England are in contact at so many points—in Egypt, Madagascar, Newfoundland, and the Pacific—that collisions frequently arise which are smoothed over with difficulty—as in the case of the New Hebrides—even when both Governments are sincerely desirous of peace, and which would easily furnish pretexts for war if either Government desired it.

The cardinal point, therefore, of English policy ought to be, while

doing all that is possible to maintain friendly relations with France, to keep in view the possibility of a renewal of the old historical wars between England and its restless and rival neighbour. To avert such a calamity the same measures are needed as to protect ourselves from serious dangers in case we are attacked. Our naval supremacy should be so assured that there is no temptation to attack us, and our home defences such, that the risk of invasion, in case some of the untried contingencies of modern warfare gave the enemy a temporary command of the Channel, is reduced to a minimum.

As regards the home defences the question resolves itself into a better organisation of the reserve forces, fortifying our principal ports and arsenals, and an increase of the regular army. Above all, we want such an organisation as would insure us against surprise, and enable every man and gun which appear on paper to find their place at once, and take the field in a state of efficiency in case of any sudden emergency. As regards the regular army, the best military authorities seem to agree that the two army corps, of which we have often heard, in a state of immediate readiness, either for home or foreign service, with proper transport, artillery, and other appliances, are about what would be sufficient to give reasonable security. Of these one is a question not of additional expense, but of Irish policy. Without discussing the merits or demerits of this policy, it is an obvious fact that as long as we maintain a policy hostile to a great majority of the Irish race at home and abroad, we must support it by a force of not less than 30,000 soldiers and 15,000 military police, who, in case of war or apprehension of war, could not be withdrawn, and are for all practical purposes non-existent for the defence of the Empire.

In addition to the two army corps there is no doubt that we require more artillery and better organisation for the Reserve, Militia, and Volunteer forces, and stronger fortifications to protect our more important arsenals and seaport towns against sudden attacks. All this costs money, but after all the main question is to insure our naval supremacy. It is evident that this is not the case at present. We may be a little stronger than France if the whole naval force of the two countries could be arrayed against each other in a single engagement ; but it is a question whether we could command, at the same time, both the Channel and the Mediterranean. Probably the command of the latter would depend on the side which Italy took in the war, and our safety ought not to depend on foreign alliances, which we shall be likely to gain if we are strong

and lose if we are weak. But in any case it is pretty clear that with our present force we could not hope to maintain a permanently efficient blockade of four or five ports at once, and prevent portions of the French fleet and cruisers and privateers from escaping and inflicting immense damage on our commerce, and possibly on our coast towns and Colonies. It is the most reckless extravagance to be remitting taxes and paying off National Debt while this state of things continues.

Who is responsible for it? The answer may seem to be paradoxical, but it is nevertheless true: the fault lies mainly with the Treasury.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer is always a powerful, and often the most powerful, member of the Cabinet, and his interests and prepossessions all lie in the direction of cutting down estimates and bringing in popular budgets. He is surrounded by officials whose business it is to criticise all expenditure that admits of being cut down or postponed. It is a useful and necessary function of Government, and ably discharged by men of great intelligence and experience at the Treasury, whose lives have been devoted to it. It requires a strong man as Chancellor of the Exchequer to emancipate himself from this influence and take a large and statesmanlike view of necessary expenditure. And it takes a still stronger man to escape the temptation to earn for himself the character of a sound financier, and for his Government and party a certain immediate popularity, and to brave the attacks sure to be made upon him by ultra-economists and political opponents, for the sake of the ultimate and probably remote results of a really national statesmanship. It is not a question of party; the same influences affect Conservative as Liberal governments; and it has been reserved for the party which is nothing if not Imperialist to furnish some of the most recent and extreme instances of this sacrifice of efficiency to economy, as in the reduction of the Horse Artillery.

There is a mischievous superstition at the Treasury, that the test of a sound financier is to pay off National Debt. This question of a National Debt affords a good illustration of the axiom for which I often contend, that complicated social problems do not admit of hard and fast solutions. Even the primary proposition that a National Debt is an evil, obvious as it seems, is by no means necessarily true. The few remaining countries of the world which have no debts, such as Persia and Morocco, are scarcely countries with which we should wish to exchange

conditions. The example of the United States shows that a surplus may be almost a greater embarrassment than a deficit, and more calculated to produce alternations of artificial stringency and plethora in the money market. The fact is that a National Debt has become almost one of the necessities of a progressive and civilised country. As in the case of a railway company, if traffic expands, money must be spent on increased plant and appliances, and if the capital account is rigidly closed, this can only come out of revenue, and increasing prosperity may mean diminishing dividends. The question is, what is the amount of debt compared with the resources of the nation ; and how the money is spent, whether unprofitably in useless wars, or wisely in prudent precautions against inevitable risks, and on objects such as education and sanitation which promote the welfare and ultimately the wealth of the community. For it must be always remembered that the amount of a National Debt is a relative quantity, depending not on absolute figures, but on the ratio which the annual charge bears to the annual income of the country. Thus a debt of 700,000,000*l.* at 3 per cent., of which the capital cannot be called in, is practically a smaller debt than one of 400,000,000*l.* at 6 per cent. The rate of interest payable on a debt is, however, a very important factor in deciding whether it is or is not wise to increase taxation for the purpose of paying it off. Thus in the case of the United States, which affords the principal instance of large repayment of debt by excessive taxation, the repayment has not been effected without great sacrifices. From being the cheapest the United States have become one of the dearest countries in the world, the mercantile marine has been almost annihilated, and protected industries have grown up which threaten serious difficulties. Experience shows that Protection may succeed as well as Free Trade in its earlier stages, while the demand of the home market is more than sufficient to meet the production. But the time comes when the home market is glutted, and manufacturers must look to foreign markets for the sale of part of their commodities. In such markets they cannot compete with the cheaper products of Free Trade countries, and the United States have already approached this stage.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks the policy pursued by the United States was probably a wise one, for this decisive consideration predominated, that at the end of the war their enormous debt carried interest at 6 per cent., while now they can borrow any amount at 3 per cent. Every 1*l.* therefore redeemed by taxation practically paid off 2*l.* of debt.

In the case of England this consideration does not apply. The rate of interest now paid, especially since the recent Conversion, is so low that there is little to hope from further reductions, and the question of repaying debt may be treated on its own merits, and as one of raising 1% by taxes to pay off 1% of debt. There are two ways of reducing debt, one by actual repayment, the other by outgrowing it. Thus, if we take Mr. Giffen's estimate that the national income, which in 1843 was 515,000,000*l.* a year, is now 1,200,000,000*l.*, while the annual charge for the National Debt has remained stationary, or rather diminished, we have practically paid off more than half our debt. The total charge may be taken at about 25,000,000*l.* a year for interest, and 5,000,000*l.* for sinking funds in the form of terminable annuities or otherwise. That is to say, taking the nominal capital of the debt at 750,000,000*l.*, we were in 1843 in the position of a man who with an income of 500*l.* a year owes 750*l.* or a year and a half's income; and are now in the position of one who, with 1,200*l.* a year, owes the same 750*l.* or less than three-quarters of a year's income. If the same comparison were carried back to the close of the war in 1815, it would show that the burden of the National Debt is practically four or five times less now than it was then.

In making this comparison it must be remembered also that even if the ratio of debt to income remains the same, a large debt with a correspondingly large income is a much lighter burden than in the converse case of a small debt and small resources. Thus, to take an illustration from private life, a debt of 200*l.* is a very serious affair for a clerk living, perhaps with a wife and family to support, on a salary of 200*l.* a year; while a debt of 20,000*l.* is a mere trifle to a man of 20,000*l.* a year. The latter can pay it off with ease out of revenue, and renew it or repay it by a fresh loan, without the slightest difficulty and at a very moderate rate of interest; while to the former it may mean ruin, or a bill of sale of his effects and usurious interest.

It is clearly, therefore, better for a country to remain with a fixed debt and outgrow it, than to attempt to pay it off by taxes which fetter trade and retard the development of industry and wealth. This was substantially the policy of the great Sir Robert Peel when he imposed the income tax, not for the purpose of paying off debt, but to repeal oppressive taxes and inaugurate the system of Free Trade under which the empire has made such marvellous strides in prosperity that, as Mr. Giffen shows, its aggregate annual income has increased in forty-five years

from 515,000,000*l.* to 1,200,000*l.* a year. No one can say that the country would have been as well off if Sir Robert Peel had adopted the opposite policy, which a good many amateur financiers and half-informed journalists now call sound finance, and applied the proceeds of his income tax as a sinking fund. Even Mr. Gladstone, rigid economist as he is, has practically adopted the same policy as Sir Robert Peel, and his splendid financial reforms have been carried out by applying surpluses to reduce and simplify taxation, instead of appropriating them to large repayments of debt.

In fact, it is sufficient for a Chancellor of the Exchequer to aim at avoiding any permanent increase of debt in times of peace. To insure this, as experience shows that with our extended empire, and the growing wants of an increasing population, the necessity of occasional drafts on capital account cannot be avoided, it is wise to frame estimates on the safe side, and make a moderate provision in the way of sinking funds, so as to have surpluses in ordinary years to apply in counteracting this tendency towards increase. But this is a very different thing from opposing an inflexible *non possumus* to all demands for increased expenditure on capital account, however indispensable they may be for national safety and welfare.

If, for instance, it should be clearly established that an outlay of, say, 50,000,000*l.*, in addition to the ordinary estimates, is absolutely necessary in order to bring our army and navy up to the standard necessary to give us reasonable security, there should be no hesitation in raising it by a loan. The charge for it would not exceed 1,500,000*l.* a year, or less than one penny in the pound of income tax, and the existing sinking funds are ample to secure us against its being a permanent addition to the debt. Surely this is better than remaining with our eyes open, only half insured, risking being involved in great wars menacing our very existence, and in all probability having to do expensively in a panic what might have been done efficiently and economically by prudent and timely preparation.

In view of the necessity for larger expenditure to provide for the security of the empire, it is important to consider whether the system of taxation by which the revenue is raised is such as commends itself to the intelligence and good sense of the community, and taxes the different classes fairly in proportion to their several interests. The main argument of demagogues is to represent the army and navy as

institutions by which poor men are taxed to provide outdoor relief for scions of the aristocracy. This is a gross exaggeration, and on the whole there is no civilised country in which taxation is less unfair and less oppressive than in our own. A country in which the total effective taxation for imperial purposes does not exceed 5 or 6 per cent. of the national income, and in which the money wages of labour have doubled and their spending power increased in the last forty years, cannot justly be described as groaning under excessive taxation. Still there is a certain substratum of truth in the assertion that the enormous unearned wealth of the country does not pay as much as it ought towards the defence of the empire and the maintenance of law and order, on which its very existence depends. In order to form any just opinion on this subject it is indispensable to keep clearly in view the fundamental distinction which has been too much overlooked, between earned and unearned income. The former is a creation of nature, the latter of artificial law. The former commands a market all over the world wherever muscles and brains are in request. The latter depends to a great extent on rights and privileges, secured by laws which differ in different ages and countries, and are in this country exceptionally favourable to the extreme rights of property.

The real difficulty in carrying out such a loan as has been suggested is not so much in the amount required, as in the impression which prevails that there is no security for the money being properly spent, and the feeling that our system of taxation is inequitably assessed. As regards the first point, it is unfortunately only too true that under our present system of administration we cannot depend on getting money's worth for our money. How can it be otherwise when we consider what that system has been and to a great extent still is? A long experience of administration, both in the affairs of the State and of private companies, has taught me this lesson—the great secret both of efficiency and economy is to have a clear chain of responsibility, so that, if anything goes wrong, you can at once put your finger on the man who is accountable for it. Having this, and a clear system of accounts, so as to be able to see at a glance what the results really are, give your officials a free hand and let them feel that they are sure of your support as long as the results come out right. And above all avoid frequent changes, and let there be a reasonable degree of permanence in your policy, so that the heads of departments may know what work they have to do and how much they will have to spend, with some tolerable assurance of certainty.

Our existing system violates all these rules. Governments change on the average every three or four years, and with every change of Ministry new men come into power at the Admiralty and War Office, who are selected by Parliamentary considerations and are as a rule totally inexperienced in the work of the departments over which they preside. With new men at the head and changes in many of the principal officials, new views and a new policy are introduced, and a programme is hardly laid down before it is either expanded to meet some momentary panic, or more probably cut down to enable the new Chancellor of the Exchequer to introduce a Budget contrasting favourably with that of his predecessor. The object seems to be not to define responsibility but to conceal it. The Admiralty, for instance, seems to be constituted with curious ingenuity for making it impossible to fix responsibility on any definite individual. Does a new ironclad refuse to answer her helm or rolls so that she cannot fire her guns in a seaway, who is to blame? Is it the Naval Constructor?—but perhaps he was overruled by the Sea Lords, or the First Sea Lord by the Board, or the Board by the First Lord, or the First Lord by the Treasury. Very probably the design was sanctioned and the construction begun in Lord Northbrook's time, and the ship was finished and her defects discovered under Lord George Hamilton. And what reasonable man could hold either one First Lord or the other responsible for not being a heaven-born naval architect, and for adopting plans laid before them by presumably competent officials?

So, again, if guns burst, or ships and forts lie idle for want of guns whose fault is it? Scarcely that of the Admiralty, who do not even manufacture or buy their own guns, but most probably that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Cabinet, who refuse to sanction the necessary expenditure. Or, again, in the case of dockyards, who knows exactly what the work costs, and how that cost compares with that of other countries and of private establishments; and who is responsible for detecting and preventing waste and extravagance?

I often think what the result would be if railway companies managed their affairs on the same principles as the nation applies to its naval and military expenditure. Suppose the Brighton Board were turned out every three years, and a new Board came in with new views, a new policy, and new men at the head of the locomotive, traffic, and other great spending departments, how long would it be before expenses went up and dividends down?

One great advantage of the system which I advocate would be that such a loan would almost of necessity introduce a better system of administration. It would not be sanctioned without a definite and well-considered programme of the purposes to which it was to be applied. So many ironclads; so many cruisers and torpedo-vessels, of such tonnage and speed, and at such estimated cost per annum, until the required number was completed; and so forth for forts, batteries, and other requisites for an efficient army. And this definite expenditure would have to be carried out by individuals, or by small special commissions, which would be selected for their fitness and practical experience in their respective departments, whose tenure of office was independent of Parliamentary changes, and who knew beforehand for five or six years what work they were expected to do and what money they would have to do it with. Of course the general supervision and control would remain of the Cabinet Ministers at the head of the departments, and the ultimate control of Parliament would not be affected. But there would be a practical assurance that so long as the programme was being properly carried out it would not be interfered with; and with a clear system of accounts showing the results year by year, the control of Parliament would really be greater than when matters are so muddled up that it is almost impossible to say what the actual results are, and, if they are unsatisfactory, who is responsible.

The next question is, whether the burden of taxation is equitably assessed on the different classes and interests.

Taking Mr. Giffen's estimate of the national income and its sources, in 1884 the total was 1,200,000,000*l.* a year, of which 400,000,000*l.* was unearned income from capital, and 800,000,000*l.* working income, 180,000,000*l.* of the latter being derived from professional and trading incomes above 150*l.* a year included in the income tax, and 620,000,000*l.* from working incomes of lower amount, principally consisting of wages. Measured by income, therefore, the unearned is one-third, and the earned two-thirds of the total amount. But it must be remembered that the unearned third is derived from realised property and is worth on the average perhaps twenty years' purchase, while the unearned two-thirds is precarious, depending on life, health, employment, and a hundred other contingencies. Without attempting any detailed estimate, it is evident that the value of the unearned property, which requires a higher insurance against risks, far exceeds that of the property which is

earned by work, and that it ought to pay its fairly corresponding share of the premium which is required to cover those risks adequately.

Let us see now how the national revenue to provide for national expenditure is actually raised. Taking the average expenditure of the last three or four years in round figures, it is about 90,000,000*l.* a year, of which

£30,000,000	is for National Debt interest and sinking fund,
30,000,000	for naval and military defence,
20,000,000	for civil administration,
10,000,000	for expenses of collection of revenue.
<u>£90,000,000</u>	

This is met by

Post Office, telegraphs, &c., which are mainly payments for services rendered	£10,000,000
Crown lands and interest on advances, &c., which are not taxes	1,500,000
Miscellaneous, which are mainly matters of account, and fees for services rendered	<u>3,500,000</u>
Revenue which is not taxation	£15,000,000

Leaving in round figures, 75,000,000*l.*, which is raised by taxes as follows, viz. :—

Customs	£21,000,000
Excise	27,000,000
Stamps and taxes, including probate and succession duties	15,000,000
Income tax	<u>12,000,000</u>
	£75,000,000

Continuing the analysis more closely we find :—

TAXES MAINLY PAID BY THE NON-PROPERTIED CLASSES.

Alcohol—Home spirits	£14,000,000
Foreign spirits	4,500,000
Beer	8,500,000
Licenses	<u>3,500,000</u>
	£30,500,000
Tobacco	9,000,000
Tea and coffee	<u>5,000,000</u>
Total	£44,500,000

TAXES PAID EXCLUSIVELY OR PRINCIPALLY BY THE PROPRIETOR CLASSES.

Income tax	£12,000,000	(but of this nearly one-half, according to Giffen's estimate, is paid by trading, professional, and other working incomes).
Probate and succession duties	£8,000,000	
Deeds	2,000,000	
Assessed taxes	3,000,000	
Wine	2,000,000	
	£27,000,000	

Leaving about 3,500,000*l.*, which is raised mainly by taxes affecting trade, such as bills of exchange, receipt stamps, railways, marine insurances, &c.

As far as can be ascertained by the aid of Mr. Giffen's figures, the amount paid specially by unearned income does not exceed 15,000,000*l.* to 20,000,000*l.* a year out of a total imperial taxation of 75,000,000*l.*

The mere statement of the figures is sufficient to show that this is not a sufficient proportion. Without proposing any Radical or Socialist change in our fiscal system, it is evident that such a tax as that on tea ought not to be maintained to enable unearned income to escape from paying a larger share of taxation. The tea duty combines almost every conceivable disadvantage. It discourages temperance, restricts the development of an important industry in our Colonies, and presses with special severity on the unrepresented and weaker female half of the population, whose interests we are bound to consider. The first step towards a really national budget of the future ought to be to repeal this tax, and make up the deficiency by equalising and increasing the duties on all property alike, real or personal, which passes by gift or succession, and is therefore clearly unearned. The additional cost of providing for an efficient navy and army, including the interest and sinking fund of any loan raised for the purpose, ought also to fall mainly on this class, though a portion of it might properly be provided by a temporary reduction of the large amount of sinking fund applied to the redemption of debt.

As regards the manner in which taxation should reach this class of unearned incomes there are two ways possible:—one, to reform the income tax on the broad, simple principle of observing a distinction between earned and unearned income, and making the latter pay at a

higher rate; the other, that of making a large addition to the succession duties, especially on all property which did not go to make a moderate provision for widows and children. Or perhaps both plans might be adopted, though I incline to think that the greater part of any increased taxation on unearned property should take the form of a heavier duty when it passes and repasses for the first time into the hands of those who have done nothing to earn it. A higher rate of income tax on unearned than on precarious income would be fairer in principle, and would remove much of the discontent with the tax which makes Chancellors of the Exchequer court popularity by reducing it, and it would be very desirable to introduce it.

On the other hand, a heavy succession duty is paid once for all in a lifetime, and those who come into land or money by the fortunate accident of having been born, have no reason to complain if their windfall turns out to be somewhat less than it would have been if they could have kept the whole and transferred the burden to their less fortunate brethren who have nothing but what they have worked for.

It is, however, in regard to local taxation that the distinction between earned and unearned income is of most importance. Let me give a practical instance of what is meant by the 'unearned increment.'

There is a mountain valley in Wales the value of which for agricultural purposes might be at the outside 800*l.* a year. But coal and iron were discovered in it; a set of capitalists took a lease, sunk pits, and erected works, and a town sprang up. The first and second set of capitalists lost their money, and about 1,000,000*l.* was sunk in the concern, which ultimately passed into the hands of a third set for about 200,000*l.*, and with this reduced capital is now a fairly flourishing company. But all the time wages were paid, and the population increased until it numbered over 8,000.

As regards the landlord the result was this: that his 800*l.* was converted into 8,000*l.* a year, which has been punctually paid through good times and bad, and represents a capitalised value of probably 160,000*l.* This is as purely a stroke of luck as if he had won the amount at Monte Carlo or by backing a Derby winner; indeed, more so, for in that case he must have stood to lose as well as to win, while in this actual instance he risked nothing. Again, he would not have received this windfall if the law of England had been like that of many other countries, in which minerals below the soil belong to the State or

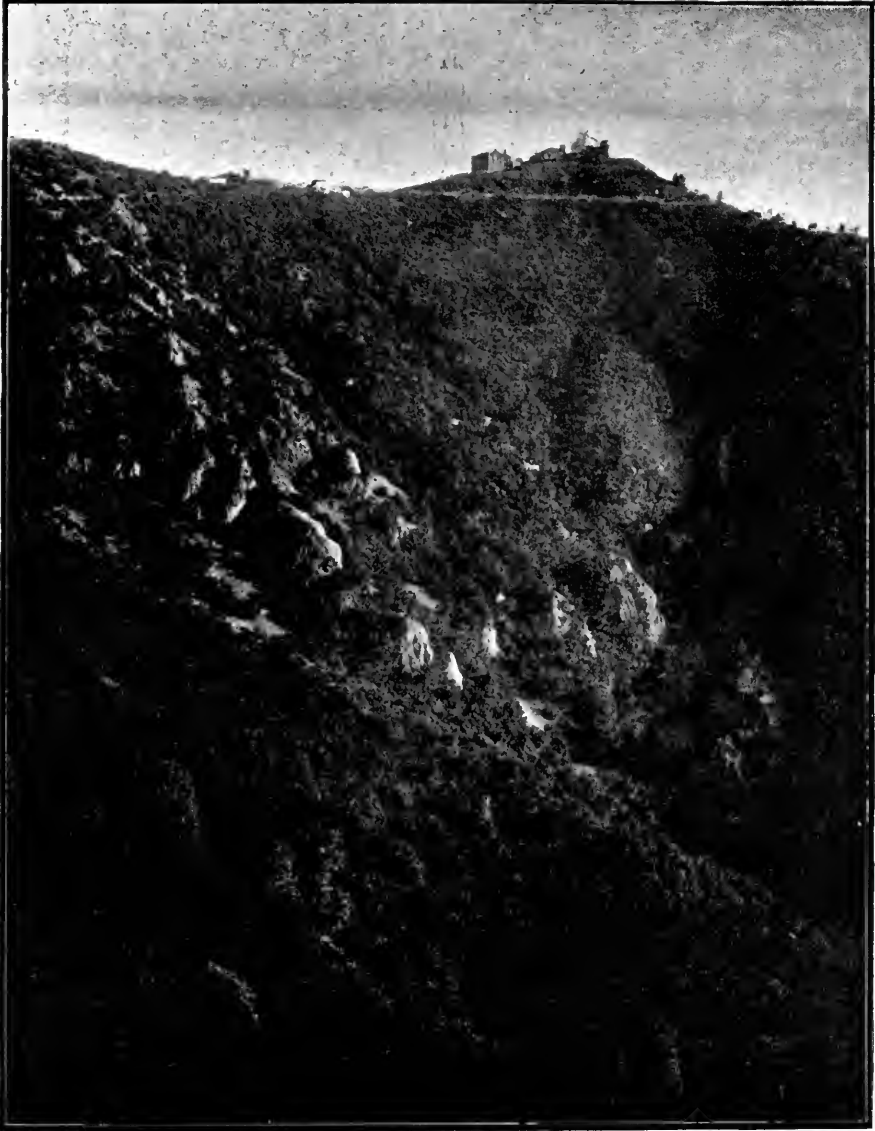
the Commune. Surely in such a case this, the unearned increment, ought to contribute largely towards the local rates for providing sewers, water supply, schools, and other requisites of civilised existence, in the town to which the owner of the soil was indebted for this enormous increase of his wealth.

The same thing applies with equal force to the immense unearned increment which has accrued to the fortunate owners of the soil from the growth of industry and population in large towns. It ought to contribute largely towards local rates, and be held under conditions not fixed solely by the landlord's right to make the most he can of his own, but by a due regard for the welfare of the community by which the additional value of the property has been created.

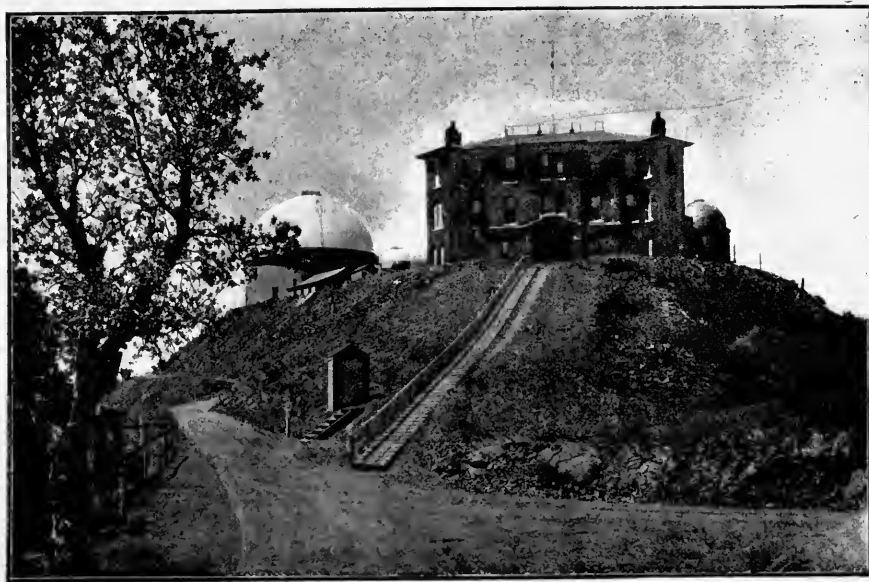
To sum up : if, to use a bold figure of speech, I were Chancellor of the Exchequer, I should look forward to framing a 'budget of the future' on something like the following lines :—

1. To equalise the succession duties on real and personal property, and raise the amount to a sufficient figure to enable me to repeal the tax on tea.
2. To reform the income tax on the principle of charging a higher rate on unearned than on earned income.
3. To assign the 'unearned increment' in towns and from mines and royalties to Local Boards, as a subject for local taxation within equitable limits, in aid of rates for local purposes.
4. To raise by loan a sufficient sum (say 50,000,000*l.*) to be spent over five or six years in placing the army and navy, but especially the navy, on a footing which, according to a programme prepared by practical authorities, would be sufficient to place the defences of the empire on a reasonably secure footing.
5. To entrust the carrying out of this programme, under the supervision of Government and of Parliament, to permanent Commissions of the best practical men in each department, with large powers and clearly defined responsibilities.
6. To provide for the interest and sinking fund of this loan by appropriating to it the saving from the recent Conversion of National Debt and a slight reduction of the sinking fund now appropriated towards paying off its capital.

S. LAING.



MOUNT WASHINGTON.



The Lick Observatory

THE Lick Observatory began its work on the 1st of June of this year. Since that time we have hardly had two cloudy nights, and we do not expect more than three or four such until the end of October. Such unequalled opportunity does not leave much leisure, and the establishment is fully occupied with purely astronomical work, and has no time nor thoughts for anything outside of this. But the greatest of England's astronomical observers has said, 'the end of all observation is communication,' and, therefore, I am glad to comply with the courteous request of the Editor of the *UNIVERSAL REVIEW* and to give here a short account of the present state of the Lick Observatory.

I assume that the history of the institution is fairly familiar to all. Its founder, Mr. James Lick, was an organ-builder, who drifted from his birthplace in Pennsylvania to South America, and finally to San Francisco, where he died in 1876, leaving an estate of 3,000,000 dollars, the whole of which he devoted to public uses. We have in the observatory the work-bench which he brought with him from Chili, and it looks strangely out of place in the vast scientific establishment which had its beginnings in the thought of the workman long ago.

I have endeavoured to find some trace of the very first impulse in Mr. Lick's mind towards founding an astronomical observatory. My own conclusion is that he was attracted to astronomy by reading the works of Andrew Jackson Davis, a spiritualist, who wrote rhapsodical visions of the universe in the style of Poe's *Eureka*. The writings of Davis were in Mr. Lick's library at the time of his death.



The Teneriffe experiment of Professor Piazzi Smyth, lately Astronomer-Royal for Scotland, a generation ago, had attracted the attention of observers to the advantages of elevated sites for observatories, and in 1873 the mounting of the large refractor at Washington had again brought up the question of the proper situation for the greatest telescopes. All these scientific questions came to Mr. Lick in a popular form through the newspapers, and by 1875 he had determined to found an observatory containing 'the most powerful telescope in the world' on some mountain in the State of California. His deed of trust declares

that this telescope 'shall be made useful in promoting science.'

After the intention was once formed, the selection of Mount Hamilton (the old Spanish peak Santa Isabel) as the site of the new observatory soon followed. Santa Clara county built a capital waggon-road to the summit in 1876 for 80,000 dollars, and now maintains it in good condition. The United States granted 1,600 acres of wild land for the site. After four years of tedious litigation between the Lick Trustees and certain heirs, the actual work of levelling off the summit was begun in the summer of 1880. The time from 1880 to 1888 was spent in preparing the site, erecting the various buildings, and constructing the different instruments. The plans for the buildings and for the equipment of the observatory are mainly by Professor Newcomb, Superintendent of the American Nautical Almanac office, and by myself. So far as I can now see, the plans are satisfactory, not only for the present but also for the future.

I had been very much impressed during a visit to the Royal Observatory at Greenwich with the changes which so short a time as two centuries had wrought in the surroundings of that great and famous institution. Accordingly I endeavoured to plan the Lick Observatory so that with trifling additions the structures might serve for the next two hundred years at least. Everything is built in the most solid manner in iron, hard brick, and cement, and no pains have been spared to make the observatory fit to contain the noblest instruments in the world.

While the large refractor (of 36 inches aperture, and 56 feet focal length) is the chief instrument, it is surrounded by a group of others, each one of which is perfect in its way, and all of which go to strengthen and round out its peculiar work. The meridian-circle (by Repsold) is not surpassed by any in the world, and it is exceptionally well installed. It is in charge of my colleague Professor Schaeberle, who will devote it to an investigation of the places of the fundamental stars. The 12-inch equatorial is one of the most perfect instruments in existence. It was for a long time the property of my valued friend Dr. Henry Draper, of New York, who parted with it to purchase the 11-inch photographic telescope which is doing such brilliant work at the observatory of Harvard College at the present time.

By a series of experiments now in progress Mr. Barnard has shown that this very perfect visual objective is itself capable of producing photographs of exquisite sharpness also. We are thus unexpectedly endowed with a new instrument of high excellence for photographic purposes.

The great telescope also possesses an auxiliary photographic lens of 33 inches in aperture.

When this lens is applied in front of the ordinary objective of 36 inches, the telescope is quickly transformed from a seeing instrument into a gigantic photographic camera. Its long focus (49 feet) makes the images large, so that the moon unmagnified is more than five inches in diameter. It is easy to enlarge such pictures from six to ten times, so that portions of the moon can be depicted on a scale of fifty inches or so to the moon's diameter.

For such bright objects as the moon and the larger stars, the expo-

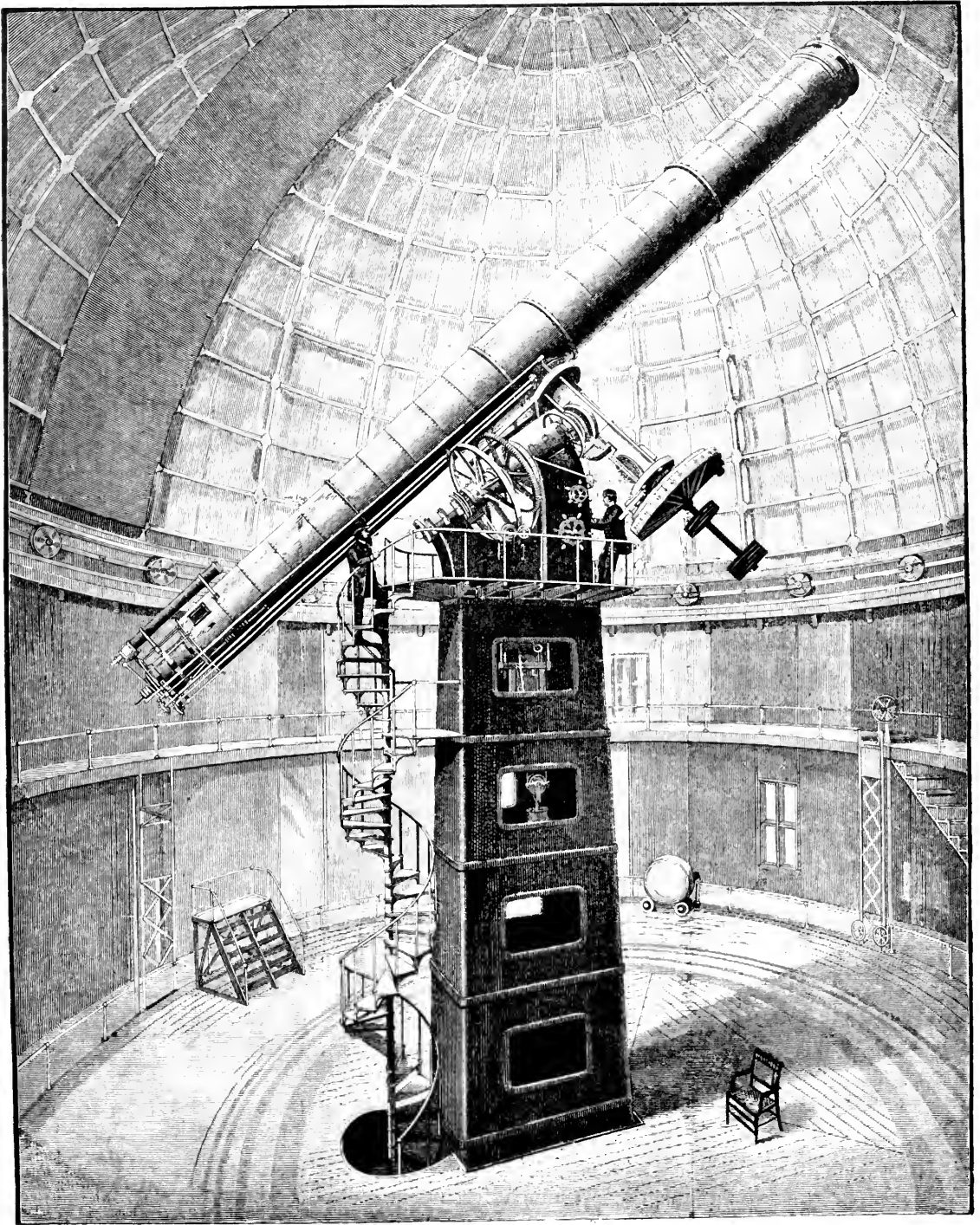
asures are practically instantaneous. For the fainter stars, however, very long exposures of one or two hours are necessary. These require the telescope to follow the stars in their courses from rising towards setting with extreme accuracy, and the pointing of the main telescope must be as precise as possible. We have therefore made provision for attaching the 12-inch telescope alongside the larger one, to serve as a pointing telescope, and this can be accomplished in a few moments. As in these cases so in others. Every instrument in our equipment is arranged to serve some useful purpose auxiliary to the work of the great equatorial.

It is hardly two months since the great telescope has been in working order, and much of this time has been necessarily given to its adjustments and to those of the various machines which manœuvre the great dome and lift the moving floor. We have every reason to be satisfied with most of these. The dome itself is a great structure more than seventy feet in interior diameter. It weighs two hundred tons, and yet it is moved quickly and smoothly without effort on the part of the observer. The lifting floor (an invention of Sir Howard Grubb's) is an immense convenience. I think it is safe to say that no large telescope will in future be mounted without such a contrivance. It is in fact a huge lift sixty feet in diameter, weighing fifty thousand pounds, which can be raised or lowered sixteen and a half feet in seven or eight minutes. For objects near the zenith it is placed at its lowest point, and the observer looks directly upwards into the telescope. For objects near the horizon the floor is raised as high as possible, and a comparatively low step-ladder enables one to reach the eye-piece, the spectroscope, or the photographic plate according to circumstances.

Some idea of the interior of the dome and of the proportions of the telescope can be had from the accompanying cuts, but it is unfortunately impracticable to show in one view the beautiful and majestic symmetry which the makers of the mounting (Messrs. Warner and Swasey) have been able to give to it.

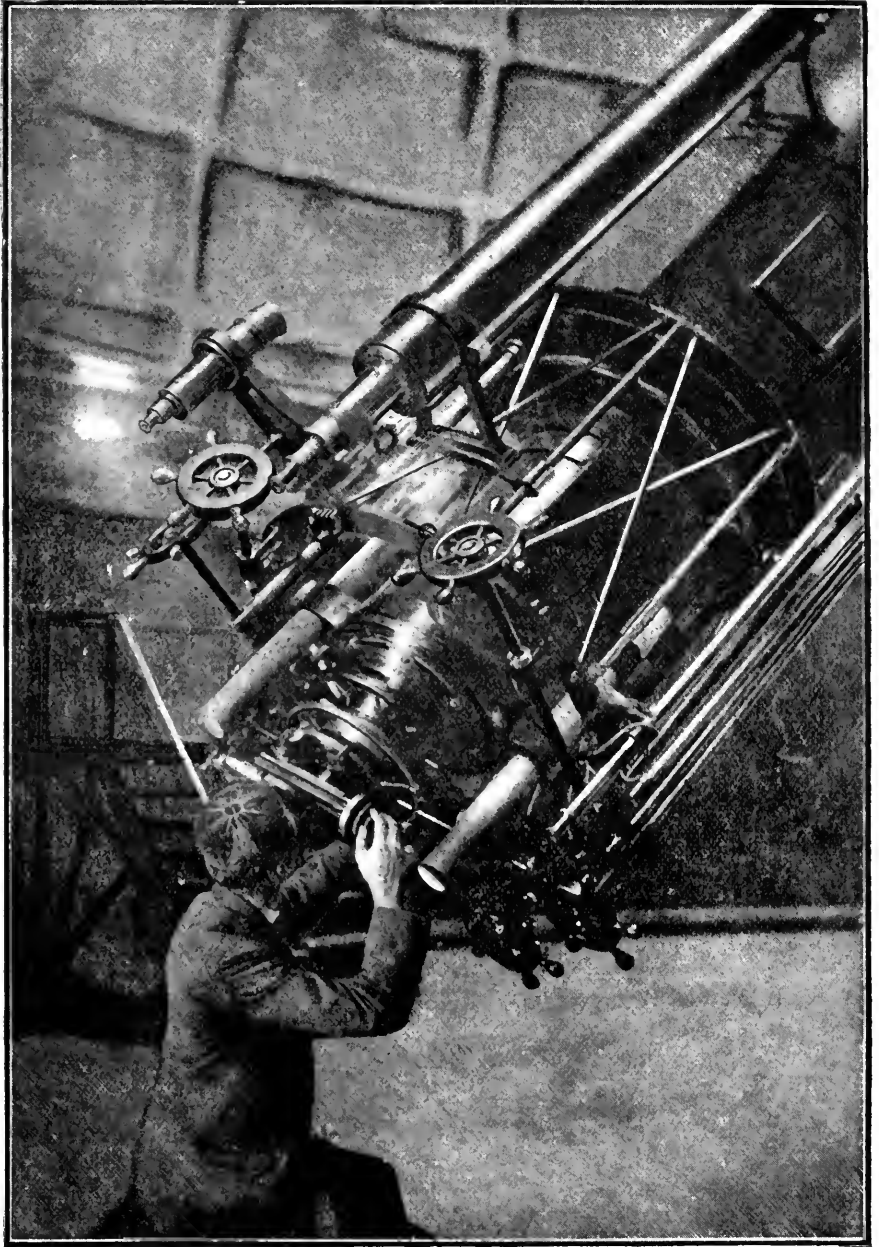
I have no doubt that in most essential respects this mounting is not surpassed by any of similar dimensions, and in our constant use of the instrument we have had reason to congratulate ourselves on the advances which have been made in such constructions since Sir William Herschel and Lord Rosse took the first important steps.

The distances within the dome are so great that we have found it



THE GREAT TELESCOPE OF THE LICK OBSERVATORY.

(From Photograph by H. E. Matthews, Secretary of Lick Observatory.)



an advantage for two astronomers to work together. Our circumstances do not allow us to employ labourers to do even the mere mechanical manipulations, though much force could be saved in this way. In the great observatory of Pulkowa soldiers are detailed for such work, and the energy of the astronomers is saved for the purely astronomical

labour. Towards morning, when one of us has wound up the clock-weight of 600 lbs. two or three times, even ardent republicanism can see some excellences in a despotic military system.

But in general the instrument is arranged so that the services of two astronomers are quite sufficient for its convenient use. And when two are working together there is a spirit and vigour in their individual efforts which is sometimes lacking to a single observer.

In order to give an adequate idea of the excellence of the mounting I quote here a few statistics. A pressure of 10 lbs. on a hand-wheel will give the telescope a quick motion in right ascension. Twice that amount is required for the corresponding motion in declination. The following little table contains a summary of the weights moved, &c. :—

	lbs.	lbs.
Tube and attachments	10,625	
Declination axis and attachments	3,914	
	<hr/>	
Weight that moves when turning in declination		14,539
Declination sleeve and attachments	9,327	
Polar axis	4,981	
Weight of declination sleeve and polar axis together		<hr/> 14,308
Weight that moves when turning in right ascension		28,847
Head of column and attachments	12,605	
Column and attachments	38,075	
Clock	1,993	
	<hr/>	
Weight that remains stationary with column		52,673
Total weight of telescope-mounting		<hr/> 81,520

The surroundings of the observatory itself can best be understood by referring to the various woodcuts in this number.

The building stands on the lowest of three peaks which went to form the Santa Isabel Mountain of the Spaniards. The highest of these peaks we have called Mount Copernicus, the middle peak is Kepler, and the name Hamilton had been assigned to the lowest before the observatory was thought of. Mounts Galileo, Hipparchus, and Ptolemy are hard by. The name Santa Isabel has been transferred to a huge black mountain two miles directly east of us. Deep cañons surround us on three sides; while towards the west the road towards San José, the nearest town, winds down the spurs of the mountain,

descending 2,000 feet in the first seven miles, and 4,000 feet before it reaches the exquisite Santa Clara valley, twenty miles away.

On all sides of us are rugged hills and mountains environing our solitude, and securing to us that quiet that is essential to work.

Once daily a stage arrives with its load of sightseers, who remain for an hour and are gone. Once weekly (on every Saturday night from seven to ten) the observatory is also thrown open to visitors, who come to the number of two hundred or more and patiently await their few moments' view of the most interesting celestial objects that we can show them—the moon, Jupiter, a cluster, a nebula, a double star.

On such occasions the whole force of the observatory is on duty, and no pains are spared to insure to each one of our guests some compensation for the long (and expensive) journey he has taken.

Although these 'public evenings' are a serious interruption to our work we do not regret them. There is something impressive in the assemblage of so many intelligent persons from every part of the known world, each of whom has come hoping for some deeper insight into the universe of stars which he knows has withheld its secrets from him hitherto. I often feel what disappointments must follow some of these visits, and how inadequate the answers of the astronomers must seem to anxious questioners. Mere curiosity can be satisfied, statistics can be supplied, methods can be explained; but the whole point of an inquiry may often be missed just because the questioner has too little technical knowledge and because the answerer has too much.

Our brief experience with the large telescope has already taught us that our duty is to prove all things anew—not to take anything for granted. We have hardly looked at any object without finding something new and interesting and important. It may be worth while to give a few examples of what I mean by this. There is no object in the heavens which is better known to possessors of both large and small telescopes than the ring nebula in Lyra. It is the brightest of the nebulae, and its wonderful shape makes it an interesting link between a planet with rings, like Saturn, and the primitive formless nebula which Laplace assumed as the starting point of his nebular hypothesis. It has important analogies to rings of stars and to star clusters also. This

bright nebula has been looked at by every amateur and professional astronomer, by every large and small telescope, in the world. Sir John Herschel describes it as a ring, and figures a small star following it. Lord Rosse, with his 6-foot reflector, gave five small stars outside of it and none inside. Mr. Lassell, with his 4-foot reflector, figures it with thirteen faint stars in an oval outside and one inside the ring. So I saw it with the Washington refractor of 26 inches aperture in 1875. Our first look at this nebula with the 36-inch telescope showed a great variety of new detail, and a careful examination has disclosed to us not only the single star inside, but likewise eleven others inside the inner oval or projected on the bright nebulosity between the outer and the inner ovals. Not only this, but it is obvious that the plan on which this nebula is built is that of a series of ellipses or ovals. There is first the ring of faint stars outside the nebula; then the outer and inner bounding ovals of the nebulosity; next a ring of faint stars around the edges of the interior ring; and finally a number of stars critically situated on the various parts of the nebulosity and outer oval. The object is entirely a new one in its appearance and in its suggestions as seen here. It is so with other objects likewise. Our final conclusion is, therefore, that we have to use the large telescope in a new way. There is absolutely nothing to be taken for granted, and there is no object in the whole heavens which we must not observe as if viewed for the first time. Our duty is to prove all things—at the same time recollecting all things that have gone before. In this respect the position of the Lick Observatory seems to be quite unique.

The mere size of the telescope is often an immense advantage. For example, we were enabled to observe the total eclipse of the moon (July 22) in an unusual yet simple way, and to settle some important questions relating to the form of the earth's shadow, from the mere fact that the image of the moon projected upon a drawing-board in the focus of the telescope is more than six inches in diameter.

Our observations were made by so projecting this image, and by tracing the outlines of the variously shaded parts upon a cardboard every four or five minutes during totality. We have lately transferred these outlines to enlarged photographs of the full moon, and we find that the real variations in the shape of the earth's shadow which have puzzled some observers are due to the different reflective powers of different portions of the moon's surface, as indeed was to be expected.

The questions relating to this are settled for ever to anyone who will examine these contours, following, as they do, with exact faithfulness every outline of the various 'seas' and 'bays' on the moon's surface. These outlines are fit to serve as an admirable basis for a thorough-going photometry of the moon's surface.

It was extremely unfortunate that the observatory was not completed in time to follow the planet Mars throughout the whole of the present opposition. Until the middle of July nothing could be done in the way of drawings of the planet, owing to the presence of mechanics and workmen. On a few favourable occasions my colleague Mr. Keeler observed the satellites, which were followed by him until they were six times fainter than when they were discovered by Professor Hall in 1877. I have myself seen one of them (Phobos) when it was eight times fainter than at discovery.

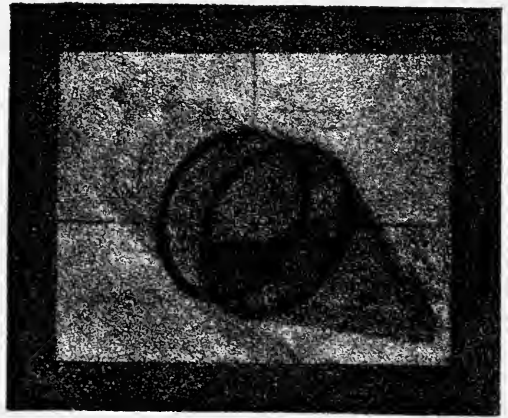
This shows us that these minute objects can be readily followed at every opposition. The important changes in the surface of Mars announced by M. Perrotin from his observations with the great refractor of Nice (especially the fact of the submergence of the southern end of the continent 'Libya') required for their confirmation by us that we should follow the planet throughout a whole opposition. The opposition took place on April 11, while our first drawings were made on July 16.

The sketches which we have obtained show none of the changes in the form of this continent which have been reported, and I am myself inclined to attribute



Photograph of the Moon, taken with the Photographic Lens at the Lick Observatory.

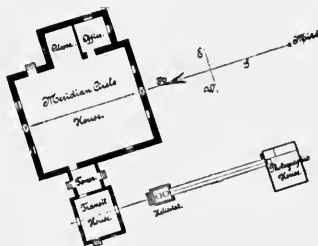
the appearances described by M. Perrotin to a temporary veil of clouds rather than to submergence under Martian 'oceans.' However this may be, it is certain that the appearances since the middle of July are essentially as we have observed them. We shall, however, be obliged to wait for a more favourable opportunity (1890 and 1892) before we can pronounce with certainty from our own observations upon this and allied appearances of intense significance.



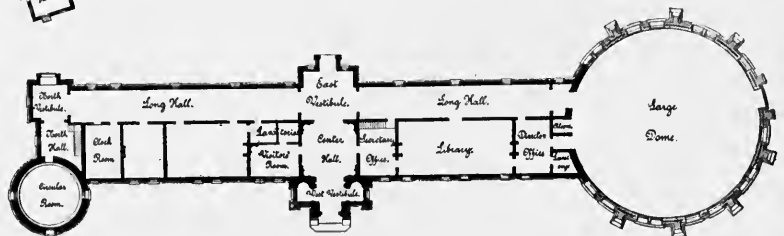
The satellites of Jupiter are quite new objects as seen here. A few emersions of these moons from their eclipses by the planet's shadow have been observed, and these reappearances have taken place with phases corresponding to those of a lunar eclipse, the disc of the satellite becoming gradually un veiled as it passed out of the shadow of Jupiter.

Many other nebulae beside the famous annular nebula in Lyra have been carefully examined. The great Orion, Omega and the Trifid nebulae are wonderfully full of detail, and many of the points left doubtful in my previous study of these with the great telescope at Washington are easily resolved.

The planetary nebula 37, H. iv. Draconis, has afforded us good grounds for believing that there is at least one example in the sky of nebulous masses which appear to be, and very probably in fact are, arranged in space in the form of helixes or screws. It is not simply a spiral, but a helical, nebula, the first example of its class. Other nebulae have also shown signs of such a structure. If our conclusions are correct, the new insight gained is as important as that which followed Lord Rosse's introduction of the class of spiral nebulae. I have



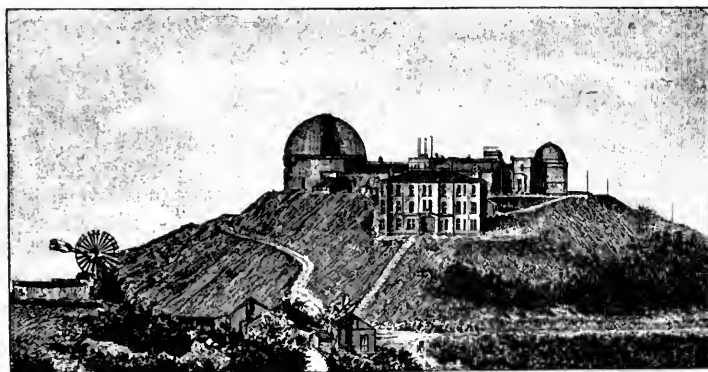
Ground Plan of the Lick Observatory, Va.
 1" = 10'



mentioned only a few of the important lines of research which have been entered upon, and have said nothing of the new and interesting double stars, or of the new nebulae and comets which my colleagues, Messrs. Burnham and Barnard, have already discovered; or again of the photographic experiments with the great telescope.

I have, I hope, given enough to show that the ten weeks during which the observatory has been in active existence have already proved that Mr. Lick's desire to establish 'the most powerful telescope in the world' has been veritably carried out.

EDWARD S. HOLDEN.



Our Great Gun Muddle

THE causes of the discreditable delays which have occurred in the production of guns and ammunition required by the Royal Navy according to the latest official utterances seem to have been in no way remedied. As a matter of fact, an intelligent solution of this all-important question is as far off as ever. Not only are more guns wanted to arm ships of war, otherwise ready for sea service, but the gravity of the present situation is intensified by the fact that, although the modern breechloading gun is an uncertain quantity, being easily disabled, there exists no reserve of this class of ordnance at present wherewith to make good the casualties which must inevitably arise during a naval war.

It has been circumstantially stated that at least fifteen great war-ships are useless for purposes of defence or attack because they are without guns. Some trouble has been taken to ascertain the truth of this statement, and the present position of affairs may be accurately gauged by the following table:—

SHIPS OF WAR WITHOUT GUNS.

No. of Ships	Class of Ship	No. of Guns wanting	Calibre in Inches	Weight in Tons	Value of Ship without Guns in £'s sterling	Remarks
1	Barbette	4	13.5	87	650,000	New ship
1	"	4	...	67	680,000	"
1	"	4	...	67	675,000	"
1	Not known	2	9.2	22	265,000	...
1	New turret	4	...	67	800,000	Guns wanted in June
1	Old turret	4	10.	30	600,000	To be re-armed this year
1	" "	2	9.2	22	400,000	To be re-armed this year
1	Turret	2	16.25	111	750,000	New ship
		2	10.	29		
1	"	2	16.25	111	750,000	"
		2	10.	29		
5	Twin-screw belted cruisers	10	9.2	22	1,300,000	Average cost of each ship, 260,000/.
		50	6.			
			4.			
Total 14	...	92	6,870,000	

Of course it has been most difficult to obtain precise information concerning the actual position of affairs, but the above may be taken as practically correct. In addition to the ships enumerated in the table, there are at least five twin-screw cruisers of the second class and one twin-screw sloop nearly finished, which will require between them thirty-eight more guns before the year is much older. The value of these ships without the guns may be put down as about 690,000*l*. So that these seven and a half million pounds sterling have been expended without any prospect of immediate additions to the defensive power of the nation.

Nor is this all, for care has been taken in the table to exclude all but the largest guns, except that it was thought well to intimate that fifty six-inch guns are required for the twin-screw belted cruisers. There would therefore be required, in addition to the guns enumerated, a great number of quick-firing and machine guns, which have not been included. It must further be borne in mind that the non-delivery of guns means delay in final fittings, a possibility of many alterations in the armaments before delivery, and other incidental matters, which necessarily cause further delays in the completion of ships of war as well as enormous additional expense.

Finally, it is necessary to remember that, in addition to the guns here shown to be required, which will take a long time to make, and cannot be hurried in manufacture, there are very many which are urgently needed at the moment to replace guns which have failed, and to re-arm numerous vessels now in commission, but which are armed with obsolete ordnance. In these circumstances, where are the guns to come from which are so absolutely indispensable for coast defence and land service? No doubt the foregoing facts will astonish and alarm the public, but in any case it is at least desirable to trace out the causes which have produced these lamentable results.

Many important facts are contained in the Appendix to the Fifth Report of the Select Committee upon the Army and Navy Estimates, No. 259 of 1887. This Appendix, in accordance with invariable official practice, was not issued until long after the evidence which related to it. This is probably why one of the most valuable of all the official documents presented to the public and Parliament on this subject has escaped attention. As it throws more valuable light upon and practically settles many points which have been ventilated controversially in the *Times*, it would seem to be to the public interest to set them out and to state the conclusions to which they point.

A study, then, of this Parliamentary paper (No. 259 of 1887), and a review of what has recently come to the notice of the public in regard to the present situation, lead to the conclusion that there are two causes which have contributed, and which still contribute, to the present state of affairs. They are—(a) that funds allotted by Parliament from time to time for the production of ordnance for the Navy have been diverted for other purposes; and (b) that no organisation has existed, or yet exists, by which the gun-producing resources of the country can be developed so as to meet our requirements.

In proof of (a), the diversion of funds from their legitimate channel, the writer placed a plain issue before the public in 1887. He then stated in the *Times* on three separate occasions that a comparison between the figures given in the Army Estimates (Vote 12) and a Parliamentary return (No. 35 of 1884) disclosed a net deficiency of 635,735*l.* against the War Office in favour of the Navy in respect of gun supplies during the period between 1877-8 and 1883-4, and challenged the War Office to produce authentic figures proving the contrary if they could. This issue was considered so important that the War Office subsequently placed a memorandum on the points raised by these letters before the Select Committee upon the Army and Navy Estimates (see page 175), which had been drawn up in March 1887. They disputed the relevancy of the figures quoted principally upon two grounds: (1) that the amounts allotted to the Navy had reference to armaments drawn from stock and not to production; (2) that the values of ordnance might have been included more than once in the total estimated values of guns issued.

Before, however, such explanations can be accepted it is necessary to assume, first, that the War Office had kept accounts of expenditure upon which their assertions were grounded, which they admit they had not (page 175); secondly, that reserves of ordnance were in existence, at the time, from which supplies to the Navy could be furnished, a matter open to grave doubt, as the Blue Books testify; and, thirdly, that it has been the War Office practice to re-charge the Navy on their re-issue with the values of guns returned to store which were virtually naval property; or, in other words, that full price has been charged (in War Office accounts) for guns on re-issue for which no credit had been allowed on their return from naval service. Such imaginary sums would appear to have been charged on re-issue over and over again for armaments returned by H.M.'s ships on paying off after a commission, &c. Was ever such a system of accounts heard of before, or could any

process be more eminently calculated to swell out War Office figures and exaggerate the values of pretended supplies to the Navy? The most disingenuous explanation offered by the War Office has, however, still to be mentioned. It is that there exists the widest possible difference between expenditure (i.e. production) and issue, the former 'including enormous supplies towards making up reserves which are not issued except on emergency' (see page 177). Such a statement could only have been intended to appeal to the credulity of those who had no facts in their possession, because it must be patent to every one that no modern guns can have been added to the reserves for naval purposes, for had they been what excuse would there be for keeping so many ships waiting for their armaments? The War Office is wroth that the Comptroller and Auditor-General should have practically confirmed my criticisms. This is shown by reference to a footnote to the War Office memorandum (see page 177), where the Comptroller and Auditor-General is stated to have reported, in regard to the War Office accounts for 1885-6, that in that year the value of supplies to the Navy was about equal to the production, a fact which has an important bearing in regard to my figures. Affixed also to this footnote is the following significant remark by the War Office: 'If the Comptroller and Auditor-General considers any useful purpose is served by such a comparison, then there is every excuse for Mr. Burdett and the public generally; and steps ought to be taken to revise forms of account which are so open to misconception.' Precisely so, but no accounts in the world will override the fact that while the money voted under Vote 12 (Army) for warlike and other stores, including the Navy ordnance, has been spent to the uttermost farthing (see page 160), the Navy is deficient in guns which Parliament was given to understand much of that money was to supply.

Up to the present time practically nothing has been adduced by the War Office to prove to satisfaction that the money voted by Parliament on the faith that it would be devoted to the production of naval guns has not been diverted and expended upon other purposes, but, on the contrary, the annual Appropriation Accounts show that, except for assigned causes, the full sums voted (under Vote 12) have been disbursed. Consequently, if by reason of delays in determining designs or other causes the money has not been expended upon naval guns, it must have gone elsewhere, and has not been repaid to the Exchequer, as it should have been. How unreliable are the official statements upon this subject may be judged from the joint report of the Director of

Artillery and Mr. Engelbach (see page 153). Speaking of the provision made in Vote. 12 (Army) for the Navy they remark: 'The statement shows the nominal amounts included in the vote for the service of the Navy, but these do not represent the actual expenditure, nor has this ever been ascertained with accuracy; as separate accounts have not been kept.' In the face of such an admission coming from the responsible officials, the foregoing *exposé* of the value of official details by the War Office of reliable statements made by experts ought not to surprise the public. So much for the duel between myself and the War Office, but the following further evidence is forthcoming on matters of fact:—

On December 29, 1886, the *Pall Mall Gazette* published a statement that a deficiency in ammunition, &c., existed, which was estimated at about 2,000,000*l.*, and that 'a call had been made upon the Treasury for about 1,000,000*l.* to be expended in addition to the ordinary sum voted, of, say, 1½ million more, in the year 1887-8, towards making good the deficiency in naval ammunition.' These statements created a good deal of stir at the time, and on January 1, 1887, the War Office published in all the daily papers a communication which declared: 'We are requested to state that there is no truth whatever in either of these statements.' It is therefore instructive, as showing the War Office methods, to examine the direct issue here raised by the light of official papers now available.

Will it be believed that a few days before this official denial was published in all the papers an extremely important communication was received by the War Office from the Admiralty, dated December 16, 1886 (see page 138), which shows that it was considered by the naval authorities that the state of the naval armaments was so unsatisfactory that an expenditure of 2,549,639*l.* during the year 1887-8 was indispensable to provide what was 'really required;' and, it is added in regard to quick-firing ammunition, 'the sum really required was shown by the Director of Artillery as 881,160*l.*, and the Director of Naval Ordnance advises my Lords (Admiralty) that he concurs in that amount, being what is required to bring up the reserves to the proper standard'? It is thus clear that the War Office was fully and officially cognisant of these facts on December 16, 1886, although they caused an unequivocal assertion to be published in the public press on January 1, 1887, that 'there was no truth whatever in the statement made' to practically the same effect in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

Again, the muddle and confusion which prevails are ably summarised in the letter from the Admiralty to the Treasury of March 11, 1887 (see page 137). It declares:—'(a) The Admiralty has no information as to the number of rounds of ammunition in store for the various types of guns in the naval service. (b) The Admiralty has no information as to the stock available of fuzes, tubes, &c., and all other essential items for the proper service of guns. (c) The Admiralty has no means of ascertaining how much the stock in hand of warlike material for naval service has been increased or diminished from year to year. (d) The Admiralty receives no account as to how much money is spent during any year on guns for the Navy, nor any exact account of the number produced in any one year with the money taken for the purpose.'

Passing from this aspect of the case, it appears from the correspondence quoted in this Blue Book that another serious cause of the deficiency of reserves, &c., has been the indiscriminate cutting down by the War Office of the sums considered requisite by the Admiralty to meet naval requirements year by year. In a memorandum upon the subject the Director of Artillery and Stores quoted the following data as illustrative of the outcome of what he describes as 'the present dual and therefore perilous system' (see page 107):—

NAVAL GUN ESTIMATES.

	Asked for	Granted		Asked for	Granted
	£	£		£	£
1881-2	647,759	360,000	1884-5	899,602	500,000
1882-3	877,001	616,033	1885-6	1,145,000	850,000
1883-4	707,002	500,491	1886-7	1,516,887	1,000,000

And he added, 'As pointed out by Mr. Northcote, late Financial Secretary of the War Office, "either the Admiralty asked a great deal too much, or the War Department gave a great deal too little." In either event it seems to me to point to a serious evil in our divided financial responsibility, a conclusion concurred in by Mr. W. H. Smith.' The Director of Artillery, in further allusion to this system, remarked (see page 102): 'I do not pretend to say that the reductions were made without communication with the Admiralty; but you will, of course, understand that we had to put considerable pressure on that Department to agree to our proposals.' Again (see page 101) he said: 'Nothing can be more unsatisfactory than the manner in which the Naval Gun Estimate is put

forward year after year to be criticised, manipulated, and reduced by this Department' (the War Office). Unquestionably events have proved that the Admiralty have not overestimated their requirements, but that the War Office, which appears to have entirely failed to appreciate the imperative necessity of providing the Navy with proper armaments and ammunition, has so 'manipulated' and 'reduced' the Admiralty Estimates (apparently without a competent knowledge of the subject) as to have created the present difficulty.

If the War Office policy, in regard to the provision of guns, &c., be contrasted with that of the Admiralty, especially in later years, the confusion of purpose into which the two departments of the State had been allowed to drift will be apparent. On the one hand, the Admiralty have been employed in pushing on a special shipbuilding programme, considered necessary to meet the activity of foreign maritime States; on the other, the War Office have been holding their hands, and so restricting the expenditure upon naval armaments, as to stultify the action of the Government in attempting, under the influence of public pressure, to strengthen the first line of defence.

Thus, although the Admiralty put forward a demand for 2,549,639*l.* for the year 1887-8, it was reduced to 1,707,561*l.*, so that it is obvious that the completion of the reserves was again relegated to a more convenient season, following the precedent of previous years.

For the year 1888-9 the Government came before the country with an estimate of 1,865,000*l.*, still obviously postponing the reserve. As late as December 7 last, in reply to Mr. Hanbury, the First Lord of the Admiralty stated that only 697,000*l.* had been spent on the Naval Ordnance vote, leaving 1,166,000*l.* to be earned by contractors and Government establishments in the four concluding months of the financial year ending March 1889; so that public anxiety must remain unallayed until it can be seen what will be the practical outcome of the current year's transactions in the shape of providing the armaments of the many ships which are awaiting them.

It is most unfortunate, in the interest of the military services of this country, that in balancing the annual Budget curtailments must fall upon those departments which administer the Army and Navy. The greater part of the national expenditure is automatic, because such items as (1) interest on the public debt, (2) salaries of the Civil Service,

(3) pay, &c., of the *personnel* of the Army and Navy, and so forth, must be met *nolens volens*. For this reason curtailments invariably react upon those branches of the service which it is of the first importance should be exempt from such influences. Nevertheless, however pressing might be the exigencies of his programme, no Chancellor of the Exchequer would care to accept the responsibility for compromising the efficiency of the Navy, as it is compromised at the present moment by withholding adequate supplies, if he was fully alive to the facts. Hence it is fair to presume that the effects of manipulating and reducing the Admiralty demands in recent years, as explained above, can never have been placed before the Chancellor, at least until comparatively recently.

It appears from the official correspondence already referred to that the War Office has long been anxious to throw off responsibility for naval armaments (see page 103), 'towards which the unremitting exertions of the Royal Department have been steadily directed now for some years past' (see page 177). It is not surprising to find, in face of the evidence now produced to prove that no proper accounts had been kept by the War Office, or at any rate were forthcoming, that the Admiralty had steadily avoided taking over the supply of guns until presumably it was furnished with a clear statement of how (1) the money voted for guns had been expended, (2) what guns were in hand, and (3) the condition of those in process of manufacture. Under a recent arrangement, however, the War Office desire has apparently been fulfilled, for the estimate for naval ordnance was included in the Navy Estimates for the year 1888-9. Its appearance, in blank, however, shows how incomplete the arrangements were. In what manner this transfer in the votes can improve matters it is difficult to comprehend, and, considering the close affinity which must of necessity exist between the provision of naval and military armaments, and that the storehouses at home and abroad must be common to both, it would appear that a duality of control has been created of a far more serious character than that formerly existing. It may be possible that, by placing the vote for Navy armaments in the Naval Estimates, the Admiralty may be justified in overhauling the War Office accounts for naval supplies, but while a certain amount of centralised control was formerly vested in the War Office, a distinct dual responsibility has now been created which, if permitted to develop, must in the long run still further complicate the question, and open the door to the 'financing' which has been so apparent in past transactions.

As matters stand at the present time the Admiralty appear to have been forced into a *cul-de-sac*. Granted that they may have full control over the sums to be voted for naval ordnance and munitions, it must be asked in what manner is their control over the supply strengthened? They may possess ample discretion as to requisitioning contractors or the Government arsenals, albeit that in the interests of the public the arsenal must be fully employed, but the War Office are competitors in the same field, and they hold the point of vantage. They exercise complete control in the Government arsenals and must retain their first hold on the market; nothing is likely to induce the War Office to recognise the fact that the efficiency of the Army is of second importance to that of the Navy, and it must be expected that they will instinctively shape their policy accordingly, as they have done in the past.

The absence of direct, i.e. of individual responsibility appears to have been one of the greatest incentives to inefficient administration. The Blue Book teems with references in this direction, and the War Office and Admiralty conjointly urged upon the Treasury (see page 111) 'that the financial control is most imperfect, and the only way, as far as can be seen, of securing it in a complete form is for the Admiralty to provide money in the Naval Estimates to meet the requirements of which they should be sole responsible judges.' And again: 'That the administration, as it now exists, has been pronounced by the most competent authorities to be one of dangerously divided responsibility, which would probably lead to disaster in the event of war, and that in the interests of the public service a radical change is imperatively demanded.'

The serious difficulties which must arise from the present system fathered by the War Office, of transferring the votes for naval ordnance to the Navy Estimates, are clearly represented in the Admiralty letter of May 19, 1887, on the transfer of the Naval Ordnance vote to the Admiralty (see page 129), in which it is pointed out: 'The (then) proposed transfer (now apparently effected) would not do away with many of the evils now complained of. It would make no difference as to the manufacture and supply of guns and other stores by the War Office. There would be the same very serious delays as at present in deliveries of stores, and failure to keep to dates in manufacture of guns, but with this great difference, that the Admiralty would be responsible for the armaments of our ships being ready, without any more power than at present over the manufacturing departments to compel them to keep to dates unless Woolwich were placed under Admiralty control.' It

would be impossible to expose more conclusively the hollowness of the system which the War Office has been so anxious (see page 177) to bring about, with what now appears to be a fatal success, with the object of 'giving the Navy that confidence which a reliance upon their own administration can alone secure' (see page 130).

This being the present position, what can be done to effect a complete and satisfactory reform once and for all? The answer is supplied by the following definite proposal made by the Admiralty in their letter (page 129), which they ought to have had the wisdom to insist upon being adopted. It is as follows: 'On the whole, after very careful deliberation, my Lords are decidedly of opinion that the best, if not the only solution of this difficult problem, is to establish an independent Ordnance Department, common to both Army and Navy, which should be responsible for the efficient supply of all war material for both services,' such department to be under a separate and independent Parliamentary head, who would present Ordnance Estimates for the Naval and Military Services. This proposal was strongly recommended by the Royal Commission on Warlike Stores (see page 131). Until an independent Ordnance Department, such as here suggested, is established, and made directly responsible for (1) the quality of the guns and ammunition supplied; (2) the date at which they are delivered; and (3) the efficiency of the arms and supplies issued to the Army and Navy, we shall continue to have ships without guns, guns without ammunition, swords which break, bayonets which bend, and cartridges which jam. How long are foreigners to be furnished with the amusement of watching England floundering hopelessly along in matters of such vital importance to the country? Surely so long as we are content to leave ourselves open to the just reproof that, although Englishmen are deservedly famous for their individual prosperity and common sense in national affairs, they fail to apply both to secure a wise expenditure of the funds which are so lavishly voted by an indulgent but unpractical Parliament, supported by the indifference and ignorance of a people asleep to their own best interests and adequate protection and preservation.

HENRY C. BURDETT.



ELSIE BIRKETT.

(From an original drawing by E. K. JOHNSON, Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours.)

An Unfinished History

I

THE older women called her a spoilt chit ; the younger, stupid and stuck up. To Grandfather she was the apple of his eye ; Ned Scott, the saddler's son, thought her far and away the finest young lass about the place ; and the rector's wife, Mrs. Rose, wished there were more like her in her class of big girls at the Sunday school. Thus she had quality on the one side if quantity on the other ; and perhaps, put into the scale, Grandfather's love, Ned Scott's placid admiration, and the approval of Mrs. Rose, outweighed the floating spite which eddied round her, as it often does round a country girl more tenderly loved and more strictly held than her companions. To Elsie Birkett herself, censure and love, spite and admiration, were equally vague. She was not introspective, not very observant, not at all sentimental. She did not see and, not seeing, she did not mind, the tacit flouts and sometimes more open sneers of the little world outside which she lived. She certainly knew Ned Scott better, and liked him better, than Jem Turner or Robby Hume, say. She was more used-like to him. But she cared no more for his placid admiration, in the way of a girl from a man, than she would have cared for that of his shopmates. And that 'Mrs. Rose had never no fault against her' was about the utmost made evident to her in that direction.

Grandfather was her all. She took his life and love and care, his cottage and his protection, as she took the sun in the sky and God in

heaven. They were of the things constant and immutable ; and she went into conscious raptures over the one as little as over the other. She was glad when the sun shone, as she stood out before the door, and the wind lifted her hair which the broad, yellow rays turned to gold ; and she said her prayers with sober earnestness and dutiful regularity. But she did not hail the Day-star with the rapture of a Fireworshipper, nor go into mystic ecstasies like a saint of olden times, seeing visions and hearing voices. So with Grandfather. Grandfather and she lived in absolute harmony and undeviating affection, but she had no spasms of affection, of gratitude, of fear, of foresight. He was Grandfather, just as God was God ; and that was enough. She was as yet emphatically a flower in the bud. Her soul and mind were like a sleeping child. She had not awakened to the consciousness of self, to the prevision of passion, to the knowledge of life. When Grandfather's pain was worse than usual, and she caught his sad old eyes fixed on her with that mournfulness which is so near to tears, she 'wondered why he should be so down ; and she was sorry to see him that sad she didn't know how.' But she had never a thought of fear for the future ; and, like all young people, she anticipated no evil. What girl of sixteen, still a child, does ? Fear of the future comes with experience, and sixteen has none.

Ned Scott, the saddler's son just out of his apprenticeship and rejoicing in his majority—he had a clearer perception of things as they were, partly because he was older and more thoughtful, and heard more from the neighbours than Elsie could. And the neighbours naturally anticipated the worst. Is not this part of Christian sympathy ? But a young carpenter of twenty-one, as yet only a journeyman making less than a pound a week, was of not much use, see as clearly as he might. He too was a potentiality still in the bud ; and old Birkett recognised the truth here as elsewhere. Heart-disease of some standing and gradually getting worse—seventy-six years as the fardel on his bent back—ten pounds for his funeral and the immediate morrow for Elsie, laid by under his tobacco in the cracked old teapot on the kitchen mantelshelf—a pretty, innocent, in no wise precocious and not very well learned child of sixteen—and all the anchorage to stability the placid admiration of a young journeyman carpenter earning less than a pound a week ! There was not much comfort here for a man who loved his one ewe lamb with his whole heart and soul, who knew that he was dying, and that she would be left alone. He had made her the heir to the love he had given wife and son and daughter and daughter-in-law—all dead now, and she the sole relic of the past remaining ;

and he sometimes almost wished that she too had slept away with the rest.

‘It troubles me, Ned,’ the old man said one evening to the young fellow who had come along after work-time, as he often did, to have a bit of talk with Elsie’s grandfather, and may be to help Elsie herself with the harder parts of her housework. For Grandfather, he could not do much now-a-days, and bearing wood or cutting it was beyond him. ‘It fairly bet him,’ as he said ; but Ned Scott found it a mere fleabite, even after a hard day’s work at sawing and planing at his master’s shop.

‘It troubles me to think what will become of her when I am gone.’

‘Aye, she’s young yet to be left,’ said Ned.

‘Never a friend to see to her—never an aunt nor an uncle to take her. It’s hard to see what she can do,’ said old Birkett, his withered hand over his quivering mouth.

‘Maybe—but she’s ower young to marry yet,’ answered Ned, answering his thought and expressing his own.

‘Aye, that is she! She’s but a bairn,’ sighed the old man. ‘If even there was a likely lad as fancied her, he and she would be bound to wait. It would be a downright sin to marry her as she is.’

‘She’ll not want for lads when she’s older,’ said Ned, with a sudden flush. ‘More than one here in Hesketh would be glad to see the right side of her hand when the time comes.’

‘Yes, but till it comes?’ queried old Birkett.

‘We must hope you’ll be spared long enough to see her fettled up,’ said Ned simply. ‘The Lord is merciful. Perhaps he will give you length of days for that.’

‘It would be ill to shorten the arm of His mercy, lad, but I doubt it,’ said the grandfather. ‘The pain gets ever worse and worse, and Doctor Moss he says he don’t like the looks of things nohow, and that I’m to be prepared for aught as may chance.’

‘My wage ain’t enough, and she’s too young!’ said Ned to himself.

He looked through the cottage window to the little shed opposite, in the doorway of which stood Elsie, churning. She was looking up to the blackbird in the cage hanging against the lintel, smiling as the bird sang out its broad, bold, luscious notes. Beyond the shed was the orchard, where the apple-trees were flushed with pink and the pear-trees veiled in white, with the first faint tender green showing shyly here and there. The girl herself, tall and well-grown for her age, was yet so young! Slim and slight her firm white flesh looked like the incarnation of the pear blossoms—her round, fair, delicately tinted cheeks were the apple blossoms made human. She and the bird and the spring—those immature

buds not yet set to fruit—all were of a piece ; and something, he did not know what, came over Ned with a rush of shame, almost of self-revulsion, that for a moment he had thought of Elsie as a man might think of a woman. A sentiment of respect, of unspoken but intense human reverence held him, and the rapid misty procession of likely lads which had passed through his brain seemed as a kind of insult, a kind of sacrilege, for which he would willingly have made atonement.

The old man looked at the young carpenter as if he expected him to say something. So he did, but not much to the purpose.

‘What can I say or do, Grandfather?’ he asked. ‘If she wants a friend when you are gone, I’ll do my best ; but bad ’ll be the best I fear. Mother might help if she would. She’s crusty and bad-tempered at top, is Mother, but she has a good heart at bottom ; and she’ll not let Elsie go to the wall for want of a helping hand. Why, dang it all, we are neighbours and have known the lass ever since she was a little one ! We are not Hottentots, I reckon !’

Old Birkett sighed again.

‘The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel,’ he whispered to himself.

Ned’s mother was known through all the country-side for a tight hand and a hard fist if ever there was one ; and she’d be bound not to be best pleased to have a penniless lass like Elsie on her hands—with her boy Ned hanging about the place, waiting for the bud to become the flower ! After this, further intimate talk was not very possible, for Elsie’s butter had ‘come,’ and been stacked in amorphous lumps on a dish in the dairy ; and Elsie herself came in to the kitchen, carrying a bowl of buttermilk for Grandfather’s supper and her own, when she had got the porridge made and set the table.

‘She’s a brave lass and a tidy housewife,’ thought Ned, as he watched her moving about the kitchen with her long and swift step and that free kind of action in her arms which of itself tells of strength and deftness. Then he looked at her apple-blossom face and slim undeveloped figure, and thought again, as so often before : ‘She’s over young ; who would say the forward word ?’

On this he rose to take his leave.

‘Good-night, Grandfather,’ he said kindly, holding the old man’s hand warmly grasped in his—his so young and strong in the grip, so full of life and power, and old Birkett’s so limp and cold and gnarled and skeletonised—just a hand of bones, no more !

‘Good-night, Elsie,’ he then said, offering his hand to the girl.

She wiped hers on her bibbed apron.

‘Good-night, Ned,’ she answered carelessly, still stirring the porridge.

Have you any job to set me to before I go?' he asked, lingering.

'Not to-night,' she answered with a smile—the same kind of smile that she had given to the blackbird.

'Can I chop your wood? have you borne all the water?' he asked again.

'Aye,' she replied, 'all's done, thank you kindly, and there's nought more to stay for.'

Ned's help, too, was of the things she took as she took the sunshine and spring flowers. They were all of the ordained order of life as she found it made for her; and if she thanked him now and then it was by the grace of her nature rather than by the consciousness of gratitude. Why should she be grateful? Was not Ned Scott part of the very substance of her days? She had known him now since she was a little one, and though she never asked herself whether she cared for him or not, she accepted him, as if he had been an engrafted excrescence, not born with but belonging to her, all the same as the orchard and the cow.

II

THE night was still and balmy. Not a sound broke the sweet silence of sleeping nature. Even the nightjar's cry was hushed, and never an owl hooted from the ivied tower. It was a night when one might have expected all sorrowful thoughts to be banished and pain laid to sleep with the rest; but, sweet as it was, old Birkett's pain and grief were hard to bear.

He feared lest he should never see the morning; yet, unselfish to the last, he did not care to rouse his little lass to go through the dark lane to the village for the doctor. Rather than this he laid himself in God's hands with that simple faith of the pious poor—content to feel and unable to reason.

When morning broke he was in much the same state, save that his pain was sharper and his grief for his little lass blunter. The stupor which precedes death was beginning to creep over him, and the things



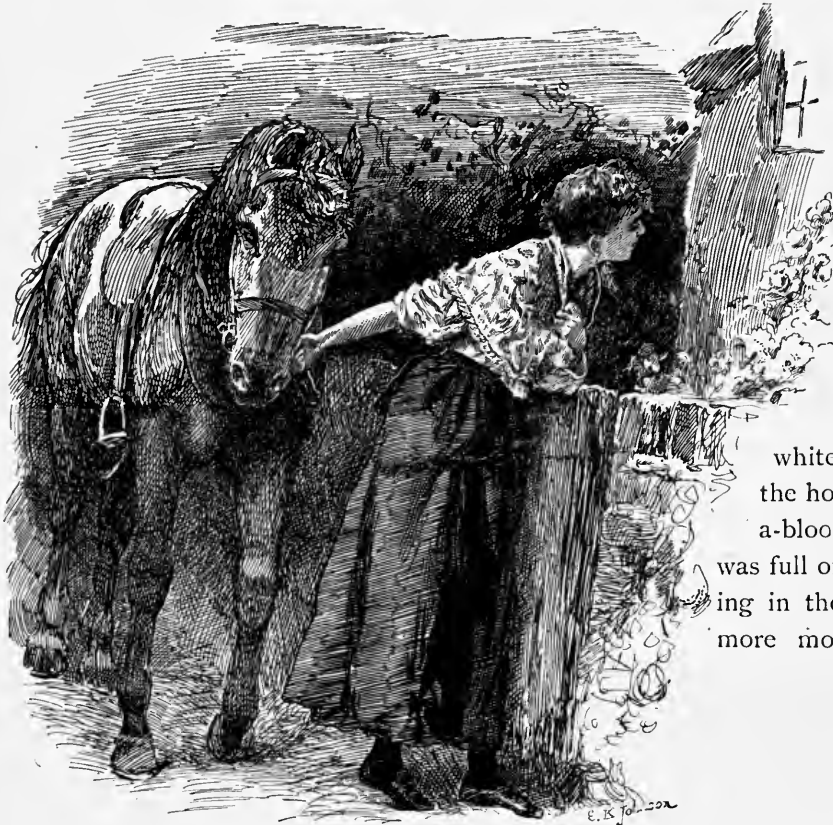
of life seemed very small, dim, and far away. Nevertheless, he roused himself enough to call feebly to the girl, when he heard her move about her little room overhead ; and she, with the active senses of youth, heard that faint voice in the kitchen down below, where Grandfather slept, sitting in an old arm-chair propped up with pillows—since his heart had grown so bad unable to lie in a bed. She came down the rickety stairs three steps at a time. She was scared—she herself said ‘fleyte’—she did not know why. She was more scared still when she saw her grandfather’s face, for the death that was on it was visible even to her.

‘Elsie, lass,’ he said, ‘so low that she had to bend her ear to his mouth, ‘I’m going. Run for Doctor Moss. It’ll be better for thee to have some one here. Run, lass, and God bless thee.’

Elsie wanted no second bidding. Swift as a young racehorse she ran along the lane to the village, where the parish doctor lived ; and after rousing him effectually she sped back—reaching home just as he rode up to the door. He flung the bridle of his horse to her and went into the kitchen, where he found the old man still alive but unconscious. It was a dreary death-bed enough. Only the parish doctor to catch the last breath, to hear the latest sign, to bear the burden of sympathy for the departing life. No loving lips to kiss the clammy brow, to press the failing hand ; no loving heart to grieve for the light of life put out for ever. Only the parish doctor to listen, to feel, to diagnose, to be convinced—with Elsie holding the horse’s bridle outside the cottage,

bending forward to the little window to try and see what was going on inside.

The spring had gone and the summer had come. For the flush of the apple-blossoms and the snowy white of the pear-trees, the hollyhocks were all a-bloom, and the orchard was full of fruits fast ripening in the sun. So many more months had passed





'GRANDFATHER IS DEAD!'

(From an original drawing by E. K. JOHNSON, Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours.)

over the girl's head, but she was still the child she had been ; and when she bent forward to hear and see she realised nothing of the awful calamity that awaited her. Then the doctor came out and said to her kindly :

‘You must be a good girl, Elsie, and not fret. Grandfather is with God in heaven, and I'll send you Molly Dow to make things decent.’

‘Grandfather's dead?’ cried Elsie ; who almost wondered that the sun, too, did not drop out of the sky.

‘Aye,’ returned the doctor, ‘that's it, poor girl ; but you're not to fret, and I'll send you Molly Dow. Don't go into the kitchen till she comes. You're best out in the garden.’

‘Yes,’ said Elsie gravely. ‘I'll have to tell the bees.’

‘Just so,’ the doctor answered—as he rode off flinging back as his last word : ‘Make it long, Elsie. They like it long.’

But Elsie was not eloquent. She went to the hives and bent over the large one where the old queen bee was. The second was the summer's swarm.

‘Grandfather's dead,’ she whispered. ‘Grandfather's dead.’

It was all she could say. The richest eloquence could compass no more. The most flowery rhetoric must end in that one brief phrase, ‘Grandfather is dead !’ The master was dead ; the keystone of the arch had fallen ; the roof-tree of the home was shattered. The bees must be told, else worse sorrow yet would befall. Birds and beasts and insects, all must know—and she must not call God cruel. And yet it seemed so hard that everything should be just the same as before ! The bees flew out and in the hive, their thighs laden with the golden grains they had gone so far to seek. One or two circled round Elsie's head but did not harm her. They knew her, she used to say ; and would sting her no more than the old collie would bite her. Grandfather's death did not seem to touch them. It did not seem to make any difference anywhere. The blackbird sang in his cage, and the birds called and chirped and carolled in the trees ; the butterflies flew in groups of three, circling and fluttering in the air like wind-blown petals ; the flowers bloomed and the insects murmured, just the same as ever ; and the sun shone with its August splendour—warm, life-giving, superb in power and glory, while Grandfather was lying dead in the little kitchen, and old Molly Dow was making things clean and comfortable.

Where she had been everything Elsie was now emphatically nothing. The neighbours flocked by ones and twos to the little cottage which had once been hers and Grandfather's, and now seemed to belong to anyone rather than to her. All talked at once and all gave different counsel.

But all agreed in one thing—the young lass could not bide there alone; and now that Grandfather was dead something must be done for her. By dinner-time Ned Scott came with the rest. He had not been able to get away before, and his coming now did no great good. He had sounded his mother on the desirability of taking Elsie now that Grandfather was dead; but he might as well have put his hand into a hornets' nest and asked them not to sting him, or have spoken to the winds and asked them to grant his prayer. Dame Scott knew the world too well for that kind of daftness; and Ned got only what he himself called a flea in his ear for his suggestion. Not if she knew it would she have a spoilt chit like that about her house—no, not if she knew it! Elsie might get her meat where she'd a mind, but she shouldn't get it at her hands—not were it ever so! So now Ned knew, and she'd given him warning straight enough. She'd have no fandanging with a lass as didn't know what real work was, and never had a mother to learn her

woman's ways; and for her part she'd be main glad if a place was found for her far away from Lingholme, where she'd never do no good, take her word for it!

Thus Ned had no flower of consolation in his hand when he went to the cottage to see Elsie and the place where the old man had been and was not. Empty of all that had given it life and character, how dreary, how desolate it was! The women had gone back to their homes for dinner. Elsie was alone—still in the garden. In the kitchen was grandfather's chair and stick, but he and his pillows and his plaid scarf and his striped shirt had vanished like cloud wreaths in the sky. On the table lay his big Bible and his round, broad-rimmed spectacles; against the

wall hung his Sunday top hat and serviceable coat. Everything was clean and cold and cheerless, and in the inner room lay the corpse, stretched on a plank laid on two trestles, asleep for ever. Poor Grandfather! He had been a good old chap, and had done his life's work gallantly and well. Never a murmur when the dark days were on him, and no heady pride when the light ones had come. He had lost good



and gear and love and health, but he had ever been patient and resigned. And there was no one who could say an ill word of him. He had kept himself above want and off the parish; and his very funeral had been provided for. Manfully he had lived and piously he had died, and the grass would grow green over his grave. For him was no mourning needed. To Elsie alone belonged the sympathy of the moment.

Then Ned turned away from the cheerless kitchen and went into the garden, where Elsie sat on her milking-stool and wished she could bring Grandfather back to life—and what should she do now that he had gone?

The neighbours had not been able to make much of Elsie. She had not cried, nor clung to them, nor asked their advice, nor opened her poor little heart anyhow. She and Grandfather had lived so much to themselves she had no familiar friends among them; and so many of them gathered together in the kitchen and the close and the garden frightened her and chilled her. How glad she was when dinner-time came and they had to hie them to their respective homes to make their men's meat ready, and to feed their bairns, and thus to leave her alone! She would make no dinner for herself to-day. She would have no food now that Grandfather had gone. But she was young and healthy and her appetite was good, and she grew hungry enough at the appointed time; so that, when Ned Scott came on her in the garden, sitting on the milking-stool, he found her, with a hunch of bread in her lap and a few early apples to eat with it, with a jug of milk by her side on the ground for a drink between whiles. When she saw him something came over her, she didn't know what it was nor why. All those busy chattering women had been so many hags of torture, but Ned Scott was different. He had been friendly with Grandfather, and Grandfather had thought for ever of him. He seemed somehow to share in the past as much as she did. He was, for the moment, in her confused perception, like a bit of Grandfather and a bit of herself in one. He was something that belonged to her—that she had a right to—that was hers, as she was his. His presence was the rod which struck the stony rock, and when she saw him coming she rose from her seat and went up to him with her long free girlish stride, holding out her hand, as she said with childish fervour: 'Nay, but I am that glad to see thee, Ned!' Then abandoning herself as one who had the right, she threw her apron over her head and burst into tears, sobbing wildly and aloud.



III.

MRS. ROSE was a good woman according to her lights. Those lights might be a little dim perhaps, and not able to radiate very far; such as they were, however, she was faithful to them. She had always quietly liked Elsie Birkett, and now that she was so left to herself in the world she was actively sorry for her—sorry to the point of personal compassion and practical help. The seclusion in which the girl had lived, so far from being a blemish, as with the neighbours, was in her eyes a merit; and the innocent immaturity of mind, which found no favour with such as Dame Scott, to the clergyman's wife—herself little better than a great girl, fifty though she was—had a value past counting. Hence when Grandfather was dead she talked the matter over, for form's sake, with her husband, and both came to the same conclusion:—she would do well to take Elsie Birkett into the rectory, and see what she could make of her. So she did; and Elsie, who would far rather have been left in the cottage by herself, was forced to consent to an arrangement which, looking at things from a common-sense point of view, was the best that could be made for her, all ways considered. But it was a weary business, and an unsatisfactory. Though Elsie had never been suffered to be a runaway, and had been kept strictly within bounds, ever since she was eleven years old, she had been her grandfather's house-keeper, and so far independent. She had learned to milk the cow and churn the butter for market; to bake and wash and iron and mend; to clean the house, and cook the food; to look to the bees and take care of the stores. Grandfather had kept the garden tidy after his day's work was over, and he had done all the harder jobs, till his heart got that bad he couldn't stoop nor carry, nor use his arms, nor do aught as he used; and then Ned Scott had put in his oar and pulled the little craft along. But in any case Elsie had been pretty well her own mistress within those bounds prescribed by the old man's sense of propriety as to what a motherless lass should be; and the orderly discipline of a gentleman's house came to her as both strange and irksome. She could not be broken in to the undeviating routine—the minute care—the punctuality necessary for the good conduct of an establishment which was to set an example to the place. She did not want to gad, but she did want to be free—to do things in her own way, and to work at looser-ends than could be allowed. She wanted to run out into the garden when she had a mind, and to do her sewing when she had a mind; and if she did not want to do it at three, say—the ordained hour—then she could not be made to see why she should, when

four would be quite early enough. Why could not four, which would suit her better, serve their turn just as well as three? Not that she was wilfully disobedient or intentionally recalcitrant; she was only tiresome. She did not mean to do wrong, but she failed to do right; according to the idea of right held sacred at the rectory; and so she came to grief, as was but natural. Between the older and better trained servants who would not be bothered with her loose-handed ways, as they said, and Mrs. Rose herself, who was disappointed that her prize Sunday-scholar should be so evidently a domestic failure, times grew to be hard for her, and she had no one to help her. She never saw Ned Scott now, save at a distance at church, when he was not allowed to speak to her. The rectory looked on followers as deadly; and the servants, who had been there for twenty years, were past the age when they were possible. When the girl went out for a walk, which was not often, she was always accompanied by one of these older women, acting as a Cerberus, a duenna, not of the most exhilarating kind. Her presence spoilt the whole thing, and turned what might have been the sweetness of an hour's liberty into the sour ferment of disappointment and boredom. Thus things went on badly, as has been said, and they were not made better by Elsie's hearing that Ned Scott was sweet on Liz Troy, the daughter of the local grocer, and as pert a hussy as was to be found in the country-side. At last matters grew so disjointed that Mrs. Rose took to heart the expediency of finding Elsie another place with some lady who would give more personal superintendence than she was able to do, and who would have that kind of influence which attaches to complete novelty. Elsie knew them all too well here for the perfect obedience which was wanted to make a woman of her. Changed conditions of life were best met in a new place. In the old one they are more difficult to accept.

So Mrs. Rose argued, not unreasonably, and looked about for another situation, where Elsie might find a good home and a kind mistress, and be thus more carried out of herself than she would ever be at Lingholme.

The stock of knowledge of the world and its ways were small at the rectory. The rector himself, though he had been a 'Varsity man in his day, had always been more of a student than an athlete, say—more of a dreamer than a man. He had been a shy, awkward, mother-bred youth; he was a shy, awkward, wife-devoted sexagenarian; and he knew no more of the world than he did of 'ground and loity tumbling' say. Hence, when his wife received, in answer to her advertisement, a finely written letter on highly scented paper, with a crest and the address—101, Blank Square—all in gold and red; a letter promising a mother's care to the

'orphan country girl' for whom a situation was desired, he, as well as she, saw only the promise of supreme success for poor Elsie, and rejoiced exceedingly at the prospect opened before her. It was the very thing. This lady—this Mrs. Molyneux—was evidently a good Christian woman who would care for this desolate young thing, as she said, like a mother. She would train her and educate her, and make her fit to get her own living, as she promised. She would look after her health and happiness and see that she was taken care of in all ways. She was fond of country girls, she said, and liked them better than the town-bred. She had trained a great many who had turned out wonderful successes. So Mr. and Mrs. Rose rejoiced, and Elsie was bidden to pack her box and prepare herself for her new place and all the strange excitements of London.

Not much roused Elsie now into activity of feeling or feverishness of action. Her life had fallen into a monotony of boredom—her mind into a monotony of sadness, not so much acute as deadening. Where formerly she had been like an undeveloped flower, alive, creating itself, but still in the bud, now she was like that flower blighted and slowly withering before blowing. The want of personal liberty, the absence of personal sympathy and love, told on a nature used to both within the bounding circle of a wise and lenient authority. A something, too, of loss was connected with the total dropping out of her horizon of Ned Scott—that engrafted excrescence, that naturalised alien of her former state. She did not know why she should feel pained when she heard that he was sweet on Liz Troy. What did it matter to her? Nothing; save that she hated Liz Troy, who had red hair and freckles, and thought Ned might have looked higher and chosen better. If he had chosen someone else—anyone else—she would not have minded; but Liz Troy, of all the girls in Lingholme! It was a pity, almost a shame; and she was in her right to be sorry, even resentful, and to feel that Ned had somehow behaved ill and disappointingly.

But if little in the ordinary routine of her life roused her to activity of thought or feeling, this project of London service did, and that effectually. She did not want to go. She would rather live as a farmhouse girl anywhere here in Lingholme than leave for that great city which she had read of as like Babylon, that mysterious Scarlet Woman of Revelation, and like a monster devouring all around it, and its own children as well. She cried and showed her reluctance plainly enough; but Mrs. Rose said it was for her good; and Mr. Rose saw in it the finger of Providence; and both insisted that she should go, under pain of their displeasure—carrying penalties as mysterious as those dreadful things she feared and did not know. She had nothing for it, then; but



GOOD-BYE, HESKETH !

(From an original drawing by E. K. JOHNSON, Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours.)

to accept the position pressed on her, pack her box and make ready to go. The dogcart would take her to the fork of the road where the coach passed on its way to the station. There she would be left. The man was obliged to go on to Birthwaite, to meet the Master and fetch him back to early dinner. She would not have to wait long, and no harm could possibly come to her.

It was all carried out as arranged. The decree of the authorities was as absolute as though they were so many Joves ruling heaven and earth, from the top of Mount Olympus. Sitting on her box by the roadside Elsie waited for the coach which was to take her to the station, thence to London and Mrs. Molyneux, of No. 101 Blank Square. All her past had faded into a dream; all her future was dark and undeclared. Loveless, alone, disregarded, unprotected, she sat there like some pale spirit from the world beyond the tomb. The autumn day was sad and drear. No sun shone in the sky, no birds sang in the bushes, no flowers bloomed in the hedgerow. For love's sake she had taken one or two late-blowing sprays from the rectory garden, but they were not like the apple-blossoms of spring, nor the deep-hearted roses and hollyhocks of summer. The cold dews of Autumn clung round her; the sorrows of the whole world seemed to weigh on her; behind her were the shadowy forms of the loved and lost receding farther and farther into the distance; before her the terrifying phantasms of the unfamiliar and unknown. Dangers, of which she was mentally unconscious but spiritually aware, flitted about her like bats in the evening, like spectres in the midnight. Those dangers were now weaving a net for her feet, wherein, should she be taken, she would be lost; and the jaws of hell were opening for her behind the cruel door of 101 Blank Square. Ah! why did grandfather die before she had come to her maturity?—why had God left her so alone?

E. LYNN LINTON.

(To be continued.)



The Story of Shah Jehan

NOTE.—*All the statements of fact in this article are taken from official documents placed in Mrs. Besant's hands, and are further substantiated by papers in the possession of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, M.P., which have been sent to him by the Begum herself.*—ED. U.R.

WHEN Mr. Fawcett was 'Member for India,' he strove in vain to interest the masses of the English people in the government of their vast dependency: on an Indian night in the House of Commons the benches were only dotted here and there with drowsy legislators, and the indifference of the members was reflected in the constituencies. During the last twelve months, however, there has been a shaking among the dry bones, and the coming session is likely to witness an awakening of the sense of duty to India which would rejoice the heart of Mr. Fawcett, could some rumour thereof reach him in the Elysian fields.

The natural result of English indifference has been Indian misgovernment, and officials trusted with despotic power have become tainted with despotism. Unchecked by public opinion, unstimulated by public criticism, too far removed from the Viceroy to be efficiently controlled by him, too high above the native population to be healthily influenced by it, our Residents and Agents have too often proved the truth of the wise saying, 'There's no man good enough to be another man's master.'

Among the tales of injustice and oppression which will be used during the coming session as arguments for listening to the voice of the Indian National Congress is that of Shah Jehan, the Begum of Bhopal.

Bhopal is a small state—its area is but 6,874 square miles—situated in the Nimar and Malwa Agency, in Central India, with a population of nearly a million. It is ruled by a sovereign whose independence is guaranteed by treaty, and for so small a State has a notable history. For some unintelligible reason it has always been friendly to us ; in 1777 the reigning Nabob gave passage to British troops, and rendered them every aid, though he exposed himself thereby to the danger of hostile raids from the Mahrattas. In 1818, in gratitude for its steady friendship, the East India Company signed a treaty, guaranteeing to the Nabob and his successors that they should be ‘absolute rulers of their country,’ and that ‘the jurisdiction of the British Government shall not in any manner be introduced into that principality.’ When, in 1861, the Governor-General of India publicly thanked the then Begum for the great services rendered by her in the hour of Britain’s sorest need, he spoke of Bhopal as a State ‘which is conspicuous in history for never having been in arms against the British power.’ Bhopal, then, was scarcely the State to select for special ill-usage.

Another thing that rendered Bhopal ‘conspicuous in history’ was its brilliant succession of female rulers. By some quaint turn of heredity, Nature bestowed on Bhopal rulers of the ‘weaker sex,’ and rulers withal who showed a remarkable capacity for government. The present ruler, Shah Jehan, is in no whit behind her predecessors in capacity. Inheriting the throne as a child, she stood aside in favour of her mother—the Begum who was so cordially thanked for her loyalty to the British during the Mutiny. On her mother’s death in 1868, she took the reins of government into her own hands, and from 1869 to 1880 our official reports, from time to time, note her admirable rule. We read from the pen of the Viceroy’s secretary, of her ‘energy and wise zeal . . . in extirpating corruption ;’ of her ‘useful and beneficial reforms,’ of her ‘liberal and enlightened principles.’ Another report speaks of her self-sacrifice in personally traversing her dominions and administering justice during the dangerous season of the year. The Viceroy in Council praised her rule. The Duke of Argyll, Secretary of State for India, in 1870 expressed his satisfaction. In 1872 the Political Agent spoke of Bhopal as ‘a pattern of good management to other States.’ Sir Richard Temple, in his ‘India in 1880,’ mentions Bhopal as being well governed. From 1868 to 1881 her Highness Shah Jehan Begum, by universal consent, ruled Bhopal with justice and righteousness. In 1881 Sir Lepel Griffin appeared on the scene as Agent, and clouds, at first no bigger than a man’s hand, began to fleck the hitherto clear sky.

The first jar was due to an ill-advised attempt on the part of Sir Lepel Griffin to establish private relations with the Begum of a character more intimate than had been usual with his predecessors. In a letter dated May 12, 1881, he proposed to the Begum that she should appoint a confidential agent to reside at Indore, by whom she was to communicate to Sir Lepel in an unofficial way her 'private views and wishes.' The proud Oriental Princess, accustomed to independent rule, and living in the haughty seclusion at once of the sovereign and of the Mahomedan woman, declined to enter into these confidential relations with a British official; 'his proposal was not acceptable to me,' she writes drily. It is evident from his subsequent conduct that Sir Lepel Griffin was anxious to signalise his agency by bringing the hitherto independent State of Bhopal under British control, and as his advances to the Begum were so summarily rejected it was necessary that he should find some other doorway through which he could pass into Naboth's vineyard. This doorway he found in the daughter and the son-in-law of the Begum, and much of the sorry story of the last few years turns on his extraordinary relations with these members of the reigning family. The domestic circumstances of the Begum lent themselves to a successful intrigue.

Sultan Jehan, the only surviving daughter of the Begum, is the heir to the crown, and is the issue of the Begum's first marriage. Left a widow in early womanhood, the duty of re-marriage had been strongly pressed on the Begum, and in 1871 she espoused Sidik Hasun, a favourite and highly-placed official in Bhopal in her mother's reign. The marriage proved a very happy one, and the Nawab Consort so thoroughly entered into the family traditions of his wife that he attained high favour in the eyes of the British Government, and received various titles of honour and a salute of seventeen guns, 'as a personal mark of respect, by order of her Majesty the Empress of India.' Sultan Jehan, lovingly styled by her mother the 'Light of my eyes,' lived in all amity in the domestic circle after the accession thereto of a stepfather, and all went well till after the marriage of Jehan the younger. The husband chosen for her, Ahmed Aly Khan, was not a success: 'he acquired no learning, but gave himself up to an idle and licentious life,' and began to cast longing eyes on the throne to which his wife was heiress. After a while he succeeded in raising clouds between the Begum and the Light of her eyes, and the life of mother and daughter, ruler and heir-apparent, no longer ran as smoothly as of old. Notwithstanding, the troubles were not serious, and they would probably have disappeared but for the unlucky

advent of Sir Lepel Griffin, who, seeing in Sultan Jehan the doorway aforesaid, set himself to embitter the quarrel, and to form a British party nominally headed by the heir-apparent and really inspired by himself, in opposition to the Bhopalese Government, headed by the wise and experienced ruler who had guided her State so well during thirteen successful years.

The first blow was struck when Sir Lepel Griffin visited Bhopal in December 1881, in the discharge of his official duties as Agent. Contrary to all native custom and official etiquette, he paid a visit to Sultan Jehan, although informed that she was under her mother's displeasure, and although no former Resident had ever visited the heir-apparent. In the following month he not only called on her again, but he had a private interview with her, excluding the officials, thus outraging the social, as he had before outraged the official, customs of Bhopal — meeting alone a Mahomedan woman, intruding into the jealous seclusion in which Islam guards the female sex. The Begum protested, alike to Sir Lepel and the Viceroy. Sir Lepel disregarded her protest addressed to himself, and intercepted that addressed to the Viceroy. (The question of his interception of her letters will be dealt with presently.) Writing in 1887, the Begum says: 'In short, my objections were not listened to, and Sir Lepel Griffin continued his visits, and saw her on eight different occasions, as follows:— January 27, 1882; February and September, 1885; February 13 and 20, 1886; December 2, 3, and 4, 1886, unaccompanied by the Political Agent or Wakil. If he insisted on visiting her, contrary to the custom of the State, he should at least have taken the Political Agent with him. But he did not.' It is easy to guess at the kind of scandal given rise to by conduct so unwise, scandal of a type to be avoided beyond all other by British officials in India.

It skills not to inquire into the rights and wrongs of the family quarrel, the details of monetary affairs which embittered the dispute, the condemnation of Sultan Jehan's conduct as 'unbecoming either as daughter or subject,' pronounced by Colonel Bannerman. On all these matters controversy may arise; but the one thing abundantly clear is that Sir Lepel Griffin outstepped his duties as Agent and infringed the treaty of 1818 when he interfered with the family affairs of the Bhopal dynasty, and violently championed the cause of the daughter against the mother in a quarrel with which he had no concern. As the Begum wrote to Colonel Ward in January 1888, this was 'purely a family

matter, utterly unconnected with State affairs, and one in which hitherto the paramount Power has never interfered.' The case is ably and temperately stated by the Begum herself, in a long letter of protest addressed by her to Sir Lepel Griffin in April 1888. The amount of her daughter's income, she had previously said, was not a question 'which, according to usage and custom, calls for any interference on the part of the Resident ;' and she wrote :—

Had I adhered to the terms of my mother's will and limited the jaigeers [allowances] to what she assigned to my daughter and son-in-law ; and had your attitude to her been like that of the former British representatives was to me during my mother's lifetime (I being heir-apparent), my daughter would never have set herself up in opposition to me. . . . Your letter is confirmatory of what everyone, high or low, knows of your strong partiality for my daughter and son-in-law, and that you have traduced and condemned the State in order to gratify them. . . . It never occurred to any European officer before your time to take up my daughters, Sultan Jehan and Suleiman Jehan, in a phaeton, and drive about with them in the streets and gardens in order to add to their dignity. How can you suppose that I consider such novel conduct as being consistent with family usage, and as indicative of high and favourable consideration on the part of the British Government ?

Sir Lepel Griffin seems to have found it inconvenient to argue with the Begum and to justify his conduct, so he resorted to the curious expedient of giving the Begum's letter to one of his subordinates to send back to her, and it was returned to her with a curt memorandum that the officer had been instructed 'to return it to you direct.' Courteous conduct, truly, towards a woman and a ruler.

There was an interval of peace in Bhopal during 1883 and 1884, for Sir Lepel Griffin was then on furlough, and his duties were discharged by Colonel Bannerman. This gentleman, like all his predecessors, with the curious exception of Sir Lepel, admired the Begum's government of her State. After visiting Bhopal in December 1883, he wrote to the Begum expressing his satisfaction with her administration, and the way in which her husband, Sidik Hasun, ably seconded her efforts. Unhappily, in 1885, Sir Lepel Griffin returned, and the clouds again gathered round the unfortunate Begum.

Sir Lepel's first step was to deprive the Begum of the aid rendered to her by her husband. He ascribed to the influence of the latter certain attacks upon himself which had appeared in the native press, and determined to strike a blow which should terrify the Begum into

submission and impress the popular mind. He convened a Durbar, on an unusual scale of magnificence, in October 1885, and summoned the Begum to attend it. Her own description of the scene will best convey the effect produced :—

The great hall was filled with a crowd of my own subjects, among whom were many never before permitted to enter such an assembly ; conspicuous among these were all those openly hostile to me. Outside the palace was surrounded by the soldiers of the Bhopal Battalion ; inside another body, fully accoutred, stood on either side of Sir Lepel Griffin. Everyone was on the tiptoe of expectation as to what was to be the outcome of all this display of pomp and power. The Agent's deportment was suitable to the occasion : he sat rigid, with a stern and frowning countenance. No private hint or allusion to what was impending having been given, the ruler of the country appeared before her own people in a state of bewildered ignorance, while her enemies, by their cheerful, not to say exultant countenances, plainly indicated that they had been in some measure prepared for the *dénouement*. Even now my flesh creeps and my heart palpitates at the recollection of that dreadful day.

In the midst of this calculated display of pomp, Sir Lepel Griffin addressed the Nawab Consort in harsh and insulting terms, forbade him to meddle in State affairs, and informed him that he was deprived of his titles and salute of honour ; turning to the Begum, he commanded her to choose a responsible minister, so as to remedy the maladministration of a State declared the year before by Col. Bannerman to be well administered ; and then, quitting the Durbar, he drove in state to visit his friend Sultan Jehan, and to inform her that he had disgraced the Nawab in public Durbar. He then, on his own authority, pronounced a divorce *a mensa et thoro* between husband and wife, forbidding the Nawab and Begum to live under the same roof. Helpless in the grip of the ruthless and all-powerful British official, the Begum submitted. She writes under date Feb. 24, 1886 :—

Though such separation has caused me and my husband intolerable pain and vexation, the order was fully carried out, and continued in full force, though a minister has been appointed [the separation was to determine on the appointment of a minister], and the above memorandum also remains unreplied to. My husband has been living separated from me for four months, two months of which, up to date, have been passed in complete separation. And though I was ill for a month, and suffered very severely, still, in obedience to your orders, I did not permit my husband to come to see me at the Taj Mahal.

Fortunately this shameless interference between husband and wife came to the ears of Lord Dufferin, and the Viceroy promptly put an end to it. The following shorthand notes of a conversation between Sir

Lepel Griffin and the Begum throw some light on the curious policy adopted by that gentleman in his dealings with the princes of Central Asia:—

Sir Lepel: I have to speak to you about another matter. Sidik Hasun practises sorcery, and does the dirty work both of Hindus and Mussulmans.

Begum: Sidik Hasun a Wahabee and a sorcerer! A Wahabee can never be a sorcerer. You may make any inquiry you like.

Sir Lepel: The death of Beelkis was caused by the Black Art.

Begum: What would be gained by the death of Beelkis?

Sir Lepel: You call your husband a Wahabee.

Begum: You call him so. But a Wahabee does not practise sorcery.

Sir Lepel: A sorcerer is an infidel, but the British Government does not take cognisance in such matters.

Quite so. But then should an official of the British Government take cognisance of them, and repeat the idle gossip of the bazaars in his official capacity, making charges of sorcery when he has no belief in its possibility?

In order to justify his interference in the internal affairs of Bhopal Sir Lepel Griffin constantly brought complaints of maladministration against the Begum's government; but these complaints were always vague and general, and the Begum vainly wearied herself in the attempt to obtain specific information. It must be remembered that previous to the appearance of Sir Lepel Griffin on the scene, and even during his furlough, despite the disturbances he had caused, the testimonies of our own officials to the good administration of the Begum were clear and unbroken in sequence. Lord Mayo, Lord Northbrook, Lord Lytton, and Lord Ripon never uttered one word of reproach, but on the contrary passed high encomiums on her administration; during thirteen years no Political Agent had found ground of complaint against her; her people were contented, and her decisions as judge—for she ruled personally and herself administered justice—were ungrudgingly accepted. 'The annual reports of General Meade, General Daly, and Colonel Bannerman, while they were at the Indore Residency,' she writes to the Viceroy in April 1887, 'are in the Foreign Office. I need only refer your lordship to their reports to convince your Excellency how I have discharged my duties to the State.' 'This sudden change of character,' she remarks in June 1888, 'from the benignant ruler to the misguided and oppressive maladministrator, is contemporaneous with Sir Lepel Griffin's assumption of office.'

Strong in the consciousness of her own integrity, the Begum for the last four years has been endeavouring to obtain an inquiry into Sir Lepel Griffin's vague charges. But here she has vainly beaten her hands against a wall which it was impossible for her to break down. Official etiquette demands that all communications from the princes of India shall pass to the hands of the Viceroy through certain assigned channels. The Begum could only address Lord Dufferin by sending her communications through Sir Lepel Griffin, and he, instead of forwarding them to his chief, persistently returned them to the Begum. Since November 1885, the Begum has been vainly endeavouring to reach the Viceroy's ear; a letter, written in answer to one received by her from the Viceroy, was intercepted; five months later she writes, expressing her fear that the Viceroy will think her discourteous in her silence, as her letter had not been forwarded to him; this letter was also stopped. In April 1887 she complains that letters 'addressed to your lordship about my grievances were returned to me from both the Agencies, and not a single one was ever forwarded to your lordship.' Every attempt she made to reach the Viceroy failed, and when in despair she telegraphed to him direct, she was desired to communicate through the official channel. There is no reason to suppose that Lord Dufferin knew that no communications sent through the official channel were allowed to reach his hands. At last she drew up an appeal to the Viceroy, as pathetic a document as was ever issued in the attempt to obtain justice:—

I have before this tried to bring my grievances under your lordship's notice through the Agent, but my khareetas [letters] were, to my great mortification and disappointment, returned to me. Prohibited from communicating directly, and debarred by the Agent from approaching your lordship through the appointed channel, I was reduced to helplessness, and had patiently to watch the course of events . . . I have striven for four years for a commission to make a full and searching inquiry into my case, but Sir Lepel Griffin, my accuser and my judge, resolutely set his face against my demand, and refused to forward my applications; these are now included in the papers herewith submitted. I cannot conceive that a hearing of my case will be denied. British law would insure this as a right to the meanest subject, and it is inconsistent that it should be denied to a princess who has ever been loyal and faithful to the Government.

Fortunately the conspiracy of silence has been broken down, for an agent of the Begum came over to England, laid her case before Charles Bradlaugh, M.P., who has been selected by the Indian Agency as 'member for India,' and the questions put by him in the House of Commons at the close of the last session have already pressed on the

attention of the Indian Government the gross injustice that has been done under cover of their authority. Already the first step towards reversal has been taken by the restoration to the Begum of her right to select her own minister.

After the Durbar of 1885 Sir Lepel Griffin forced on the Begum a minister of his own choosing, Nawab Abdul Latif Khan. (It is hardly necessary to call attention to the fact that this action was a flagrant violation of the treaty of 1818.) This minister was, naturally, a facile tool in the hands of his real master, and the Begum complains 'that now no State business comes up even before me. I am now, as it were, a painted figure, and nothing more.' A position more galling to a proud and capable woman, after seventeen years of personal rule, it would be difficult to conceive. But the insult to the ruler was less important than the injury to the ruled. The Begum writes :—

His mode of dealing with questions relating to the settlement of the revenue has been such that it has resulted in a loss to the State of hundreds of thousands of rupees—simply because he has disposed of questions without proper inquiry ; while I, under the impression that my interference might be displeasing to the Government, felt constrained to remain silent, though pained, to a degree beyond the power of expression, to witness the ruin of a State, the establishment and improvement of which had cost so much anxious thought, labour, and trouble to my ancestors. Rs. 4,000 Bhopalee, for salary and contribution towards pension paid to the minister, is, for a State like Bhopal, certainly exorbitant. Besides this, he himself has added heavily to its burdens by introducing strangers on largely increased allowances in place of old and experienced officials removed to make way for aliens ; and the State, so far from being bettered, has retrograded. His system of administration has greatly suffered in public estimation from another unusual proceeding, contrary to all precedent, and repugnant to all recognised principles ; the mere mention of which carries its own condemnation. He has commenced re-hearing cases which had already been tried and decided by myself. Should it become an established practice for a minister to do so, and disturb previous decisions, the finality of judgments will be at an end, and belief in the good faith of the administration destroyed.

Some of the cases of interference had results which must render it difficult to carry on the government of Bhopal. A man convicted of bribery, forgery, and a few other trifles, was set at liberty by Sir Lepel Griffin, and the Begum was not permitted to exile him from her State, nor even to take security for good behaviour. Another, who had been exiled and deprived of his jaigeer for hostility to the Government, was brought back, and his allowance restored. A native magistrate was arrested, tried, and punished by Sir Lepel Griffin, although the latter

had no legal jurisdiction in Bhopal. Another, 'an energetic and efficient official of the Bhopal State,' was put on his trial, convicted on the evidence of a prisoner, and carried away to Indore, beyond the reach of his own sovereign. A number of cases carried out in this high-handed fashion have dislocated the administration of justice in Bhopal. At this distance we cannot judge the rights and wrongs of the individual cases, but it is clear that if the Begum is an oppressive and unjust ruler, and we claim, in defiance of her treaty rights, to review her judgments, then we ought to depose her as tyrannical or incompetent, rather than make all justice a farce by irregular and overbearing interference. Once more, it must be remembered that her tyranny and incompetence are only contemporaneous with Sir Lepel Griffin's presence. 'Sir Lepel Griffin commenced interfering in the administration of my state and private affairs almost from the day he assumed charge from General Daly, during whose term of office no causes of complaint were alleged against me. There was an interval of peace during Sir Lepel Griffin's absence in England, but my troubles were renewed on his return.'

There is, however, one clear and definite charge made by Sir Lepel Griffin against the Begum. According to the custom of her people, she does not show her face in public, but uses the purdah, or veil. Sir Lepel declares that she cannot properly administer justice unless she shows her face, and his insistence on her duty of unveiling herself has been met by her with an equally steady insistence on her duty to her religion and national custom. In his anger Sir Lepel has so far forgotten himself as to call her contemptuously, that 'purdahnashin woman,' an epithet bitterly resented by the proud Mahomedan. 'It is well known,' she writes, 'that the sanctity of the purdah is the outgrowth of a time-immemorial custom, which has become ingrained in the minds of the people, and any attempt to set it aside is viewed with the utmost repugnance and horror. The depth and intensity of feeling on this subject is not understood by Europeans.' She urges that it is 'a religious observance with which the British Government has no concern. And it was widely notified by the Empress of India that there would be no interference with religious matters.' 'Whatever may be the opinion of advanced officials, and whatever may be the faults of the purdah system, it has an immemorial existence among the followers of Islam, and is bound up with the religious and social sentiments and habits of the people of the East.' An Agent who can flout the religious habits of the people with whom he is brought into contact, resembles, in a country

like India, a lighted match in a powder magazine. Some one's foot should put him out in quickest possible fashion.

Out of the long tale of the Begum's grievances, we select, as a last example, the way in which she, a Mahomedan, was forced to subsidise a Roman Catholic colony in Bhopal. A lady, Madame de Lane, who was a member of this community, had enjoyed an allowance from the late Begum of Rs. 40,000, and by her direction this lady's heir was to receive an annuity of Rs. 3,000 only. Shah Jehan, however, increased this annuity—held by Enayet Mosy, Madame de Lane's adopted son—to Rs. 16,000, a generous and spontaneous gift. Why Sir Lepel Griffin should have desired to befriend Mosy does not appear, but on the death of Madame de Lane Sir Lepel insisted that the Begum should pay her debts, amounting to nearly half a lakh of rupees; this, he wrote, should 'be paid by the State, which resumes the larger part of the jaijeer. No portion should be charged against the reduced estate of Enayet Mosy, who has no money even to improve the property now granted.' Not only must the Begum pay the debts of Madame de Lane, but she must support the Christian colony of which that lady was a member. Moved in this, as in all else, by the fear that her Bhopalese earthen pot would not stand collision with the British iron pot, the Begum bestowed on the colony an allowance of Rs. 9,000 a year. But this was not enough. 'Provision should be made for both church, school, and priest, in accordance with the declaration of religious toleration your highness has often made.' It is a new reading of religious toleration that it includes providing the necessaries of worship for an alien creed, but Sir Lepel Griffin stretched it yet further, and insisted that the Begum should not only provide for all these needs, but also for the poorer members of the community, else 'they will be compelled to turn Mahomedans or slaves.' So the Mahomedan princess was forced to support out of State funds the poorer Christians, and their priest and religious buildings. Religious toleration in Bhopal seems to be spelt plunder.

Thus for years has this unfortunate Begum of Bhopal been crushed under the iron sway of Sir Lepel Griffin, who, indifferent to public faith and private feelings, carried out his unavowed object of reducing Bhopal into complete subjection to British rule. The Begum sums up in a few lines his conduct towards her: 'He destroyed the time-honoured customs of my House; he outraged my feelings; he promoted discord in my family, enriched my enemies at my cost, uprooted

my treaty rights, and reduced me to insignificance and contempt.' Yet the old tradition of faithful friendship to England has survived the sufferings of the last seven years, and faith in British justice has remained unshaken. It is not yet too late to undo the mischief, and to blot out the memory of the last few years. The Begum's health has been undermined by anxiety and suffering, but she is still living, and she should be at once restored to the enjoyment of the internal independence secured to her by treaty. The story of her wrongs is known all over India, and its recital adds to the unrest which is so dangerous a symptom in all vast subject populations. Justice done to her would be a pledge of better times, and would strengthen our hands in the heavy task that lies before us—of building up a great self-governing community out of the wrecks of the despotisms we have destroyed, of passing over in safety the transition period between India conquered and enslaved and India educated and free.

ANNIE BESANT.

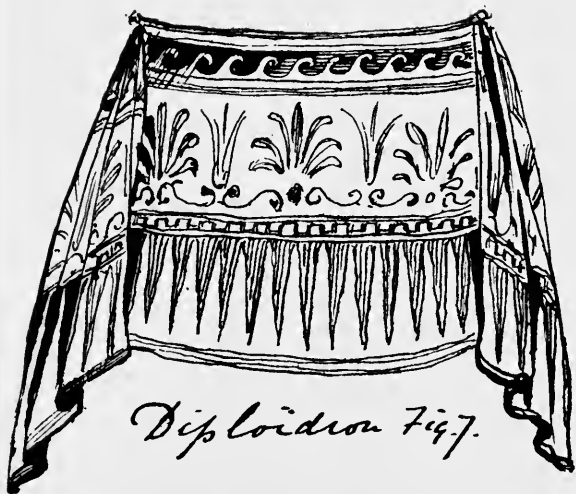
Greek Textile Decoration

POPULAR ideas of the dress of the ancient Greeks have undergone some change ; having held for years, contemptuous of assertions to the contrary by their own writers, that they lived and moved, clad in white sheets more or less elegantly draped, there is a disposition abroad at last to think of them as human beings, instead of as statues galvanised into movement, or at best as *habitués* of a Turkish bath. But if the contemporary stage or the walls of contemporary picture exhibitions are to be trusted as expositors of the more educated popular knowledge, this disposition would seem to lead those interested little farther than 'Liberty' silks and leopard skins.

A step has been gained inasmuch as colour is recognised as permissible in a drapery, if sufficiently secondary or asthetic in quality ; but it is curious that no more serious attempt should be made by artists or members of the theatrical world to find out how things really were.

A brief study of such authorities as still exist might lead to a conviction that the Greeks were much like other young races in their liking for coloured, not to say gaudy dresses, decorated as their means and skill permitted.

It would be found, I think, that all sections of the race did not dress alike—the colonies, both Eastern and Western, being more sumptuous in their apparel than Athens or Sparta, or rather than the former was



Diploidion Fig. 7.



Sleeved chiton (male)



Female - Jacket

GREEK JACKETS.

(From original drawings by A. SACHEVEREL-COKE, Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours.)

in the earlier stages of its history ; and that the dress of the Western colonies had always a much stronger likeness to that of the parent country than had the Eastern, and that for very obvious reasons.

I will make no pretence in a few pages to prove the whole case, but it is perhaps not impossible to point out a few sources from which not only to illustrate what I have suggested, but also to learn the character and origin of the textile decoration employed. It is to these latter points I shall confine my remarks—the colour and decoration of the garment, not the fashion of it.

This branch of the arts is involved perhaps in greater obscurity than is any other practised by the Greeks, if we except that of music: the direct sources of information are so narrow, consisting chiefly of the evidence afforded by the painting on their pottery; and that, being now, at all events, usually scarcely more than monochrome, and giving little of the detail necessary to a fair comprehension of the subject, suggests only the extent and character, the latter very roughly, of the ornament employed, and that, too, in a manner that is often perhaps only a conventional way of representing a coloured and decorated stuff.

Yet, with a little patience, these rough sketches sort themselves into separate groups, and yield a few distinct facts.

There is another field—the painted tombs of Etruria and Apulia; and these are for some points, being in colour, of greater value than the pottery; and although not the work of natives of Greece itself, are still, even those of Etruria, undoubtedly the work of artists of the Greek race. The little painted terra-cotta figures from Tanagra and elsewhere should not be forgotten, although rarely giving more than the crude colour of the various draperies.

To these sources we can look for illustrations of those passages in the classics, referring to sumptuous apparel, that are otherwise susceptible of a variety of renderings. I will make no effort to trace the textile work of the heroic times; though the Greeks were at that early period, if Homer is to be relied on, rather an ostentatious people in their tastes. I confess that any attempt to reconcile his descriptions of dress and armour with that borne by figures of even the earliest Hellenic art I am acquainted with, has always ended

in defeat. Before taking the subject in detail, it is as well to consider what influences must have operated in relation to their weaving and needlework.

The wide area of country occupied by this people brought them into constant contact, friendly and warlike, with alien races, some of high civilisation; and we have many proofs of the reciprocal artistic influence of this contact, being confronted with that of the Egyptian and Assyrian on the Greek at the very outset of this study.

The first footsteps in art of all barbarous races are very much alike, and, to judge by their pottery, the Hellenes were no exception to the rule; their very early efforts are thus of little interest in tracing their growth to its latest development: it is, to a student of costume, only in the later archaic period that the art becomes instructive, and then more by the way it uses borrowed forms than by any special invention of its own.

The details of the textile ornament depicted on the pottery show that the foreigner was, at first, the educator; such patterns as occur on the earlier examples being almost purely Egyptian, and later (about 450 B.C. or thereabouts) strongly impregnated with Assyrian forms. Indeed, the Greeks were at no time great designers of ornament, as were the Italians of the Middle Ages for instance; perhaps because they cared little for purely conventional forms, and yet used them, recognising that such were better fitted for enriching a plain surface, without attracting too much attention to themselves, than natural ones could be; the subordination of the part to the whole being a great characteristic of all Greek art.

The most distinctly native invention in ornament was a more or less free arrangement of ivy, vine, or some other purely natural object;¹ the evolution of the forms we are accustomed to associate so emphatically with the Greeks—the anthemion or honeysuckle etc.—being readily traceable from the foreigner.

The descent of the Egyptian patterns is easily followed, the ornament being just such as a rude people, with simple means of production, might retain by tradition from the art of the early Egyptian settlers, some of the forms having survived in a partial and meaningless manner.

¹ Never used on their architecture.

No doubt, importations of the manufactured material, from Egypt, from time to time supplemented the home supply. Later intercourse with Egypt seems to have had no effect on the arts, the Greeks being then conscious of their own strength.

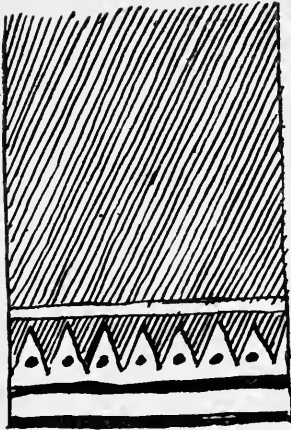
The adaptations of Assyrian or Assyro-Babylonian art are less easy to account for; they may have their origin in Phœnician commerce; the Babylonians being celebrated for rich weaving, their tissues would possibly be carried far and wide, but it is doubtful whether it would have been worth while taking them to so poor a country as Greece: I am therefore inclined to trace such adaptations as occur in the textile arts of European Greece to the spoils of Plataea (B.C. 479), and would consequently credit the Persians with their introduction, they themselves being indebted for what decorative arts they possessed to their conquest of Babylonia. The Athenians are mentioned as speaking of the embroidered coats of the Persians on that very field, and in a way that shows they were not used to them.

There is a strong likeness, often remarked upon, to Assyrian forms in much of the ornament painted on the earlier pottery, but I have not observed its influence on the textile fabrics depicted upon it earlier than the above date; from which it seems probable the painter, when he drew arms or draperies, followed existing types, and illustrated a new infusion from an old source.

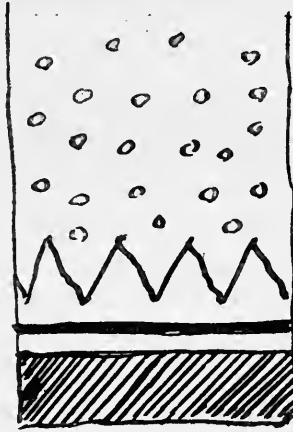
Of this archaic time, I find that, in spite of the widely extended field the ware has been gleaned from, such textile ornament as it presents in various examples differs little; the same characteristics occurring in all. Time alone marks a distinct difference.

It may be owing to the mass of this manufacture emanating from Athens—its presence East or West being only accidental—or possibly that similar causes induced similar development in the different sections of the race.

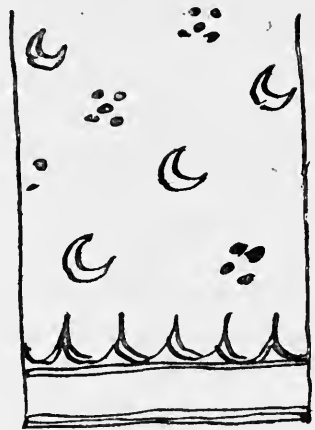
The pottery itself, for colour, shows only the clay, usually used at this period, as a ground for the figures, which are in black, brown, a dirty purple (probably originally red), with a sparing use of white for the smaller details of ornament. Very rarely is any garment entirely of any one of the colours named, those of either sex being made up of portions of brown and purple, alternated in various ways, and commonly



Chiton

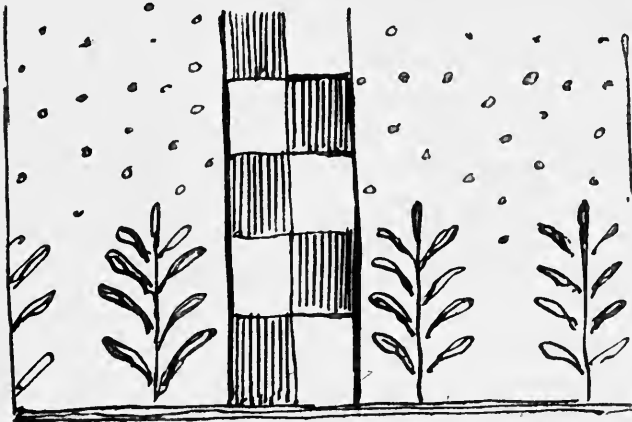


Chiton

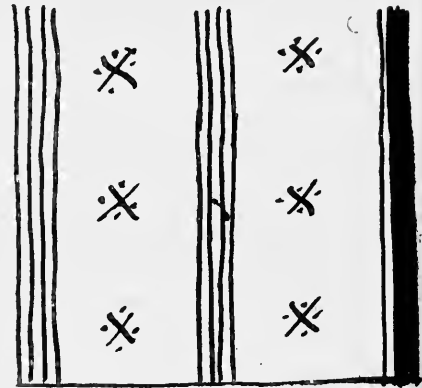


Kimaton

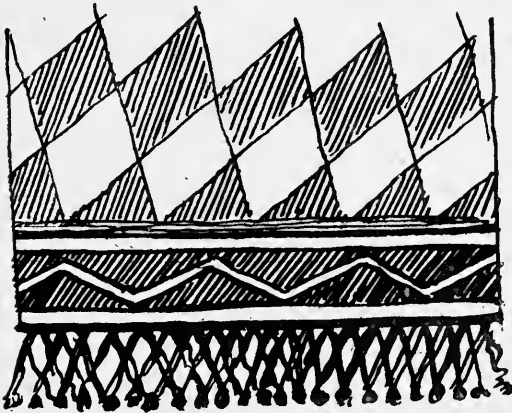
Stuffs and Borders



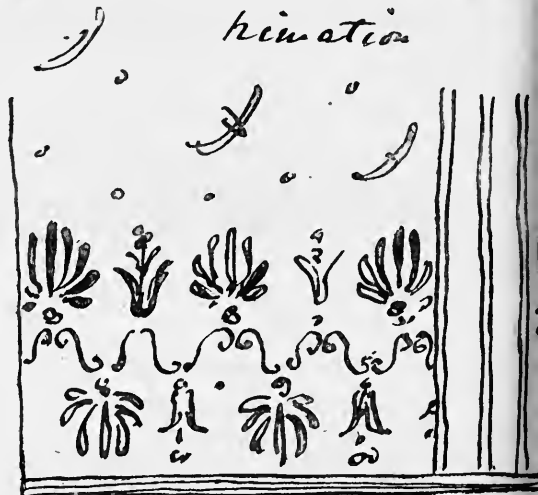
Chiton



Kimaton



Short jacket



Chiton

Centro

ornamented with a small black and white pattern. White, as a mass, does occasionally occur, but never (so far as I can remember) as a drapery, but only as the flesh in female figures, and it is then produced by laying on a solid pigment.

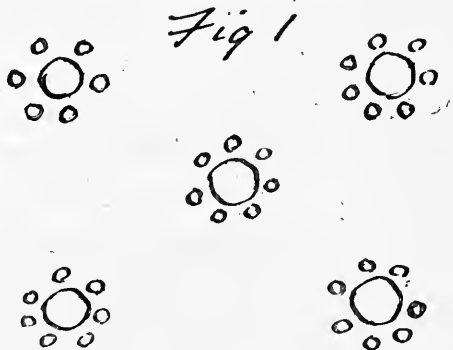
We must not suppose that the cramped resources of the ancient potter were capable of showing all the colour the dyer could produce; the brown and purple divisions I have referred to are only valuable as revealing that there was a decided leaning in favour of parti-coloured draperies—I mean of such as had the stuff of various colours as well as the ornament upon it; and the remarkable absence of white points to the fact, that so far from clothes of this colour, or rather of no colour, being usual, they must have been rare. Indeed, white as a drapery meets with little support from ceramic art until its finest period, and then the evidence is but of a negative nature, being rather due to the absence of any pigment on the clay ground than to the actual presence of white as a body, which is still used for the flesh of goddesses.

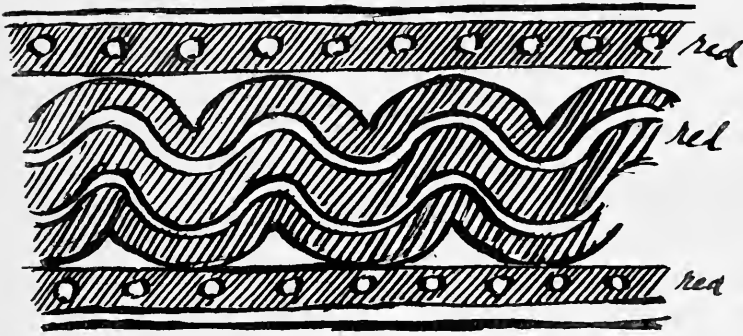
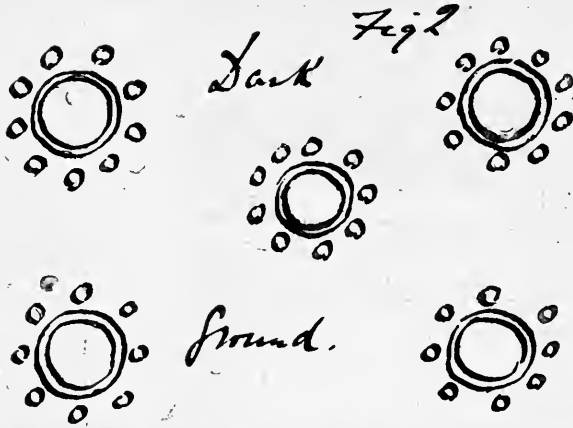
A particular kind of ware of the finest period, and of Athenian manufacture, shows, in the several pieces I have examined, persons in blue, green, what seems to have been yellow, and scarlet draperies; sometimes all these colours being present in distinct and separate masses on one figure without the presence of any white.

A similar conclusion will be found to result from a study of the Greek painted tombs in Italy, where, in some cases, will be found large numbers of people together, and all clothed in strong colours. This makes the Athenian law, that 'no one shall frequent the Panathenaic festival in dyed garments,' intelligible, it being possibly desired to make all present more conscious of being partakers of a sacred rite, by clothing them in a colour usually confined to the magistracy and priesthood.

In the decoration of these materials, among the first facts that strike one is that the ornamentation is nearly always such as might be produced in the simplest of looms; at a later period it is generally obviously the work of the needle.

At about 500 B.C. one or two forms





*Ornament and border of
short chiton on male figure*

predominate, the simplest, perhaps, being small groups of spots, a large central spot (or ring) surrounded by a circle of smaller ones dotted evenly over the whole surface of the cloth; and that it is not merely a conventional way of representing a rich stuff seems probable by precisely the same pattern occurring on the dress of a large carefully finished and coloured statue of Osiris (Egyptian) of much earlier date; there the central spots are pale blue, the smaller ones white, and the ground crimson.

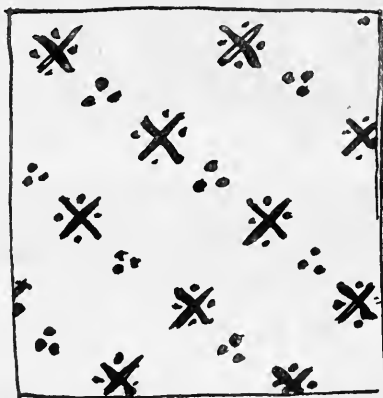
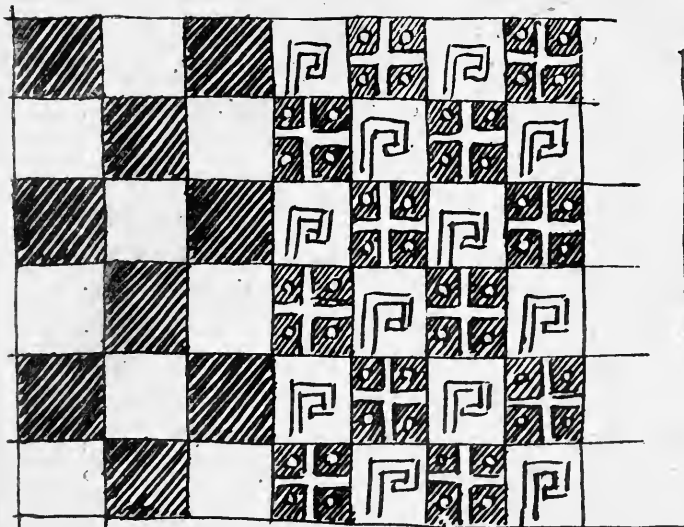
Chequers of light and dark squares, set chessboard fashion, are very common, and cover the whole fabric, sometimes varied to quite a remarkable extent by the addition of lines and dots;

the material has in this latter case probably had some help from the embroiderer. These chequers are plentiful in the simpler form on Egyptian work, where they are usually in several colours, every complication of the other type may be seen on Assyrian ivories; both without going farther than the British Museum.

A marked difference in the use of this class of ornament is interesting. The Egyptian and Assyrian laid the pattern square on the stuff, the Greek invariably diagonally to it.

The chequers, when elaborated and in colour, as on the walls of the Italian tombs, become sometimes almost a tartan; Dennis, if I recollect rightly, in his 'Etruria,' mentions finding an actual one among them. This is very natural, the crossing of lines that makes up this sort of pattern being the natural growth of a simple form of weaving, and

Fig 3



Apparently a thin material

Woven & enriched with Embroidery

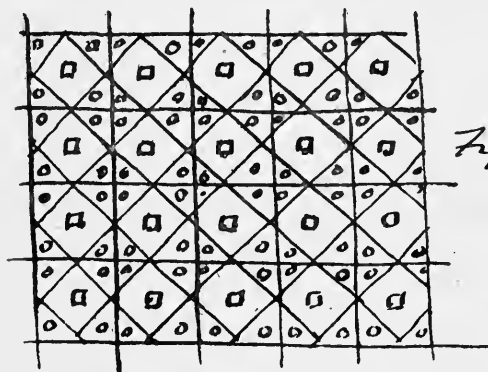
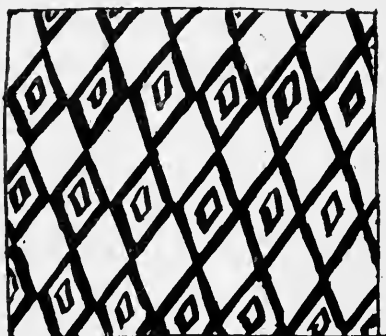


Fig 4



Woven & Embroidered

common to many half-civilised peoples ; but that it lingered curiously long with the Greeks, as it did, was probably owing to their looms being very primitive ; there is a headless female statue of late date in the British Museum with the cross lines plainly marked on the himation with the chisel.

Another variety, and the only one I have noticed as lasting all through Greek ceramic art, is an arrangement of groups of dots and



embattled borders



crosses, set alternately, sometimes on the separate lozenges of the chequers already spoken of, but more usually spread evenly over the plain surface of the fabric; the pattern is very small. At a later period it generally decorates semi-diaphanous materials.

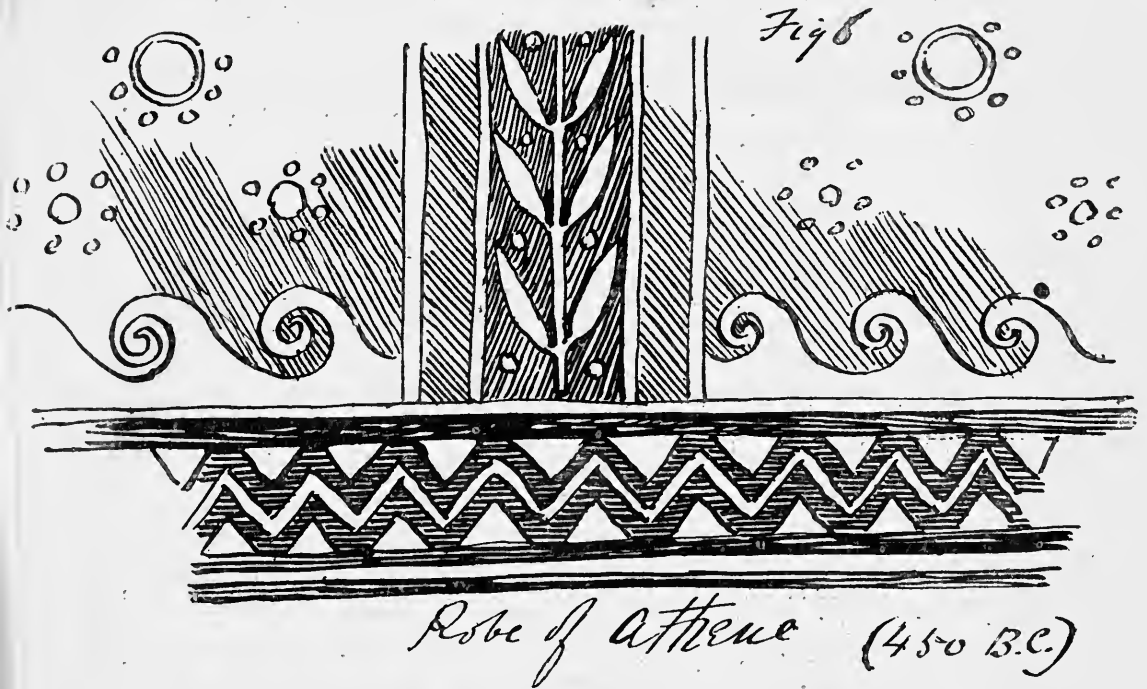
The edge of the garment has always some well-designed border, such as the Assyrian embattled stripe, three or four broad bands undulating in regularly recurring curves between two boundary lines, or other simple form. The ground upon which these borders are worked always

differs in colour from the material they are attached to. There is no particular reason to suppose them made separately and sewn on; a broad light-coloured band woven at the edge of a dark cloth would form the bed for embroidery, and make a border distinct from it.

Without multiplying examples, these represent roughly the earlier Greek textile decoration as found on the pottery; some of the forms from their constant repetition may have become at last only a conventional way of expressing an ornamented material, but there is no proof of it.

At its latest, archaic (textile) decoration becomes richer, the dresses have heavier borders, and we meet the three or four vertical lines down the front of women's chitons that never afterwards disappear; the intervals between these lines are frequently the field for ornament, sometimes a chequer, at others an olive branch, as on a figure of Athene on a vase in the British Museum found at Teucheria, Cyrenaica (about 450 B.C.); the dress of the goddess represented has all the main characteristics I have enumerated, being spotted with rings and circles of dots on a dark ground, having four lines down the front inclosing the olive branch (although here an attribute of Athene) found on Assyrian ivories, a heavy zigzag or dentated border, and one new feature I cannot class as foreign, the familiar wave pattern.

All this in strong colours must have been very unclassical. Another vase from the same locality has a similar figure whose dress, from its



having a frieze of human figures on its lower part, is thought to bear some reference to the peplos worked for and offered at the Panathenaic festival at Athens to Athene; this peplos is described as embroidered with figures, and as dark violet, but also saffron coloured; each description was probably correct at different times, the gift being renewed every five years.

We may possibly form a more complete idea of the general appearance of the offering from a cloak worn by Demeter on a vase of the succeeding period, also in the British Museum, which if it represents, as it is supposed to do, the peplos offered to that goddess at Eleusis, would no doubt resemble that of Athene at Athens. The Eleusinian one is embroidered in parallel bands of anthemias, birds, dolphins, winged human figures, and chariots and horses, a strip of conventional ornament separating each row; the decoration, as a whole, has much in common with that on the sails of ships found in Egyptian tomb-paintings—a resemblance that, coupled with the fact of the Panathenaic peplos being taken to the Parthenon on the mast of a galley, suggests that the original of the type was nothing more than the sail of such a vessel hung over the statue of the goddess to protect it. A remnant of this class of decoration, and possibly of the embroidery

used, may still be seen on the aprons of the peasantry of Southern Italy.

All these vases date later than the Persian wars, and a marked change becomes noticeable ; the embroiderer, abandoning to the weaver this system of keeping the decoration in strips, in a series of borders, as it were, over the whole stuff, instead, spread his somewhat intractable architectural forms of ornament freely and flowingly over the whole material, in many cases with as beautiful a result as the Greek ever attained in this branch of the arts.

The design, though more sumptuous, had become more refined ; and if the attributes of architecture had been borrowed, they were used so skilfully, that embroidery appears the proper medium for them.

Stuffs were still woyen in stripes, close together or scattered over the material, the intervals between them spotted with some small pattern, groups of spots, little stars or crescents, and were in this shape commonly used for chiton or himation by both sexes, when they would often have, in addition to a well-defined border, a further enrichment of embroidery ; some sort of border was invariably present, if no more than three or four lines round the edge, like a modern blanket.

Large many-rayed stars, set in rather a mediæval manner thickly over the whole stuff, call to mind the dress (probably a long Ionic chiton) ordered by Demetrius of Macedon (B.C. 294), which is related to have been of 'purple interwoven with gold, and embroidered with all the heavenly bodies : ' he evidently had no taste for a quiet style of dress.

One curious variety of ornament asserts itself, generally on the himation inside its border ; a series of long teeth or rays are set side by side (like those on a backgammon board) and pointing inwards ; this remains such a favourite, that it is to be found at a later date, not only as a consecutive whole, but occurring in small odd pieces in the midst of elaborate designs—was probably originally *appliqué*.

The diploidion and the lower part of the skirt in the female dress are the field for the richest ornament, the remainder often being spotted, as I have already described, and the ornament is displayed in such a

manner on the pottery, as to leave it clear that the colours of ground and pattern were often, to use an heraldic term, counterchanged.

The tight-sleeved jackets, derived from the Persians and worn by women, are covered with embroidery, sometimes in designs of purely natural forms, such as occasionally decorate the pottery itself, a vine or ivy tendril running down the sleeve from shoulder to wrist; but this heralds the introduction of an impure style of design in which architectural details and conventional forms are mixed with purely natural ones, with archaic chequers, and odds and ends from all sources; a species of degradation of art textile work seems peculiarly apt to fall into, and sometimes to redeem by beauty of texture and colour.

I have noticed traces of one more distinct type; a design of flowing lines that spread freely and gracefully over the whole ground, with here and there what seem to be natural flowers; perhaps the result of such an amalgamation of the conventional and natural as a designer at the best period of art would evolve, as the most fitted both for its purpose and his needle, working within such limitations as the material dictated.

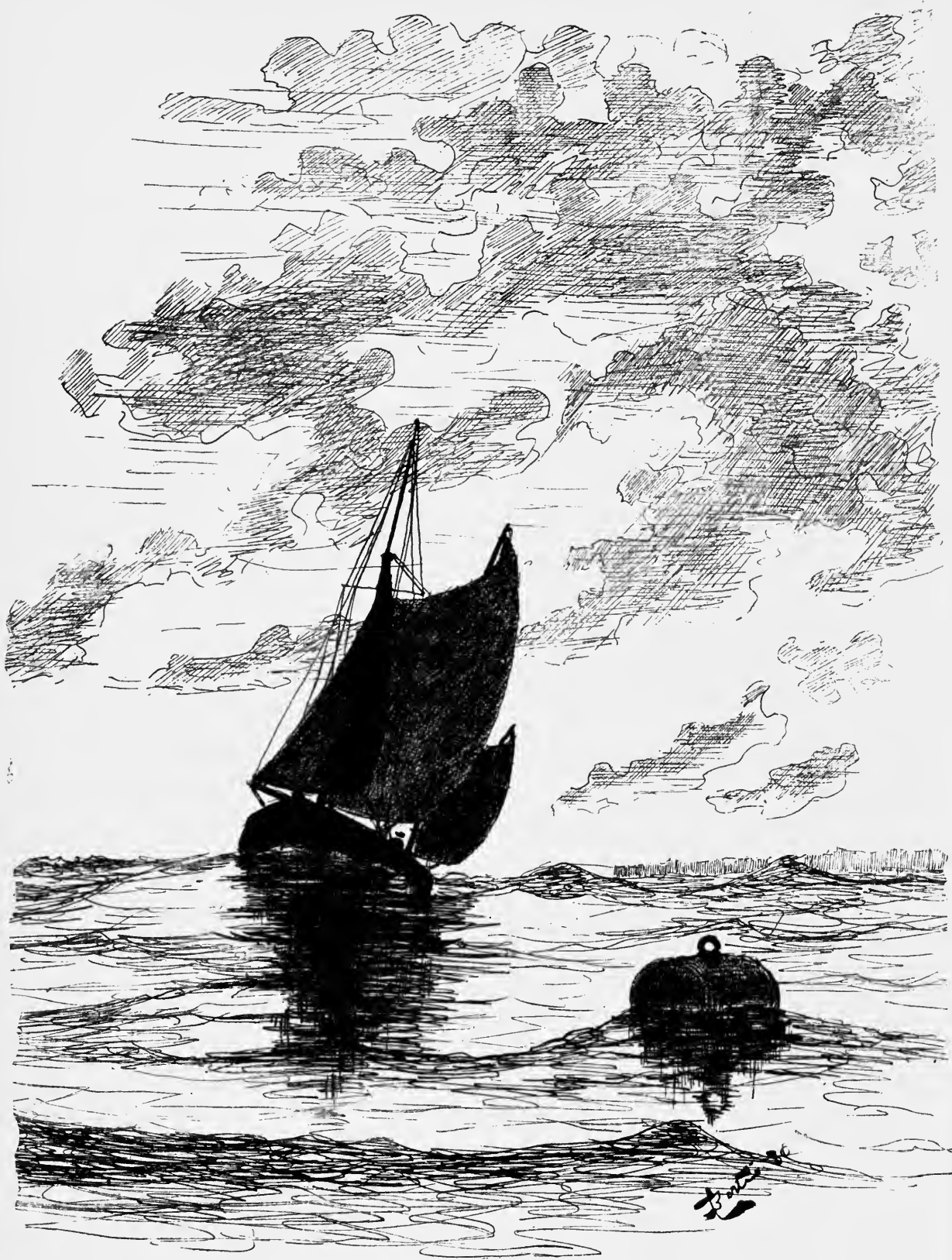
On one of the vases I have spoken of as painted with figures in coloured dresses, there is at the British Museum a figure of a young girl in a sleeved blue dress; over it she wears a red sleeveless one reaching to the knee, its upper part being folded over and falling over her breast (*diploidion*); the hem of this outer dress is embroidered with anthemia in yellow (gold?), and its upper hem is marked by a line of the same colour, the surface of the *diploidion* being broken by the ray-like ornament I have mentioned; on her shoulders she has a very short round cape or tippet, now drab in colour, but probably originally green; the colours are strong and well marked, their present flat surfaces having most likely been dotted over with some small pattern that has now flaked off in common with much of the rest.

This liking for colour was carried out in their arms; and if we can only suspect the Lacedæmonian soldier in the field, in scarlet and brass, of being something of a dandy, we can have no doubt of the Achæan on that point. 'Philopœmen,' says Plutarch, 'led their [the Achæan] vanity of appearance into a useful channel . . . in gilt breastplates, shields, and bridles studded with silver . . . adorning helmets with coloured crests, and embroidering military chitons' (B.C. 200). There is a figure of a foot-soldier in a coloured relief on a cinerary casket found some-

where in Italy, now in Michelangelo's house in Florence ; the work is coarse, giving little detail, but evidently Greek ; he wears a bright yellow cloak, and has under his cuirass a scarlet chiton edged with blue, the head, arms, and legs being bare ; his shield is painted in patterns of black and blue on a yellow ground, the last colour being probably intended for the brass covering of the hides forming it. Similar examples are very common.

It seems plain, then, that this people, moving in life, with strongly coloured draperies shot with gold and elaborately embroidered, their spotted diaphanous muslin robes sewn with palm branches or coloured anthemia, would have had a much greater likeness to modern Orientals (some of whose simpler draperies are quite Greek as they stand, both in shape and decoration) than to the living statuary they were so long supposed to resemble. Finally, I may say that the so-called antique Greek lace has no connection at all with the people it is named after.

A. SACHEVEREL-COKE.



HOMeward. Fanny Bertie.

David Gwyn

DAVID GWYN was a Welshman bold who pined a slave in the
hulks of Spain,

Taken years since in some mad emprise with Francis Drake on the
Spanish main.

Long in that cruel country he shared the captive's bitter and hapless lot ;
Slowly the dead years passed and left him dreaming still of the days
that were not,

Of tiny Radnor, or stately Brecknock, or Cardigan's rain-swept heights
may be,

Or green Caermarthen, or rich Glamorgan, or Pembroke sitting on
either sea.

Sickening within his squalid prison, while still as the circling seasons
came

The fierce sun beat on the brown Sierras, springtide and summer and
autumn the same,

Almost hope failed the dauntless sailor, chained in an alien and hateful
land,

Lonely and friendless, starved and buffeted, none to pity or understand,
Pining always and ageing yearly as slow Time whitened and bowed
his head,

While longing and hate burned high and higher as life sank lower and
hope fell dead,

With brutes for his gaolers, and fiends for his fellows, chained to him
 ceaselessly night and day,
 Eleven autumns, eleven winters wasted their wearisome length away.

Then there awoke round his floating prison clang of hammers and
 bustle of men ;
 Shipwrights labouring late and early woke old thoughts in his heart
 again.

'Spain will lay waste your heretic island with fire and sword ere the
 winter be come,
 And you and the rest of your felon crew shall row the galleys which
 sack your home.'

The hot blood flushed to the prisoner's forehead, but never a word in
 reply said he,

Toiling obediently days and weeks till the great fleet sailed on the
 summer sea ;

Splendid galleons towering skyward with gilded masts and with
 streamers brave,

Floating proudly to martial music over the blue Lusitanian wave,
 Four great galleys leading the van, and in one midst the close-thronged
 benches sate

David Gwyn, a forgotten oarsman, nursing a burning heart of hate.

So along the windless ocean slow the great Armada sped
 Two long breathless weeks of summer blazed the hot sun overhead.
 Hourly from the high deck pulpits preaching rose and chant and prayer,
 And the cloying fumes of incense on the brisk Atlantic air ;
 Courtiers fine and sea-worn sailors jesting the slow hours away,
 Silken sails and blazoned standards flapping idly day by day,
 And within his high poop-turret, more than mortal to behold,
 The High Admiral Medina lounging idly, clothed with gold :
 Not a thought of peril touched them, not a dream of what might
 come,

Proudly sailing, sure of conquest, with the benison of Rome.
 And far down among the oarsmen's benches, fainting, desperate,
 David Gwyn, a patriot helpless with a burning heart of hate.

With the roaring Bay of Biscay louder winds and greyer skies,
And the galleons plunge and labour, and the rolling mountains rise ;
Blacker loom the drifting storm clouds, fiercer grow the wind and sea,
Far and wide the galleons scatter driving, drifting helplessly.
Higher mount the thundering surges ; tossed to heaven, or fathoms
down,
Rear or plunge the cumbrous galleys while the helpless oarsmen
drown.

Like a diver the *Diana* slides head first beneath the wave,
Not a soul of all her hundreds may her labouring consorts save.
Now to larboard, now to starboard, shattered, tost from side to side,
Helpless rolls the great Armada, shorn of all its pomp and pride.
Down between those toppling ridges, groaning, straining in his place,
David Gwyn among the oarsmen sits with triumph in his face.

Then amid the roaring seas, when hope was gone and death was near,
And the hearts of all the Spaniards sinking, failing them for fear,
Boldly to the haughty Captain David Gwyn the oarsman went,
Veiling with a fearless frankness all the depth of his intent.

‘Quick, Señor ! the ship is sinking ; like her consort will she be,
Buried soon with slaves and freemen, fathoms deep beneath the sea.
Give me leave and I will save her ; I have fought the winds before,
Fought and conquered storms and foemen many a time on sea and
shore.’

And the haughty Captain, knowing David Gwyn a seaman bold,
Since upon the Spanish main the foemen sailed and fought of old,
Answered, turning to his prisoner : ‘ Save the ship, and thou shalt gain
Freedom from thy life-long fetters, guerdon from the Lord of Spain.’
Then from out the prisoner’s eye there flashed a sudden gleam of
flame,

And a sudden gleam of triumph o’er his clouded visage came,
Thinking of his Cymric homestead and the fair years that were gone,
And his glory who should save her from the thralldom of the Don.
‘ I will save your ship,’ he answered ; ‘ trust me wholly, have no fear :
Pack the soldiers under hatches ; leave the main deck free and clear.’
Doubting much the Don consented ; only, lest the slaves should rise,
By each oarsman set a soldier, watching him with jealous eyes.

Little knew he of the cunning, secret signs, and watchwords born
 Of long years of cruel fetters, stripes and hunger, spite and scorn.
 Little thought he every prisoner as in misery he sate
 Hid a dagger in his waistband, waiting for the call of Fate.

David Gwyn, the valiant seaman, long time battled with the main,
 Till the furious storm-wind slackened and the ship was safe again.
 Sudden then he gave the signal, raised his arm and bared his head.
 Every oarsman rising swiftly stabbed his hapless warder dead,
 Seized his arms, and, fired with conquest, mad with vengeance, like a
 flood
 On the crowded 'tween-decks bursting, left the Spaniards in their
 blood.

David Gwyn was now the Captain, and the great ship all his own ;
 Well the slaves obeyed their comrade, thus to sudden greatness grown.
 Straight for France the stout *Vasana* shaping, sudden on her lee
 Don Diego in the *Royal*, foaming through the stricken sea,
 Driven by full four hundred oarsmen nigh the monstrous galley drew.
 Then from out her thundering broadside swift the sudden lightning
 flew ;

In among Gwyn's crowded seamen straight the hurtling missiles sped ;
 Nine strong sailors in a moment lay around their captain dead.
 David Gwyn, the dauntless Captain, turning to his comrades then—
 ' God has given you freedom ; earn it : fear not ; quit yourselves like men.
 Lay the ship aboard the *Royal* : free your comrades and be free.'
 The strong oarsmen bent, obedient, rowing swiftly, silently,
 Till, as if in middle ocean striking on a hidden rock,
 All the stout *Vasana's* timbers, quivering, reeling with the shock,
 Straight on board the crowded *Royal* leapt that band of desperate men,
 Freed the slaves, and left no Spaniard who might tell the tale again ;
 And the sister galleys stately with fair winds sped safely on,
 Under David Gwyn, their Captain, and cast anchor at Bayonne.
 And King Henry gave them largesse, and they parted, every one
 Free once more to his own country, and their evil days were done.
 David Gwyn to England coming won the favour of the Queen ;
 Well her Grace esteemed his valour in the perils that had been.

What! had those swift, mighty galleys, which could wind and tide
defy,
Winged with speed the slow Armada when our weak fleet hovered by?
Had not then that sullen quarry, ploughing helpless on the plain,
Turned and crushed the nimble hunters, and rewrit the fate of Spain?
Who shall tell? But his were doughty deeds and worthy lasting fame,
Though the country he delivered never yet has known his name.

Did he seek again the home of his youth, did he let the years go
peacefully by,
Breathing the sweet clear air of the hills, till his day was done and he
came to die?
By tiny Radnor, or stately Brecknock, or Cardigan's rain-swept heights
may be,
Or green Caermarthen, or rich Glamorgan, or Pembroke sitting on
either sea?
Did he dream sometimes 'mid the nights of storm of those long-dead
years in the hulks of Spain,
That stealthy onset, that dread revenge, with the wild winds drowning
the cries of pain?
Did the old man shudder to think of the blood, when the knife pierced
deep to the Spaniard's heart?
Nay, to each of us all is his Life assigned, his Work, his Fate, his
allotted Part!

LEWIS MORRIS.

Robert Browning¹

PARMI les grands littérateurs anglais de ce siècle, certains, d'un mérite égal, se sont rencontrés à la même heure dans un même champ d'études, y ont fourni parallèlement une longue carrière, et d'ores et déjà leurs noms demeurent associés de par la dissimilitude du génie et le contraste de l'individualité : tels les romanciers Dickens et Thackeray, les historiens Carlyle et Macaulay, les poètes Tennyson et Browning.

Robert Browning n'a rien de commun avec son illustre rival. Son destin ne fut pas de refléter toutes les émotions de son époque, ni d'incarner, en les amplifiant, à peu près tous les traits généraux de sa race, mais d'accentuer soudain et de développer d'une façon surprenante quelques-unes des facultés intellectuelles de celle-ci : d'en tirer, pour la poésie et la pensée, des richesses aussi imprévues qu'énormes, et, en un mot, de créer la psychologie dramatique.

I

C'EST ici le cas de se rappeler que la race anglaise est une race à la fois réfléchie et active, et qui, dès le début de son essor utilitaire, ne manqua pas de sauvegarder solennellement les droits de l'âme : à l'heure précise où, grâce à l'intuition nette de sa situation géographique, elle créait son commerce, c'est-à-dire sa vie extérieure, elle embrassait

¹ *The Poetical Works of Robert Browning.* London : Smith, Elder & Co. 1878.

aussi la Réforme et s'assurait une vie intérieure inépuisable. Digne fils de cette vie intérieure et de ses profondes analyses, le poète que nous allons étudier naît un jour, et il est doué en outre d'instincts dramatiques ; mais les temps de l'action héroïque sont passés : il ne faut point en général songer à recommencer au dix-neuvième siècle cette existence aventureuse et tragique qui fut celle des contemporains d'Elisabeth et que les dramaturges d'alors mirent tout naturellement à la scène, après l'avoir parfois menée pour leur propre compte. Au lieu d'apparaître à cette date de la Renaissance où, tendant à des effets de relief, l'imagination se manifesta surtout par la voix et le geste, il tombe au milieu d'un âge essentiellement analytique et scientifique : il ne coudoie point Marlowe, Shakespeare, Webster et Raleigh, mais John Stuart Mill et Bain, Eliot et Thackeray. Après avoir quelque temps cherché, ou sans avoir cherché du tout, et peut-être aussi inconsciemment qu'une espèce mixte donne ses produits, il trouve le point de fusion de l'action et de l'analyse, et ce point se trouve être l'intérieur de l'âme humaine ; il substitue les causes aux effets, et au théâtre extérieur, c'est-à-dire à l'aboutissement de l'âme, le théâtre intérieur, c'est-à-dire l'âme elle-même.

Mais nous allons préciser davantage. Il est patent que dans le drame ordinaire le caractère se manifeste par des actions qui s'influencent les unes les autres : chaque mot n'est qu'un raccourci du travail de l'âme, travail inconscient ou conscient, mais caché, dont le spectateur n'a en général nul souci et que le critique peut essayer ensuite de reconstruire, s'il lui plaît. Or, ce travail caché ne pourrait-il pas devenir aussi dramatique que son effet visible ? Vous hésitez à répondre, car la question est nouvelle, mais la poésie de Browning a déjà répondu à votre place : et elle prouve le mouvement en marchant. La voici qui dramatisé la surexcitation psychique : devant vous elle a saisi l'âme dans une des fortes crises intérieures où ses mille feux flambent, ou ses mille ondulations de détail deviennent autant de bouillonnements électriques et d'éclairs. Quant aux événements extérieurs dont la crise intérieure relève, qui peuvent la déterminer, l'accentuer, la dénouer, ils n'opèrent que pour elle, n'apparaissent qu'à travers elle, n'ont de résultat qu'en elle : elle les attire et les absorbe : et s'il est clair qu'ils servent à révéler soudain toute l'âme à elle-même et à la mirer d'un coup dans son miroir, il est également clair qu'ils sont un moyen, non un but.

Une telle conception ne pouvait éclore, et, de fait, n'est éclos

qu'au seul pays où le moi se soit taillé une assez grande place pour constituer un véritable acte ; et ici, par une rencontre heureuse et rare, le sentiment de l'importance absolue du moi personnel conduisit l'auteur au sentiment de l'importance aussi absolue du moi des autres, condition *sine quâ non* d'une œuvre objective. Par une seconde rencontre heureuse, ce même sentiment profond de la vie intérieure de chacun se trouvait encore échoir à l'une de ces nobles organisations en qui la vie morale est la source de la vie intellectuelle. Extraire de la poésie de Robert Browning sa théorie de la conscience et la leçon pratique qu'elle dégage sera l'un des points les plus intéressants de cette étude, mais il veut être traité suffisamment, et, nous réservant de le développer dans notre troisième division, nous nous contenterons maintenant de l'effleurer en ces termes : loin de faire comme la plupart de nos analystes français, qui semblent d'ordinaire considérer les hommes comme des bêtes plutôt curieuses et comme un simple sujet scientifique, Mr. Browning au contraire tient chaque âme humaine pour une représentation nouvelle et différente des vicissitudes de l'Idée du Bien, et par là même pour le plus capital des enseignements moraux : seulement, à cet effet que l'impression demeure profonde et que le jugement soit équitable, il importe de la reproduire, chaque âme humaine, dans son intégrité, de l'entourer de ses circonstances, de la composer des causes qui la produisent et des effets qu'elle représente, de l'expliquer et de la manifester sans rien omettre de ses complications ; bref, d'en monter et d'en mouvoir l'entier mécanisme, et aussi de la placer sous son jour le plus scénique et dans une de ses situations les plus frappantes. On se souviendra donc qu'en Browning un moraliste double le dramatisante et le psychologue, et maintenant revenons vite à ces deux-ci pour terminer cette rapide synthèse de leurs caractéristiques : comme il s'agit pour lui de peindre non seulement les hommes et les femmes de son époque, mais les hommes et les femmes de toutes les époques, non seulement ceux et celles qu'il a pu connaître directement, mais ceux et celles dont il n'a fait qu'entendre parler, vivants et morts d'aujourd'hui et d'autrefois, il lui est nécessaire de nourrir d'une érudition immense sa sympathie pour l'âme, mais il lui faut surtout créer la vérité psychologique au souffle de l'intuition flexible : il lui faut se varier sans cesse, se métamorphoser en chacun de ses personnages, être à mille faces, et que toutes palpitent : moyennant quoi, il aura la gloire d'avoir édifié en ce siècle le monument que j'appellerai le Théâtre de l'Âme ; et vous aurez embrassé déjà d'un coup d'œil d'ensemble celui qui, sur cette scène de l'intérieur psychique, inaugurée par lui, évoqua le plus d'*individus* depuis Shakespeare.

Dramatiste, psychologue, moraliste, et ces trois personnages fondus en un seul ayant choisi pour champ de combinaison et d'évolution telle ou telle âme humaine, voilà donc tout Robert Browning : dès maintenant cette formule le résume. Ce que nous ajouterons s'y trouve inclus d'avance ; l'on ne s'étonnera point que des effets aussi nombreux et différents que ceux qu'il veut obtenir appellent des moyens infinis et que, suivant la scène et le héros, il se montre tour à tour lyriste, humoriste, peintre, musicien, philosophe, savant. Une pareille souplesse d'imagination et de savoir le rapproche des grands artistes du seizième siècle : c'est à elle qu'il doit de démêler et de rendre le complexe de l'homme ; et ainsi a-t-il pu, s'aidant d'un instrument approprié, le monologue, souffler la vie à tant d'êtres humains distincts. Ces innombrables créations d'âmes, un jeune critique anglais, Mr. Arthur Symons, les passe en revue dans la page suivante, extraite de l'ouvrage qu'il a publié sur le poète—ouvrage dont nous ne saurions trop recommander la lecture, car il est un des meilleurs commentaires que nous sachions :

Only in Shakespeare can we find anything like the same variety of distinct human characters—vital creations endowed with thoughtful life—and not even perhaps in Shakespeare such novelty and variety of *milieu*. There is scarcely a salient epoch in the history of the modern world which he has not touched, always with the same vital and instinctive sympathy based on profound and accurate knowledge. Passing by the legendary and undeveloped ages and civilisations of East and West, he has painted the first dawn of the modern spirit in the Athens of Socrates and Euripides, revealed the whole temper and tendency of the twilight age between Paganism and Christianity, and recorded the last utterance of the last apostle of the now conquering creed ; he has distilled the very essence of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the very essence of the modern world. The men and women who live and move in that new world of his creation are as varied as life itself ; they are kings and beggars, saints and lovers, great captains, poets, painters, musicians, priests and popes, Jews, gipsies and dervishes, street girls, princesses, dancers with the wicked witchery of the daughter of Herodias, wives with the devotion of the wife of Brutus, joyous girls and malevolent grey-beards, statesmen, cavaliers, soldiers of humanity, tyrants and bigots, ancient sages and modern spiritualists, heretics, scholars, scoundrels, devotees, rabbis, persons of quality and men of low estate—men and women as multiform as nature or society has made them. He has found and studied humanity, not only in English towns and villages, in the glare of gaslight and under the open sky, but on the Roman Campagna, in Venetian gondolas, in Florentine streets, on the boulevards of Paris and the Prado of Madrid, in the snow-bound forests of Russia, beneath the palms of Persia and upon Egyptian sands, on the coasts of Normandy and the salt plains of Brittany, among Druses and Arabs and Syrians, in brand-new Boston and amidst the ruins of Thebes. But this infinite variety has little in it of mere

historic or social curiosity. I do not think Mr. Browning has ever set himself the task of recording the legend of the ages, though to some extent he has done it. The instinct of the poet seizes on a type of character, the eye of the painter perceives the shades and shapes of line and colour and form required to give it picturesque prominence, and the learning of the scholar then sets up a fragment of the broken past, or refashions a portion of the living present, as an appropriate and harmonious scene or background. The statue is never dwarfed by the pedestal.¹

II

COMME on le voit, l'œuvre est immense : elle contient plus de trente volumes. Non seulement nous n'avons pas l'intention de les analyser tous les trente, mais il y a certaines œuvres que nous n'aborderons même pas, par exemple 'A Blot in the Scutcheon,' car elles ne sont point l'aspect principal du talent du poète et se rapprochent plutôt du drame ordinaire, ou même se confondent avec lui. Il est naturel qu'un talent aussi flexible que celui de Mr. Browning ait voulu se mesurer avec tous les genres de drame, et ait aussi bien réussi à marquer son empreinte distinguée dans les sentiers battus qu'à se frayer une route vierge, loin des pas vulgaires : nous ne saurions cependant nous intéresser réellement qu'à la seconde partie de l'entreprise, et, en outre, ne disposant à cet égard que de quelques pages d'essai critique, nous nous donnerons de garde d'aller nous perdre au milieu de la foule de ses personnages, ce serait le vrai moyen de brouiller l'étude : le mieux est d'en choisir deux ou trois des plus frappants et de les bien mettre en lumière.

Commençons par 'Paracelsus,' une création étonnamment puissante qui, mise au jour en 1835, fut la seconde en date des œuvres de Robert Browning et presque son coup d'essai : suivant l'habitude des grands poètes, celui-ci ne s'était pas traîné longtemps dans les ébauches médiocres : sans tarder il s'annonçait et se prouvait un maître.

'Paracelsus' est le poème des cinq journées de l'âme philosophique. Je me trompe, c'est d'une âme philosophique qu'il faut dire, de la plus passionnée, de la plus brûlante, de la plus mobile des âmes philosophiques. A sa base se retrouvent la fougue puissante et l'intempérance du seizième siècle : l'art du poète en sature son héros, être bouillonnant, encore en fusion, pour ainsi dire, dont les facultés, au lieu de se répartir avec équilibre dans leurs diverses cases, versent toutes du même côté sans contrepoids : l'observation et l'intuition purement scien-

¹ *An Introduction to the Study of Browning*, by Arthur Symons, pp. 10-11. London : Cassell & Co. 1886.

tifiques seront merveilleuses, mais nul le maniement du réel, nul le maniement des hommes : il laisse vierge sa mine d'or, car il n'a su l'exploiter lui-même, et c'est à d'autres qu'il appartiendra d'extraire le précieux métal.

Ainsi que nous le disions plus haut, les événements extérieurs ne font que transparaître : ils se révèlent par les crises qu'ils déterminent dans l'âme et s'y répercutent à l'heure même de la crise : il peut même arriver que celle-ci résulte simplement des événements intérieurs, de la tension du cerveau surmené par le travail. Le premier acte est celui de l'enthousiasme : Aureolus Paracelsus, étudiant à Wurzburg, annonce à deux fiancés, ses amis, Festus et Micheline, qu'il a résolu de parcourir la terre, à l'effet d'y conquérir la science universelle. Une fois celle-ci devenue son lot, il en dotera ses semblables : lui-même renonce à toute affection et à toute joie vulgaire : le seul triomphe qu'il ambitionne est *l'Eureka* d'Archimède. A cette action disproportionnée de la pensée correspond neuf ans après une réaction naturelle : le théâtre en est Constantinople, où, échoué après ses longs voyages, Paracelsus comprend que l'Absolu est hors de notre portée et que nous ne saurions atteindre que le relatif. Son découragement est si profond qu'il y sombrerait peut-être sans l'apparition soudaine du poète Aprile, lequel vient mourir entre ses bras en lui léguant le mot de réconfort : Amour. Connaître n'est que la moitié d'un tout : aimer est l'autre : donnez à l'Humanité votre moisson telle quelle. Paracelsus croit et comprend, mais il ne peut appliquer, car il n'est pas doué de la vertu de patience ; il ne songe point qu'aimer est un apprentissage aussi dur que savoir, et qu'il ne faut pas se rebuter dès l'abord, ainsi qu'il va le faire tout à l'heure à l'Université de Bâle, où, mandé sur sa renommée et installé professeur, il manque de modestie, de prudence, et d'habileté dans son enseignement, commence par s'abandonner aux succès de vanité que lui procure sa chaire et va jusqu'à les provoquer par du charlatanisme, puis voit tourner la fortune, et est bientôt réduit à fuir de la ville sans qu'on le plaigne beaucoup ni qu'on s'étonne, car, en somme, il n'a déployé ni grande intelligence ni grand caractère dans ce troisième acte de son existence. En vain il se galvanise un moment au sortir de Bâle, décidé, dit-il, 'à jouir autant qu'à connaître,' il est clair qu'il est maintenant mûr pour la tombe. Cependant une dizaine d'années s'écouleront avant qu'il vienne agoniser à l'hôpital de Salzbourg, où l'approche de la mort, en même temps qu'elle lui donnera la vision claire de l'Humanité, lui inspirera les paroles qui l'expriment et témoignera qu'il a enfin acquis l'expérience indulgente.

A l'appui de cet exposé du poème il faut quelques citations : elles parleront d'une façon plus exacte et plus vivante que nous, montreront à l'œuvre l'analyse dramatique de l'auteur, feront toucher du doigt la suite et le détail des mouvements d'âme. Voici d'abord 'le long espoir et les vastes pensées :' voici la sublime ardeur de la jeunesse et l'illusion illimitée du départ :

No, I have nought to fear ! Who will may know
 The secret'st workings of my soul. What though
 It be so ? if indeed the strong desire
 Eclipse the aim in me ?—if splendour break
 Upon the outset of my path alone,
 And duskest shade succeed ? What fairer seal
 Shall I require to my authentic mission
 Than this fierce energy ?—this instinct striving,
 Because its nature is to strive ?—enticed
 By the security of no broad course,
 Without success for ever in its eyes !
 How know I else such glorious fate my own,
 But in the restless irresistible force
 That works within me ? Is it for human will
 To institute such impulses ?—still less,
 To disregard their promptings ? What should I
 Do, kept among you all ; your loves, your cares,
 Your life—all to be mine ? Be sure that God
 Ne'er dooms to waste the strength he deigns impart.
 Ask the gier eagle why she stoops at once
 Into the vast and unexplored abyss,
 What full-grown power informs her from the first,
 Why she not marvels, strenuously beating
 The silent boundless regions of the sky.¹
 I go to prove my soul !
 I see my way as birds their trackless way.
 I shall arrive ! What time, what circuit first,
 I ask not ; but, unless God send his hail
 Or blinding fire-balls, sleet or stifling snow,
 In some time, His good time, I shall arrive :
 He guides me and the bird. In His good time !²

Empruntons à ce magnifique premier acte une seconde page qui précise l'aspiration précédente, en soit comme la tonique, et lui rappelle le but auquel elle vise :

. See this soul of ours !
 How it strives weakly in the child, is loosed

¹ *The Poetical Works of Robert Browning*, t. i. 'Paracelsus,' pp. 57-58.

² *Paracelsus*, p. 65. Ces sept vers étaient, dans l'œuvre de Browning, vers préférés de Gordon.

In manhood, clogged by sickness, back compelled
 By age and waste, set free at last by death :
 Why is it flesh enthralled it or enthroned ?
 What is this flesh we have to penetrate ?
 Oh, not alone when life flows still do truth
 And power emerge, but also when strange chance
 Ruffles its current ; in unused conjuncture,
 When sickness breaks the body—hunger, watching,
 Excess or languor—oftenest death's approach,
 Peril, deep joy or woe. One man shall crawl
 Through life surrounded with all stirring things,
 Unmoved ; and he goes mad : and from the wreck
 Of what he was by his wild talk alone
 You first collect how great a spirit he hid.
 Therefore set free the soul alike in all,
 Discovering the true laws by which the flesh
 Accloys the spirit ! We may not be doomed
 To cope with seraphs, but at least the rest
 Shall cope with us. Make no more giants, God,
 But elevate the race at once ! We ask
 To put forth just our strength, our human strength,
 All starting fairly, all equipped alike,
 Gifted alike, all eagle-eyed, true-hearted—
 See if we cannot beat thine angels yet !¹

Nous l'avons déjà dit, les pages précédentes reflétèrent l'illusion matinale et le départ enthousiaste ; mais voici qu'il en a fallu rabattre, car l'après-midi de la vie est venu. Et maintenant le soir approche et la mort. Du fond du découragement et du désespoir qui précédèrent l'heure funèbre la vérité s'est levée : au lit d'agonie de Salzbourg elle apparaît, triste et haute. Avant de descendre dans la tombe, Paracelsus saura 'qu'il ne suffit pas d'un jour pour changer la condition de l'homme' :

. Nor yet on thee
 Shall burst the future, as successive zones
 Of several wonder open on some spirit
 Flying secure and glad from heaven to heaven :
 But thou shalt painfully attain to joy,
 While hope and fear and love shall keep thee man ;

et il aura vu également en quoi pécha son amour de l'Humanité, comment il eut le tort de s'irriter vite, au lieu de rester calme et de comprendre :

In my own heart love had not been made wise
 To trace love's faint beginnings in mankind,

¹ *Paracelsus*, pp. 72-73.

To know even hate is but a mask of love's,
 To see a good in evil and a hope
 In ill-success ; to sympathise, be proud
 Of their half-reasons, faint aspirings, dim
 Struggles for truth, their poorest fallacies,
 Their prejudice and fears and cares and doubts ;
 All with a touch of nobleness, despite
 Their error, upward tending although weak,
 Like plants in mines which never saw the sun,
 But dream of him, and guess where he may be,
 And do their best to climb and get to him.
 All this I knew not, and I failed.¹

Nous avons tenu à montrer d'abord le poète aux prises avec l'âme d'un spéculatif, et Paracelsus est loin d'être, dans cette œuvre-ci, le seul de son espèce : il y en a d'autres, le philosophe grec Cléon, le médecin arabe Karshish, dont le drame psychique est de l'ordre purement intellectuel : ils le jouent devant nous au moment où leur vie, tout entière de pensée et de science, reçoit le choc qui la concentre et lui donne son maximum d'intensité, où, sous une pression quelconque, elle se voit obligée de percevoir le total de son effort, d'émettre sa tendance définitive, et de conclure en laissant échapper un cri d'inassouvissement, de tristesse, d'espérance, ou de foi. Mr. Browning n'eût-il peint que des âmes de ce genre, la besogne lui eut été relativement facile, car, outre qu'il n'y a guère eu d'âge plus philosophique que le nôtre, un poète érudit et philosophe n'aura pas grand-peine à reconstruire la crise cérébrale d'un 'confrère' d'autrefois : il lui suffira d'évoquer la sienne et de transposer d'un temps dans un autre, c'est là tout le poème de 'Cléon.' De même il va de soi qu'en tant qu'artiste lui-même, et artiste très-composite, qui se demanda dans sa jeunesse s'il ne deviendrait pas peintre et musicien autant que poète, et se prépara aux trois arts, il excelle à rendre ce qu'il y a de spécial dans l'âme artiste : témoin ceux de ses poèmes dont la musique fait le fond, 'Master Hugues of Saxe-Gotha,' 'A Toccata of Galuppi's,' surtout 'Abt Vogler,' pièce digne de Beethoven, ascension extatique dans le sublime ; et aussi ceux consacrés à la peinture, 'The Guardian Angel,' 'Old Pictures in Florence,' 'Pictor ignotus.' On pourrait objecter toutefois qu'en certains des poèmes précités la morale se mêle trop ostensiblement à l'art, et la critique à la technique, pour constituer réellement du théâtre, qu'ils sont à cet effet trop lyriques ou trop discursifs, contiennent trop d'enthousiasme ou d'enseignement direct ; cela est possible, et si nous voulons des œuvres où tout un caractère et toute une vie se condensent soudain en un

¹ *Paracelsus*, p. 195.

moment d'action intérieure, où, de plus, l'homme se retrouve sous l'artiste et, le doublant de son relief, le rend accessible et l'explique, c'est dans la note humoristique 'Fra Lippo Lippi' qu'il faut prendre ; et, au point de vue tragique, le monologue si admiré d' 'Andrea del Sarto,' où l'on assiste à l'un des drames les plus vrais et les plus navrants qui soient, à un duel d'où l'idéal et le génie sortent transpercés par la passion la plus pitoyable. Le peintre a épousé, pour sa beauté physique, une femme sans âme, Lucrezia del Fede ; et il doit subir la torture de ne pouvoir se débarrasser de son amour pour elle, bien qu'elle l'ait avili, l'ait réduit à ne plus travailler que pour l'argent dont elle est insatiable et avec lequel elle entretient ses amants, ait barré le développement de sa gloire et de son talent artistique, l'ait réduit à n'avoir d'autre qualité que cette merveilleuse et monotone correction qui lui valut le surnom 'd'impeccable.' Et malgré tout il l'aime, il continue à l'aimer au point de se complaire dans son supplice, d'oser à peine laisser échapper devant elle quelques soupirs, dont il s'excuse, on dirait qu'il va lui demander pardon de ce qu'elle a brisé sa vie : non seulement il n'a pas le courage de mépriser cette basse prostituée . . . mais après tout qui donc aurait le droit de le mépriser, lui ? Son épouvantable souffrance résignée, la fatalité qui pèse sur son cœur, l'étendue même de son amour, c'est là l'expiation : et le mot est pauvre, car si l'objet fut indigne, s'il y eut latrie, le sentiment lui-même fut divin, c'est là la beauté . . . Quelle scène, et quelle connaissance de l'homme ! quelle entente de la noblesse et de la faiblesse de son cœur, de ses contradictions, de sa complexité !

Nous voulions en arriver à ce mot qui va nous donner également la clef d'un des hommes d'action de l'œuvre : n'eût-il en effet rendu que des âmes de philosophes et d'artistes, l'auteur eût fait preuve d'une psychologie dramatique trop spéciale, psychologie qu'il pouvait connaître sans doute mieux que personne en sa qualité de membre éminent de la corporation, mais qui n'eût été ni assez variée, ni assez frappante, puisqu'un grand nombre de lecteurs sont peu familiarisés avec l'âme philosophique ou avec l'âme artiste, et à moins qu'il ne leur ait été donné de fréquenter et d'aimer ces deux espèces, trouveront l'une trop fatigante et spéculative, l'autre trop bizarre et paradoxale : saisiront mieux telle autre sorte d'être humain dont ils se sentent plus proches, avec lequel ils sont journellement en contact, qui crée des faits à leur portée, agit d'après des idées dont ils ont une teinte, vise un but qu'ils comprennent, ou même pèse sur leurs intérêts les plus positifs, les plus directs, les plus chers : un prêtre, un soldat, un noble, un prince, un chef populaire,

un diplomate, un politicien. Nous pourrions prendre comme exemple le Djabal du 'Return of the Druses,' mais nous lui préférons une figure singulièrement piquante, celle de Chiappino, dans 'A Soul's Tragedy.'

Chiappino est un être hybride et inconscient, plein de volte-face et de surprises, capable d'un accès de civisme théâtral à l'heure où il est un des chefs de l'opposition populaire et résiste à la tyrannie du prévôt de Faenza : quitte à devenir instantanément retors, et malhonnête, et sophiste, du moment qu'il apercevra qu'il peut devenir tyran à son tour et se sentira sur le chemin du pouvoir ; bref, un politicien. A l'en croire, il est la seule âme fière et haute de la ville : n'est-ce pas chose évidente, et dont fait foi la sentence d'exil qu'on vient de prononcer contre lui ? A côté de lui que sont les autres, sinon des esclaves, ou des habiles prêts à toutes les concessions, comme son ami Luitolfo, pour lequel il ne dissimule pas son dédain ? Tandis qu'au début de la pièce il est en train de se vanter ainsi au dépens de Luitolfo, celui-ci tombe soudain dans la chambre : le prévôt n'ayant pas voulu lui accorder la grâce de Chiappino, il l'a tué, et les gardes sont sur ses talons. Générosité pour générosité : en un clin d'œil Chiappino change de vêtement avec son ami, le fait évader, puis attend la mort qui monte en ce moment l'escalier . . . seulement, au lieu des gardes, c'est le peuple qui entre et acclame Chiappino, qu'il prend pour le meurtrier libérateur. Chiappino se garde de rectifier l'erreur, car il a vu le parti à en tirer : l'enthousiasme populaire peut le porter à cette charge de prévôt contre laquelle il déclamaît naguère et qu'il jugeait si incompatible avec les principes démocratiques ; mais quoi, les points de vue changent, il est avec la conscience des accommodements, ceux-là seraient même les plus faciles à trouver, et le malheur est qu'il en faut aussi avec ses concitoyens et surtout avec Rome, qui a la haute main sur Faenza et lui impose un premier magistrat de son choix : va pour de nouvelles compromissions, et notre homme de s'empressez auprès du légat Ogniben, envoyé pour apaiser la révolte, et par lequel, après un semblant de résistance, il se laisse souffler les arguments les plus spécieux, ceux même qu'il peut désirer pour s'absoudre aux yeux du peuple et aux siens propres d'avoir retourné sa veste. Tout s'est donc passé pour le mieux de l'ambition du renégat, à cela près qu'Ogniben est un profond psychologue et un expérimenté diplomate qui joue Chiappino sous jambe : il lève le masque à la dernière heure, et ne nommera le nouveau prévôt qu'à la condition que le meurtrier de l'ancien subira la peine légale. Aussi noble que devant, Luitolfo se dénonce : on lui pardonne, et Chiappino, dont la vie politique finit ainsi dans la honte, n'a plus qu'à s'en aller piteux sous le sourire railleur du légat.

La seconde partie de la pièce regorge de cet humour qu'on s'est plu à rapprocher de celui de Carlyle, et il est bon de dire en passant que Robert Browning est un des premiers humoristes de l'Angleterre. C'est là, dans l'étude de son œuvre, un point sur lequel nous aurions aimé à nous étendre, si nous avions eu la place : nous devons nous contenter de le mentionner et d'énumérer la plupart des nuances qu'il affecte, drôlerie pure, gaieté étincelante, ironie souriante ou mordante, grotesque, esprit proprement dit, comique au fer rouge et qui atteint à l'effet tragique. Qu'on se reporte plutôt, pour chacune de ces nuances, aux pièces intitulées 'Fra Lippo Lippi,' 'Pacchiarotto,' 'Caliban upon Setebos,' 'Bishop Blougram,' 'The Heretic's Tragedy.'¹

Maintenant, qui voudra voir fonctionner pendant des heures l'appareil de psychologie dramatique créé par Robert Browning, n'a qu'à prendre son œuvre la plus longue, 'The Ring and the Book ;' quant à nous, nous ne nous sommes point assigné dans ces essais d'autre tâche que d'extraire les principales caractéristiques d'un auteur, et, les ayant énoncées, d'ajouter quelques exemples à l'appui. Il n'importe donc que nous choisissons comme preuve de nos affirmations Paracelsus ou Chiappiào plutôt que le Comte Guido Franceschini : s'il plaisait au lecteur de voir défiler une galerie plus nombreuse, il n'aurait, je le répète, qu'à lire l'épopée psychologique en quatre volumes à laquelle nous faisons allusion. Elle est née d'une d'entre ces chroniques italiennes dont telle ou telle avait déjà fourni des sujets tragiques aux dramatises de l'époque d'Elisabeth, et voici le thème sur lequel Robert Browning vint broder à dix parties les variations de son analyse mentale : en 1699 Guido Franceschini, assisté de quatre sicaires, égorga sa femme, Pompilia, et fut, pour ce fait, condamné à mort et exécuté. L'intérêt du cas se trouve non pas dans l'assassinat lui-même, qui n'est pas nié par le coupable, mais dans la défense de ce dernier ; il se réclame de son droit de justicier et affirme n'avoir fait que punir l'adultère de sa femme avec le chanoine Caponsacchi. Il est bon de dire déjà que Guido ment : Caponsacchi et Pompilia sont innocents, il le sait, et il n'a agi que par vengeance, passant sur sa femme sa fureur contre les beaux-parents qui l'ont frustré de la dot promise : mais le poète qui, naturellement, n'exhibe pas la partie extérieure du drame, et ne veut qu'en tirer les conséquences psychologiques, a pris position entre l'arrestation de Guido et son jugement, au moment où l'affaire passionne la ville, où l'émotion des acteurs est à son comble, et à son comble aussi la curiosité des spectateurs : il suppose que dix

¹ Voir encore *Sibrandus Schnarnaburgensis. Mr. Sludge the Medium, Ned Bratts, The Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister, Holy Cross Day.*

personnes monologuent longuement sur l'histoire, chacun la racontant à son point de vue. Le chœur se compose de trois personnages : un mari jaloux représente 'la moitié de Rome' qui se prononce en faveur de Guido : 'l'autre moitié de Rome' s'exprime par la bouche d'un jeune homme, et tient au contraire pour Pompilia : la 'société,' elle, essaie d'être impartiale : en perruque poudrée, dans un salon où les glaces multiplient les girandoles, elle dédaigne les commentaires passionnés de la plèbe et disserte avec convenance sur l'événement du jour. Puis c'est le tour des trois principaux acteurs, Guido, Caponsacchi, Pompilia ; puis, des deux avocats ; et enfin, repassant et résumant la question, le Pape rejette l'appel de Guido et signe la sentence de mort. N'allongeons point et indiquons simplement encore que Guido est merveilleux de scélératesse et de ruse, qu'il déploie tous les artifices de la bête humaine traquée, jusqu'au moment où, se voyant perdu, il jette le masque et laisse éclater son sinistre désespoir : Pompilia lui fait contraste, et, dans la nuance spéciale de douceur et de charme que nous retrouvons chez ce poète-ci après l'avoir notée chez le poète précédent, elle est une de ces délicieuses femmes qui, depuis Shakespeare, n'ont cessé de fleurir la littérature anglaise : les Pippa, Michal, Mildred, Colombe, Pompilia de Browning sont les sœurs des Edith et des Maud de Tennyson : seulement comme notre auteur d'aujourd'hui est avant tout un auteur dramatique, 'une âme aux mille âmes,' il ne manque pas de reproduire parallèlement l'autre série, celle des héroïnes perverses, et, entre les deux variétés extrêmes, toutes les intermédiaires.

III

CETTE expression à la fois minutieuse et vivante du drame intérieur, le poète ne l'avait-il créée que pour elle-même ? Allait-il la laisser à la joie de vivre et de s'ébattre insouciant tout du long de ses pages ? Poser la question, c'est la résoudre, car nous sommes en Angleterre.

De quoi s'agissait-il en effet dans cette œuvre-ci, sinon de souligner une nouvelle interprétation morale du moi, de ce célèbre moi qui, chez nombre d'individus de race anglo-saxonne, a trop d'orgueil pour être vaniteux, rougirait de se mouler à chaque minute dans l'opinion des autres, et, d'autant plus farouche qu'il s'est libéré de l'hypocrisie conventionnelle, vit autonome, roi de soi-même, soumis à soi seul ? Vient-elle à prendre son essor, cette vie anglaise du moi, nous avons marqué souvent au cours de ces études qu'elle tend à l'Idéal moral comme à sa cime la plus haute : y touche-t-elle et de là nous jette-t-elle un mes-

sage pour nous convier à notre tour au voyage, les paroles en seront toujours un appel au Sublime.

Or, la mission de Robert Browning ne pouvait être autre que l'habituelle mission de ses frères en poésie anglaise : il était destiné à découvrir une des faces de la vérité commune et à l'éclairer d'un jour esthétique très-spécial. Il revêtit d'une forme dramatique encore inédite cette idée si particulièrement étrangère aux pays de race latine, à savoir qu'il n'y a que les pitres, les bandits, ou les artistes corrompus, pour considérer la vie comme une pièce dont le seul héros est le succès, si bas soit-il d'ailleurs, et quels qu'aient été ses moyens, toujours amusants s'ils sont adroits, et qu'alors il convient aussi d'applaudir à outrance. Tel souvent par respect humain, il est vrai, et de crainte d'être pris pour un *naïf*—tel pense parmi nous le spectateur le plus honnête, et tel pense surtout l'acteur : il ne vit que dans l'opinion de la galerie, laquelle est une prostituée ou une sotte ; tu peux jouer ce que tu voudras et comme tu voudras, l'important est de me distraire et de réussir, crie-t-elle. . . Mais rien n'est plus vil et plus déshonorant que cela, sachez-le de la bouche du grand Browning, ô lecteur, et n'oubliez non plus que la vie, votre vie—tout autant la vie extérieure que la vie intérieure, et celle qui vous surprend du dehors comme celle que vous vivez au dedans de vous—que la vie n'est pas une scène à parterre, à coulisses, et à loges d'actrices, mais bien un enseignement, une pierre de touche, une épreuve morale. Vous ne lui demanderez point de remplir à votre égard le rôle d'un miroir de coquette, perfide et menteur par excellence, et qui, pourvu que vous soyez riche, ou puissant, ou que vous mettiez du fard, vous dira que vous êtes à ravir alors que vous êtes à faire peur, car vous exigerez au contraire qu'elle soit une glace implacable qui vous renvoie votre image telle quelle, nue et complexe. Et si vous voulez qu'elle vous présente par la suite un portrait plus pur et plus apaisé, vous commencerez par vous purifier dès aujourd'hui, éliminant vos humeurs et vous nettoyant de vos tares. Enfin apprenez qu'il est des circonstances où la leçon de la vie sera plus accentuée que jamais, des heures où vous vous apercevrez en relief, des crises et des luttes où vous deviendrez pleinement conscient de vous-même, et verrez qui triomphe en vous, du bon ou du mauvais ange, du bien ou du mal, du faux ou du vrai, du laid ou du beau. Un accident quelconque, un des mille faits de l'existence vous mettra en demeure de nous montrer de quel métal vous êtes, or, argent, cuivre, plomb ; ou plutôt vous seul vous en rendrez compte, car nous ne pouvons être juges que de vos actions, non de vos mobiles ; c'est pourquoi nos appréciations

de votre caractère ne prouvent en général pas grand'chose, et moins encore quand elles portent sur le succès ou l'insuccès de vos tentatives ; au fond de vos seuls mobiles, dans l'ombre de leurs complications, gît votre valeur exacte, votre rédemption ou votre damnation morale devant vous-même et devant Dieu. En temps ordinaire sans doute il ne vous était pas très-facile d'établir votre moyenne, et le plus subtil des psychologues se fût-il mis en tête de procéder à une enquête sur votre âme, vous eussiez eu raison de ne guère plus vous fier à ses conclusions qu'aux vôtres : mais dans les cas précis et graves il ne faut point tant d'affaire : la conscience vous renseigne mieux que la science, et selon ce qu'elle vous dit de votre conduite vous pouvez en toute sûreté vous traiter de gremlin ou d'honnête homme, de héros ou de pleutre, de gentleman ou de cuistre ; quitte à vous retrouver le surlendemain ce que vous étiez probablement l'avant-veille et ce que sont la plupart des hommes ; j'entends un de ces innombrables êtres enchevêtrés et sans logique où toutes les notes se coudoient et se croisent sans cesse, où la dissonance accompagne l'accord ; bref, et suivant le vieux mot auquel on doit toujours en revenir, un être essentiellement 'ondoyant et divers.' Aussi bien de cette diversité même, et du moment que vous la connaissez, pouvez-vous extraire votre futur mérite : à vous maintenant d'être courageux et tenace, d'exercer votre vouloir, et de transformer insensiblement votre ondoyance en simplicité vertueuse : à vous de vous frayer un droit chemin à travers vos contradictions.

Telle me semble être l'exhortation constante de ce théâtre psychique : elle y transparait à chaque drame, sous le symbole de cette épreuve morale dont chacun des personnages importants sort non pas toujours tout d'une pièce ni sculpté blanc ou noir dans une lumière crue, non pas toujours nettement vainqueur ou vaincu, noble ou ignoble, mais dessiné, s'il y a lieu, dans sa teinte intermédiaire et dans sa nuance, fondu dans son mélange humain de laideur et de beauté. De prouver par des exemples qu'il n'y a pas pour ainsi dire un personnage de Browning qui n'ait à passer par le feu, cela est presque oiseux, tellement la chose est évidente : vous pouvez, à votre gré, les prendre un à un ou les réunir en une synthèse finale. Après une longue aspiration, une vie toute ébranlée de désir et que le frémissement intérieur fit vaciller sur sa base, Paracelsus et Sordello meurent de l'effort pour la victoire : ils n'ont pu triompher que par la mort. Ce sont des vaincus que Lord Tresham et Strafford, mais les plus glorieux de tous : le premier tombe victime de l'affolement de son honneur, le second de son affection passionnée, désespérée pour Charles. Héros et vainqueurs, Luria, Norbert, Caponsacchi,

car le premier aime mieux se tuer que de punir l'ingrâte Florence, le second préfère hautement l'amour de sa 'mie' à celui de sa reine, et le troisième alors qu'il s'est chevaleresquement levé en faveur de Pompilia, respecte son amour pour elle. Victorieuses, Colombe de Ravenstein, Mildred Tresham, Pompilia, ces exquises femmes 'si aimantes et si pures, si calmes et si bonnes, graves et gaies, réservées et libres : ' l'une sacrifie joyeusement sa couronne ducale et son futur titre d'impératrice afin d'épouser un sujet dont le grand cœur est digne d'elle ; la seconde lie son sort à celui de son amant calomnié et ne le délaisse pas plus dans la mort qu'elle ne l'a délaissé dans la vie ; la troisième pardonne à celui qui l'a tuée. Quelques degrés au-dessous de ceux que nous venons de citer se tiennent les âmes dont le feu moins immaculé témoigne cependant qu'elles aussi sont issues de l'étincelle divine : c'est le Djabal du 'Return of the Druses,' qui s'est fait imposteur pour délivrer son peuple et que nous voyons à la fois puni pour ses moyens et récompensé dans son but ; c'est son amante Anael, une Charlotte Corday orientale, sublime et blâmable ; c'est Andrea del Sarto, qui sacrifie l'art à une passion imbécile, mais si sincère, si tendre, et si fatale que la pitié pour lui vous monte au cœur. Puis viendra le tour des natures faibles, hybrides, point tout à fait incapables, à l'occasion, d'actes qui leur fassent honneur, mais en qui l'ambition finira par engendrer la déloyauté et la casuistique : le prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau (lisez Louis-Napoléon), l'évêque Blougram et le politicien Chiappino rentrent dans cette catégorie. Enfin, les monstres apparaissent, ceux qui s'efforcent vers l'enfer comme d'autres vers le ciel, Ottima, Guido, le vieux noble de l' 'Inn Album.' Au reste, si l'on veut voir avec quel art le poète sait adapter la morale au drame et comme il y réussit à ce point que, bien loin de gêner celui-ci, celle-là en a subitement doublé la vie et l'intensité, on n'a qu'à lire cette pièce typique : 'Pippa passes.' Une jeune fille du peuple désire employer le premier janvier, son seul jour de congé dans l'année, à s'imaginer être tour à tour une des quatre personnes qu'elle juge les plus heureuses d'Asolo, et pour ce faire, elle passe successivement sous leurs fenêtres en chantant. Or il se trouve qu'à ce moment même ces quatre personnes sont en proie à une terrible crise intérieure qu'il va leur falloir dénouer vite par une décision d'où dépendra le bonheur ou le malheur de leur conscience. Chez chacun des quatre le mal va l'emporter, lorsque la chanson de Pippa frappe leur oreille : trois d'entre eux y perçoivent je ne sais quoi qui leur semble l'avertissement direct de Dieu, et ils sont sauvés.

Bref, le théâtre de Robert Browning est, en dernière analyse,

l'apothéose de la lutte, de la tentation, de l'épreuve morale. Par là l'œuvre, qui, fût-elle restée une simple dissection émouvante de l'âme, une psychologie dramatique sans autre but qu'elle-même, se fût révélée, certes, comme une création littéraire nouvelle et comme un phénomène intellectuel des plus intéressants, mais eût pu d'ailleurs se produire autre part qu'en Angleterre,—par là, grâce à son éthique, cette œuvre est une des plus anglaises qui soient. Faisant surtout appel au plus rare des courages, au courage contre soi-même, et ne lui promettant guère d'autre récompense terrestre que l'approbation de la conscience, elle constitue l'une des expressions les plus héroïques et les plus stoïciennes de l'esprit d'un peuple qui eut la double chance d'être trempé par la conquête normande et par la Réforme : dans lequel ces deux éléments infusèrent, en même temps qu'un sentiment hautain du droit et loyaliste du devoir, je ne sais quelle fortitude altière et je ne sais quelle indomptabilité romaine : vertu dont telle ou telle ou même dont l'ensemble se traduisit en haut relief chez des hommes d'action comme Wellington, Collingwood, Nelson, Gordon, Havelock, et chez des écrivains comme Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, George Eliot et Browning.

GABRIEL SARRAZIN.

The Chase in Art and Morals



WE think it is in Peacock's 'Nightmare Abbey' that Mr. Flosky, the transcendental philosopher, 'pities any man who can see the connexion of his own ideas.' Perhaps we may experience something worse than pity for venturing to assert any close relation between the three ideas named at the head of this paper. The fact is they represent three inseparable energies or active habits of the soul and body of man, which have practically gone on together since the human world began. You may as well try to

isolate Art from Love as from hunting; and there is morality, or a right and a wrong way, in all three, as in all the ways of man. 'The ways of well-doing,' says Hooker, 'are as many as the ways of man's life.'

By Art we here mean in particular the 'Three Arts,' frequently so called, of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting. Poetry cannot be excluded or included; its connexion is obvious, but it would involve too great length. Also the chase has given endless motives and inspirations to music; which, if lower in the intellectual point of view, has the widest range of influence in our present state of society. Hunting is knit up with man's body and soul: with his æsthetic and other emotions, with his imagination, his moral being, and his dinner.

For the Graphic or Glyptic arts, they seem literally to have begun with the chase, and in fact before anything else : at a period when hunting (or being hunted) was the chief occupation of primæval man, in the neolithic or even palæolithic ages. They are an irrefragable distinction between man and brute even then. It is emphatically true, as Æsop says, that the king of beasts is no carver ; at least we are sure the British Lion never was : that is demonstrated by our metropolitan statues. Had he been able to keep proper game-books by picture or hieroglyph, they would probably have resembled the first series on the gates of Camelot, where

On the highest, beasts are slaying men,
And on the second, men are slaying beasts,

rather than the lion-alabasters of Khorsabad, where the gallant quarry is being netted and speared by 'beaked kings' with massive heads of hair ; but at the earliest date of artistic expression there seems to have been a tolerably even balance of power between wild beasts and primitive artists.

What an admirable subject it would be for the Salon, if too eccentric for the English market at Burlington House—a studio of primitive and tribal man ; located, not unhappily, 'in a cave by the sea,' and just rising above a diet of 'oysters and foes.' Think of the return of the fur-clad or unclad Tinchel with its deer ; or, perhaps, of a body of champions bearing the giblets of a pterodactyle (if there were any then), or the fry—perhaps we ought to say the *omblet*—of a woolly rhinoceros ! There is rejoicing among the wives, the children, and the uneaten ancients of the tribe ; all the kitchens and all the middens are put in full blast, and the revel follows and comes to an end ; probably with well-earned rest, and without whisky or other forms of the fire-water¹ of later days. Then graphic art dawns on the Polar night, or on days of impracticable weather. It seems that hunting men amused themselves then, as they do now, chiefly with endless talk about hunting ; and further that they then illustrated their conversation together, or made hunting appointments from afar, by engraving the forms of their quarry on shoulder-blades of venison, and by sculpture in bone or horn. Both were most spirited and true in their kind. There are etchings of fish, seal, ox, horse, ibex, reindeer, great Irish elk, and mammoth or woolly elephant ; and the excellence of the work is as unaccountable as the preternatural accuracy of the savage senses. Some of these outlines are

¹ Whisky = Gaelic 'Uisg,' water. Loch 'Coruisk' is Coire-uisge, the 'Hollow of Waters.'

even shaded. Dr. Geikie figures a capital sketch of a reindeer feeding, with a boggy background, which reminds a Norwegian traveller of the Lapp camp at Tromsø.¹

These works have the graphic raciness of long familiarity and entire interest. A man whose life is all chase is likely to throw his whole life into delineation of bear, boar, or deer. They are only rude as to materials; a very little teaching with proper tools would certainly have enabled their authors to improve very considerably on the subjectless dulness of modern design.

It should be observed in passing that these works shut out that distortion of the Evolution Theory which develops man from pure brute. If the lion ever had turned carver, if the cave bear ever had recorded the aspect of the men he swallowed, the difference between lion or bear nature and human nature would not be so absolute. Our modern pessimists delight in levelling man downwards, which seems cynical as well as unnecessary. But this point cannot be got over—that the savage of another geological formation, almost helpless before the terrors of a giant fauna, can still not only war with them successfully, but observe and record them graphically, and speak to us on his blade-bone from the unknown ages, as Muhammad gave the world the Koran on shoulders of mutton. It lies at the root of Art, as of all things intellectual, that man has Memory, and that Mnemosyne is the mother of all the Muses or inventions of the soul of man.

As we said, we don't mean to go to the Vedas or the Eddas to trace the obvious connexion between poesy and the chase. One could not have existed without the other; witness the songs of every northern nation. Without doubt it is from the northern pine-woods that the chief artistic dignity came to woodcraft: for the forest vaulting and its clustered stems are rudimental in Gothic architecture. But in lower latitudes the Assyrians and Persians were keen enough in both lines to carve their huntings in alabaster; and the Egyptian frescoes show there must have been good enough sport in the Valley of the Nile. The Scythian races preferred to be brutes as well as hunt them, and have left no records. But epic Greece is just like old and merry, or lyric, England. We don't know what boys are taught now, and the difficulty is shared by their examiners; but we suppose classic specialism has not altogether forgotten the names of Atalanta and Calydon, of Theseus, Chiron,

¹ See *Magazine of Art*, vol. v, pp. 306-7.

Meleager, of Taygete and Erymanth, of the deerhound of Amyclæ and the Cretan quiver. The jovial might of Hercules, felling his deer and losing his Hylas, the chaste terrors of Artemis, their protectress¹ (as in another woody Caledon they were 'beloved of our Fairy Queen')—the awe of Pan at noonday in the forest silence—all these things connect hunting not only with the moral but religious thought of Greece, and all are recorded in her poetry and sculpture, in her epic and her tragedy, in the pediments and on the friezes of her temples. It may be only a curious coincidence that the legend of Meleager's boar-hunt should be associated with the first or Lombard Renaissance of Art at Pisa; but it is by no means surprising if Niccola Pisano looked with delight on the several bas-reliefs of the Calydonian hunting which his countrymen brought home in their long galleys.²

But long before Niccola, from the seventh century carvings of S. Michele of Pavia, about a hundred years from Alboin, the earliest Lombard basilicas were covered with greenwood chase and pastime. These things men cared about, and they adorned their churches with their own outer life. The only difference between theirs and the high Attic feeling about the chase seems to be caused by higher Greek civilisation in a better-cultivated country. The northern training was wilder, and the Athenian more of a farmer or gardener than a hunter. But Xenophon's testimony is express. He wanted to make use of the chase, especially the equestrian part of it, in physical education of the citizen soldier: while every Frank, Northman, or Longbeard, was a soldier already as far as personal hardihood and the use of arms could go. The best soldier of Athens prefers the woodland or mountain chase decidedly to the civic palæstra; he wants the free field and not the stadium. Athenian gymnastics did not satisfy him; they seem to have become somewhat too professional in his time, suffering, as all our own sports do, from being converted into busy idleness, or idle business. Above all, they were too conventional for the young soldier, whose trade is to be prepared for everything, and to watch for all uncalculated events. The hunter-craft is more than mere skill in a game or gymnastic exercise, even the manliest; because the unexpected is always happening, because 'you must use your wits and your strength together,' and 'unless you really excel in endurance, design, and calculation, you will not bring anything home'—which is the object. And, as he notices farther on,

¹ 'Diana of Versailles,' now in the Louvre.

² I can see no reason for interference with this tradition except mare's-nesting, competitive scholarship, and mutual advertisement.

unless you show these qualities in the chase of the boar you are exposed to danger of not returning home yourself. If you don't put the *προβόλιον*, the short spear, well in between the boar's brawn and his shoulder blade, he will incontinently see your inside. You have to do it right every time; it is never too easy; and the penalty for failure is great danger always. I remember a similar remark from a hunting man of both pluck and experience, in accounting for a 'voluntary,' or fall, for which nobody was to blame but himself—'that one had to make the same effort to stick on every time, and he didn't make it.' Now, it is exactly the same in art. Its successes are so genuine, because its conditions are so variable, and so dependent on high combinations of idea and action. A good drawing or carving is a pure mental achievement, *plus* physical perfection of eye and hand, all brought to bear at the same moment, and irrevocable in result. To draw Giotto's circle proves that you are a workman like Giotto; and nobody can help you or cram you to do Albert Dürer's one golden hair. If you can draw Robin Hood's bow, and cleave the wand, you *can* do it; and others cannot. One good drawing under examination—one real bit of execution, in painting or music—shows the standard executant; and execution cannot be crammed for. One good jump on a strange horse shows standard horsemanship; one sharp temptation well resisted, be it of pain or pleasure, shows real moral quality—all these good things being alike obtainable by industrious practice, only or chiefly; the moral quality, underlying all.

So much for hunter-craft in general Greek education; where such an addition was required, in the mind of the best citizen-soldier of his time, except perhaps Epaminondas. In the northern races it formed of course the chief part of education, and, as in earlier geological ages, was the first object of artistic effort. Professor Ruskin curses all field sports, in the first edition of 'Modern Painters' with the hysteric passion of his later days; but we think his views were modified during his residence in Oxford; at all events he was very kind to his fox-hunting friends, as to all others; and we well remember his reconciliation with mountaineering and the Alpine Club, whose pursuit is at least the best substitute for war and chase in modern Europe. But his notes on the Lombard churches at the end of vol. i. of the 'Stones of Venice' are invaluable on our subject, as they show that where the chase is a part of life it will be made a part of religion through art, in a rude, but real way, in Church sculpture and the like; and that hunters and soldiers like Xenophon or Agilulf, devout men in their way, will see no incongruity in it. ⁸ Both

of these were wont to pray at least early and late, for safety and good sport. Xenophon is like a pithy and sincere Puritan without texts. To both, the chase, its honour and delight, seemed good for man, and worthy of dedication; and its 'Agalmata' seemed proper decoration for Attic or Christian temples.

As hunting becomes a less important part of daily life, its command over art naturally declines, and it dies away from the Italian churches, as animal food gives place to the various products of agriculture. It was still strong in the thirteenth century at Lyons and Rouen; and one of its most interesting documents is the chase of Theodoric on the west front of S. Zenone at Verona; where glyptic orthodoxy has set the Fiend in waiting for the Semi-Arian hunter of men.¹ There can be no doubt as to the greenwood influence over vertical architecture, as displayed in its uprushing vaults and columns, and in leaf and flower ornament. English ballad poetry is a subject in itself; and the rest of our article must be given to the bearings of the chase on English landscape feeling. We must confess that we feel with Professor Ruskin to the full extent of his denunciations of Renaissance boar and wolf hunts, and must pass by even Rubens and Snyders without much looking. They dwell on the fierceness, and still worse on the agonies, of hounds and game, all as mere pageant; the men are nowhere in the picture, although we know they used spur and spear and hunting-sword boldly enough. Nor can we care for the 'Hunting Pieces' of Wouvermans or his followers; these answer their purpose as background for fine clothes and fat horses, and there is an end of them. The sylvan war involves deprivation of animal life, and a certain risk to human; but you can't eat things alive, or live for ever yourself; and the moral importance of the chase is considerable, as Xenophon saw it, as training in craft, daring, and promptitude of hand. The revived landscape school in England takes it modestly up once more as the natural delight of gentlemen and soldiers, or (according to the great Mr. Jorrocks) 'as the image of war with only 25 per cent. of the danger.' But we can only regard as art such works as some of Wilson's or Constable's, where the figures are part of the landscape, and the red coats do not blot out everything. We fear we must give up Alken and the Tom-and-Jerry school, or leave it to its ridiculous renaissance in modern fashion; though much is to be

¹ Professor Ruskin's earliest example (*Stones of Venice*, vol. i. Appendix 8, p. 360) is the seventh century Church of S. Michele at Pavia, where the subjects are like a hunter's night-mare; and he comments on the comparative sobriety of the inlayings on S. Michele of Lucca, four hundred years later.

said for Alken's sharp drawing of men and horses, and power over rapid action. His *coup d'œil* and grasp of momentary and violent subject are well displayed by his pictures of the crowd of men and horses breaking through and from cover, over every kind of obstacle and with all varieties of calamity; and his works resume a value in art, now that graphic outline is so neglected. He connects the Rowlandson and Bunbury group of illustrators, as well as Cruikshank, with Leech, Browné, and Du Maurier, with Caldecott in particular, and with all modern grotesque character or caricature, which requires a big book to itself.¹

The 'sporting picture' is not art; but much may be said for the representations of country gentlemen and their hounds which still adorn the galleries of many an old house and glorious. These things taught many squires, their sons and daughters, to care sincerely for art, and to enjoy pictures of what they loved, instead of collecting them as curiosities. Style, technique, and all except the most unconscious composition, may wait; let us begin with Squire Osbaldistone or Squire Western enjoying a picture of horse or hound because it *is* like what he *does* like. To *like* things well enough is the foundation of realist art, which stands on love, like everything else worth having. It was thus that Turner's Yorkshire drawings were made for Mr. Fawkes at Farnley, where he probably passed some of his happiest days. There he was first appreciated, there he saw the scenes he wept to remember in his decay, there still remains his delightful study of the first grouse that ever fell to his gun. What would moors be without grouse? at all events not equal to moors with. Turner's frequent introduction of incident of that kind is deplored by his great critic; but still 'the Mountains are inhabited by the Beasts,' quoth St. Bernard, and it is the nature of man to go there in search of them—and the birds.

We have always regretted Sir E. Landseer's too easy use of his magnificent powers. He was not quite true to his art or his gifts; but his Highland landscape almost redeems him. Though society kept him continually painting toy dogs, he broke out when he chose into works like the 'Deer Pass,' the 'Random Shot,' and 'Loch Awen' under Cairn Gorm; or rose to high feeling and noble pathos in the 'Shepherd's Chief Mourner,' and the 'Provençal's Prayer for Rain.' He did much, but not

¹ We don't say that caricature and character are etymologically connected. 'Carricare,' Ital. to pile up, to exaggerate, is the received derivation; but the associations between the two words are inveterate.

all ; nevertheless he often showed the hunter's path into high naturalist art.

And, indeed, the chase can be but a part of the life of a period ; and when it is only an artificial amusement it can only rank with other plays and games, and falls below their highest forms, below boat-racing or mountaineering. In the north it is still something more, and in our own days of deer-stalking, forty years ago, there could scarcely be better training for the naturalist ideal of Turner anywhere than those long days from light to dark, upon the Ross-shire mountains in all weathers. With little enough time for sketching notes, there was enough to assist impressions which last the lifetime. To gain the last ridge of a high peak at evening, and come out among its crumbling and clinking fragments, with snow-white ptarmigan rising before, and sailing away into the rosy light, of which oneself seems to be a part, so prevailing are the last rays—to look from thence over Northern Skye, and the Butt of the Lewis, and the outer Benbecula, and watch the sunset 'dream over seas and shores and isles and capes'—that is a possession of the soul. To drop a grouse dead into one of the 'lochans,' the unknown high-level meres of the North-West Highlands, only separated (as it seems when you are on their level) by a low margin of rocks and heather from the offing of ocean beyond, or from the horizon and infinite sunset ; to lie in secret passes of roe-deer, where the heather is deep and rich among the boulders, and the lichened granite is clad in scarlet and yellow bilberries ; or, for a change, to hear the sudden challenge of the west wind as it breaks down on some inland lake, uplifts the whole body of its waters like the Red Sea, and drives them fifty feet up the hillside, to fall back in one great cataract¹—these sights are for shepherd and hunter, and none else. And though we remember the saying of Professor Alphonse Legros, that such things were 'les spectacles de la Nature,' and less suited to art than solemn quietudes in hillside or forest, such as he himself loves to people with grand and gaunt Bûcherons, nevertheless the excitement of such occasional splendours is intense and lasting, and makes the painter enduringly keen. Then for fishing—we do not suppose anybody ever forgot the pool in which he first saw a salmon rise.

But for the midlands and the south, one form of the chase is representative of, and stands for the whole Energeia—fox-hunting of course—

¹ I saw this near Shildaig of Gairloch in 1856, but would not have committed it to print, but for the parallel testimony of the oldest and truest of hunters, in *Reminiscences of the Lewis*.

and the rest of this article belongs to it by right. We do not allow that any apology for this pursuit is necessary when it is practised in earnest. All sports and pastimes, as well as all serious avocations, are infested with imposture and encumbered with false brethren—sham cricketers, sham oarsmen, the people who look on at football, or smoke in studios, or hang about literature. *O imitatores, servum pecus*, you are everywhere, and you spoil everything. But for the serious customer, great man or small, old or young, from the grey lord or yeoman, who rides hard at seventy, to young undergraduates just able to stick on, or the little boys on ponies, who are keenest of all, between them the hunting and the riding make the man, and a good deal of the soldier. A run with foxhounds fulfils all Xenophon's conditions. There is woodcraft in getting away without getting *in* the way; there is an ever-varying demand for strength and science in the horsemanship; there is plain courage in facing the obstacles. You cannot do much without these qualities; and all three will come to you and grow on you naturally if you will only stick to it and do your best—on whatever kind of nag your good or evil genius may assign you. We dare say more depends on the horse than the man, and though a bad one is no doubt a misfortune, he may be contended with, manlike. And it is quite wonderful, speaking morally and mentally, how much may be gained from a good one. We can't help it, but courage is what we chiefly want; and how one's heart does rise with the glad willing speed of a determined nag, and how he finds pluck for two, and how much better, morally better, a man feels for hardening his heart and facing his fences as they come! Sedentary and contemplative virtues may doubtless take precedence of those which involve risk and daring, but it is wrong to underrate or ignore the latter, as professional 'thinkers' often seem to do; since the philosopher requires the protection of an executive, whereunder to lucubrate.

In the artistic point of view, although the term Impressionist is exposed to suspicion, we think very much is to be said for sketches or studies of rapid action, particularly in correct line. The advice 'always to paint one's impressions' was long ago given by Turner to Stanfield, who had been much struck by a view he did not at the time delineate, and had been unable to recall it on returning to the spot some time after. He had seen his picture in nature, which is the first great step, but had failed to secure any mental photograph of the momentary scene or situation. All painters are in fact impressionists; what you want to represent is an impression which nature has made on your brain;

and every touch you put on ought to be an integral part of that. Photographers are the greatest 'impressionists' of all, for their pictures are proofs of plates by the hand of nature. We call a good cerebral impression or 'first-thought' of a picture an Ideal or an Idea, and most men think pictures are valuable in proportion to their nearness of resemblance to their first-thought. Of course the finished work in oil must become more or less a Composition, or impression adapted to technical and other necessities; and the essence of good Impressionism appears to be retaining the freshness of the early thought with a fair degree of definiteness.

Now, this is the beauty of studying men and horses in rapid motion, or even at the coverside, that the action is everything, and immediate impression which you must master somehow. There can be no doubt that Caldecott did this thoroughly in his coloured outlines, and with delightful taste and feeling; or that it is now done very well in outline by 'Punch's' artists, and often on a larger scale by those of the 'Graphic' and 'Illustrated News.' It was a great thing for art when the first rapid scratches made on actual battle-fields by Mr. Hall and others were first sent home for publication just as they were; because they enable the world to know what it really is to paint, or anyhow to record, a vivid and complicated impression.¹ And we think we are right in saying that when a genuine impression can be given in correct lines it is generally worth painting.

But it is at present a fatal fault in hunting pictures, and in fact it keeps them out of art, that in them landscape, contrast, tone and composition are all sacrificed to the exigencies of portraiture. An M.F.H. must stand out of the canvas, fearfully recognisable, till the hounds know him. Also his horse, till the stablemen know *him*. Likewise his scarlet coat, white leathers and tops, saddle, bridle, spurs, stirrups even, to the advertisement of his tradesmen. Sometimes we are spared the virginal whiteness of the leathers; and brown undergarments may be substituted with advantage. Yet the white may be taken to symbolise the Templar motto of Beau-Séant, a spotless seat of stainless honour; and both white and pink are relics of the old time. So we have no heart to exclude them, we only want them farther into the picture, so as to illuminate the winter landscape, and not blot it out.

¹ An analysis of a simpler one (of two horses jumping) is given, with the first sketch, in a book called *Our Sketching Club*, 4th edition, p. 295 (Macmillan).

Or if such a thing were possible, the most beautiful of woodland equipments, the Heythrop green velvet, with cap and brown boots, &c., might be more generally adopted. If absolute smartness and turn-out are necessary they must be endured, and balanced by careful study of weather-beaten manly faces, by the presentment of Tom Rance with 'his single eye,' or *oi*, 'worth many another's two,' or the white coronal under the cap of old Jim Hills—by 'crafty earthstoppers' and rustic faces generally. But even girls and horses are now sacrificed to smart clothes (I think worse in black and white than in colour), and the chase cannot enter into art where its imagery is that of tailors' and saddlers' advertisements. Of course where dress and display are the real object there can be no real art at all.

But a painter should be able to make something of 'a field' in England, while beauty is beauty. He may there be enabled to observe a very high standard of good looks, equine and human, with some of the last vestiges of ancient costume. It is the fashion just now to make pretty pictures out of the dress of the beginning of this century, which we take to be the ugliest that ever enhanced the shame of the primal Fall. A lady looks better in her habit than in a gown with a waist at the nape of her neck, and a man in a beard and a cutaway is not so bad as he would be in red 'dressing-gown' skirts and a pigtail—as limners love to paint him now. It is not from want of skill or feeling that painters fail to do honour to their art; the fact is they are asked to paint portraits to the satisfaction of subscribers; and the British subscriber exacts awful and screaming likeness, projected into his eye out of the canvas like a pea out of a schoolboy's tube, and if he does not get it 'he will not abear' the deprivation.

So much for the chase and its art, and its morals; and the only further question which much attracts us is how far it should be artificially sustained; and this we think undesirable, if not impossible, as to its supplying material for art. But while it can be practised so as to develop strength and hardihood, and represented in proper connection with landscape, it may hold its own, as so very dear in association to English country life—as that is still remembered. Late objections to it appear to us senseless, and therefore unanswerable. They were last raised by vivisectionists in terror of legal coercion, who paralleled the death of a fox—say in forty seconds after forty minutes' run—with the prolonged torment of hecatombs of dogs, the said dogs procured without questions asked. Then all the thinkers went at it in fine

sedentary frenzy, like 'moutons enragés,' and meditated aloud in their magazines, chiefly on the damnatory side. It appeared to us that a confusion existed in the minds of many intellectual persons between their own feelings and a fox's. Because the rapid pursuit of him on horseback would be agonisingly paralysing (or *vice versa*) to themselves, they are led to think that he feels much worse than he probably does feel, as he glides over ridge and furrow (better than any other known creature) on his four springy pads. And three more brief apophthegms may complete our testimony on this matter.

First, nobody can judge of it who has not learnt to ride fairly well ; and all those who can ride fairly will judge on the same side.

Secondly and seriously, we are all somewhat too afraid of bodily pain, and, living as we do in refined occupation and cool blood, we do not allow for the merciful effect of violent action and inner excitement, which seem in many cases, animal and human, to be a kind of wine and myrrh, allowed to make death easier.

Thirdly, allowance must be made in all these wordy controversies for the enormous and increasing demand for, and the corresponding supply of, the nutritious edible called flapdoodle, ever so much appreciated, and so widely consumed, by the population of these realms.

R. ST. JOHN TYRWHITT.

The Population Problem of France



THE question of how to deal with the exotic population of France is no new one. It is always smouldering, and bursts forth with increased volume every five years, when the result of the quinquennial census brings home to the French people the alarming fact that the native population is shrinking, and that the wave of foreign immigration is ever swelling. Over the frontiers of France every year come hordes of foreign invaders, who quietly displace, and in some cases threaten to absorb, the native population. Belgians rush in on the north, Germans press inward from the north-east, Swiss swarm along the eastern borders, Italians advance along the Mediterranean littoral, and Spaniards en-

croach on the southern borders, until the conglomerate mass of aliens now forms over three per cent. of the whole population. This huge army of foreigners is regarded as a source of trouble in time of peace ; as a danger in time of war. Recent manifestations show what bitterness of feeling and narrow prejudices their presence may create. The Paris municipality and other town councils stipulate that no foreign labour shall be employed by contractors in the execution of public works. German tradesmen are boycotted in the north, Italian workmen are lynched to death in the south, and the Egauz of Montmartre, after shrieking themselves hoarse about universal brotherhood and international solidarity, drive Belgian workmen from the Tour Eiffel. Influenced by such hostile manifestations as these, and no doubt also by the insane cry for more protection—for if the produce of the country be protected, why not also the producer?—several deputies have brought forward propositions all tending to alter the status and position of

IMMIGRATION

Nombre des étrangers par départements
d'après le denombrement de la population
de 1886.

Proportion pour 1000 habitants



DIAPSON DES TEINTES

Départements où il y a pour 1000 hab^{ts}

MOINS DE 5 ÉTRANGERS	DE 25 À 50 ÉTRANGERS	DE 100 À 25 ÉTRANGERS
DE 5 À 10 ÉTRANGERS	DE 50 À 75 ÉTRANGERS	DE 125 À 150 ÉTRANGERS
DE 10 À 25 ÉTRANGERS	DE 75 À 100 ÉTRANGERS	DE 175 À 200 ÉTRANGERS

Nota: La Carte a été dressée sur les chiffres officiels
que nous savons très inférieurs à la réalité.

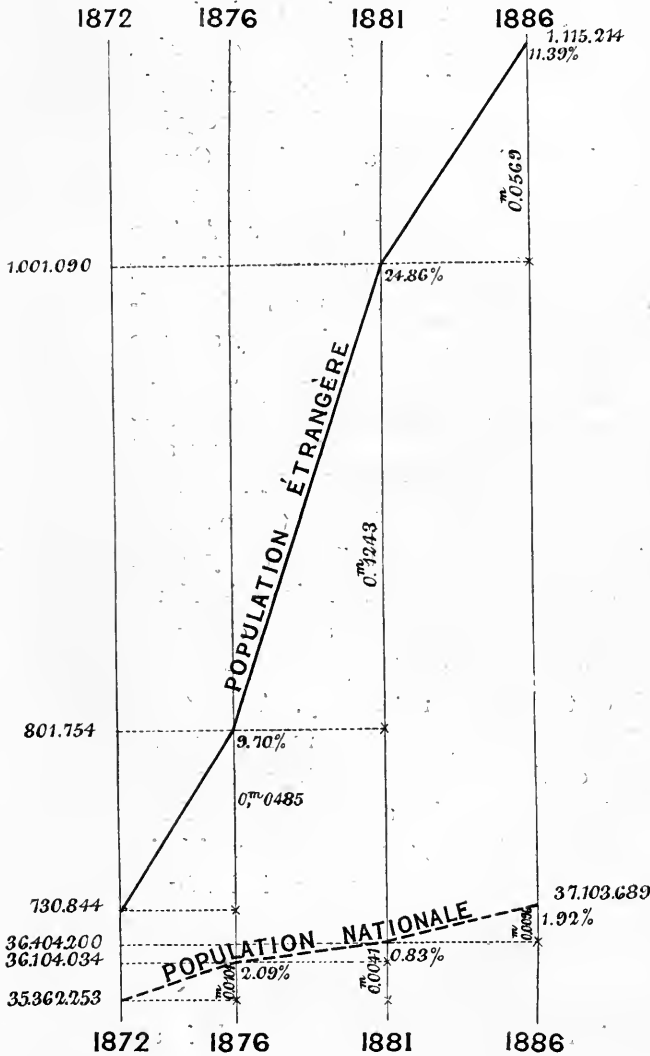
foreign residents. M. Thiessé, for instance, proposed a capitation tax on foreign employers and workers; M. Pally wanted to introduce in all contracts for public works, whether national, departmental, or communal, a clause binding the contractors to employ only French labour; M. Pradon wished to impose a *taxe de séjour* on foreigners; and M. Steenackers went to the other extreme, and asked for a tax on those who employed foreign labour. A Parliamentary commission was appointed to consider these four projects; to investigate generally the question of foreigners in France, and to find out how aliens were treated in other countries. They found that foreigners enjoyed more privileges in France than in any other country in the world, and the first result of this discovery has been the Presidential decree which was intended, as President Carnot remarked, 'to enable us to gain a knowledge of the circumstances under which persons or families come from abroad to settle on our soil.' The decree ought to have been accompanied with a measure facilitating naturalisation. Thoughtful economists recognise that the foreign residents are indispensable for the development of French industry and the maintenance of French commerce, and would like to see them absorbed by the native population. But they hold aloof. They would not object to become Frenchmen, but they shrink from accepting the charges and dangers which French nationality imposes. The naturalised Frenchman has not only to pay with his purse; he has to offer his life to the service of his adopted country. Being born on French soil, probably of a French mother, does not make one a French citizen. It is optional for him when he reaches his majority to declare himself a Frenchman or remain a foreigner. The dread of military service generally compels him to remain outside the pale of the French nationality. Thus there is a native as well as an immigrant foreign population in France. In this paper I will trace the growth of this foreign element, point out the important part it plays in the literature, politics, and commerce of the country, and consider the cause of this inrush, and the effect which it, together with the stationary condition of the native race, is likely to have on the future of France.

I

THE infecundity of the French is not a recent phenomenon. It is as old as the French race. The French have never been a prolific people. It is estimated that in the year 1700 France contained 19,600,000 inhabitants. With the natural expansion of the people and an accession of territory—Lorraine and Corsica—the population had grown to 26,000,000 in 1789. By 1815, after the wars of the Revolution and the

first Empire, which destroyed 1,760,000 men, France contained 29,000,000, which is only a little more than an increase of 115,000 a year. It has grown but slowly during the century. The annexation of Savoy and Nice brought France 669,060 new subjects, and this was the main cause of the in-

Accroissement Proportionnel de la Population Nationale et Etrangère en France.



crease between 1851 and 1861. The next five years was a period of peace and prosperity, and in 1866 the population reached 38,047,523. In 1876 it had fallen to 36,905,788. By the end of the next five years it had recovered its lost ground somewhat, and stood at 37,672,048. When the last census was taken (in 1886) the population, which was 38,018,903, only slightly exceeded what it was twenty years before. It is true that the war and the loss of two provinces must be taken into account; but it must also be remembered that the population had been artificially raised before 1870 by the annexation of territory. Slight as has been the increase of the population of France during the century, and more especially in recent years, it has been mainly due to immigration, and to the fecundity of foreign residents. While the native stock has been stationary, or even retrograde, the

new settlers have been multiplying at a progressive ratio. France has always been a happy hunting-ground for foreigners, but it was not until 1857 that they were considered of sufficient importance to be scheduled apart in the census returns. They then numbered 378,561, or about 10 to

every 1,000 inhabitants. In ten years' time they were 497,094. Proportionally the progression was at the rate of 28·5 per cent. for the foreigners, and 2·3 per cent. for the French. By the end of the next five years the invaders rose to 635,495, and were now over 16 per 1,000 inhabitants. But it is since 1870 that they have gained most. They have almost doubled in numbers in eighteen years, as the diagram opposite and the following figures show :—

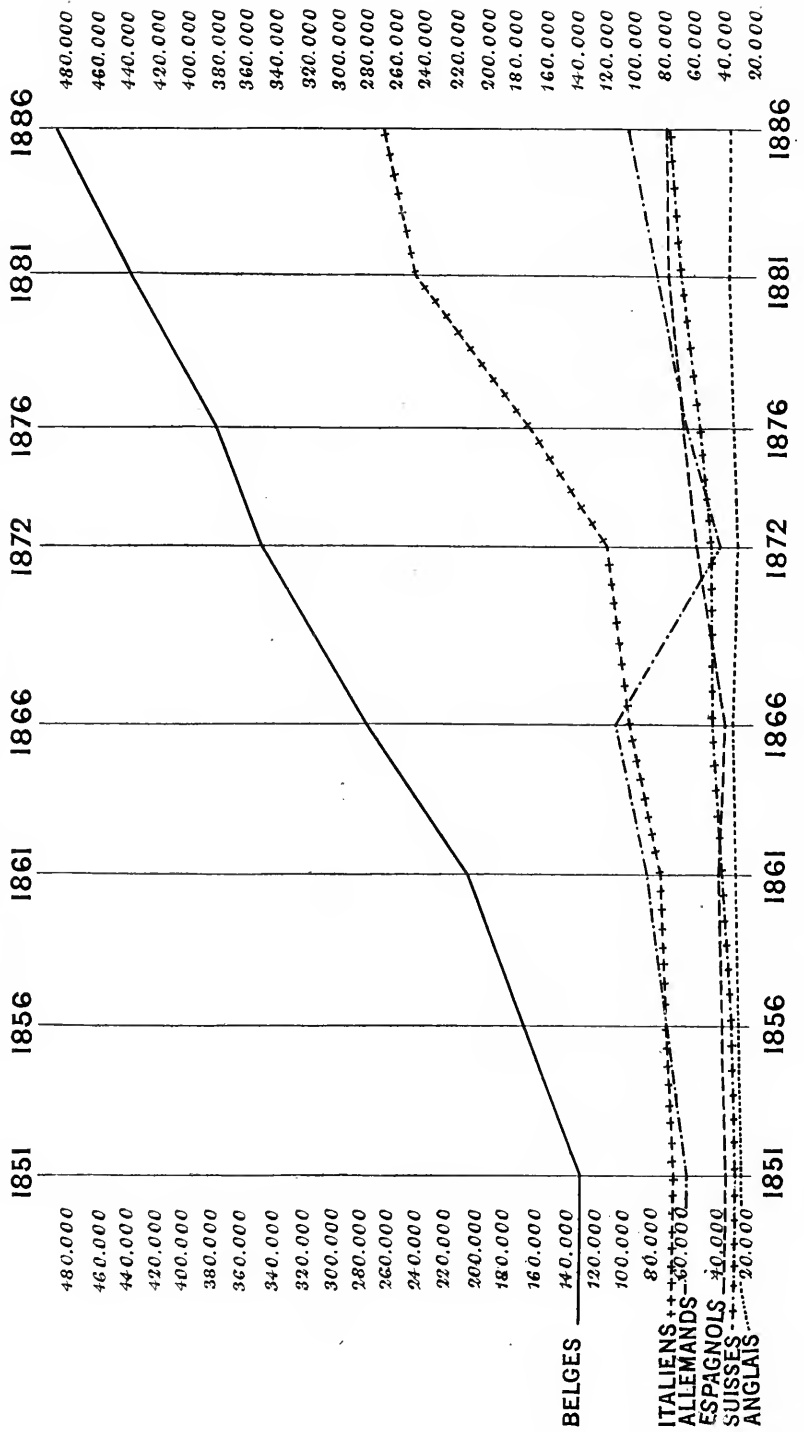
	No. of Foreigners	Per cent. of Population
1872	730,844	2·03
1876	801,754	2·17
1881	1,001,090	2·68
1886	1,115,214	3·0

This does not include temporary residents, like those who winter at Nice or spend the summer in Auvergne, or live temporarily in Paris, but only those permanently established on French soil. The repartition of nationalities is as follows :—

Belgians	482,261	Swiss	78,584
Italians	264,568	British	36,134
Germans	100,114	Austrians	12,090
Spaniards	79,550	Other Nationalities	75,230

These are the official figures found in the census reports supplied by the Minister of the Interior ; but the Minister of Commerce makes the number of foreigners in France 1,126,531. Even this is absurdly below the mark. All the foreigners are not included in the official statistics. Many Germans schedule themselves as Alsatians, and are thus incorporated in the native population. Others boldly declare themselves Frenchmen, and not a few evade making any return at all. So great, indeed, is the discrepancy between the official figures and the actual facts that M. Pradon, the chairman of the special commission on the subject, does not hesitate to say that the number of resident foreigners is double that given in the census returns. Imperfect as they are, however, the statistics conclusively show that it is to the foreign elements that France owes the increase of half a million during the last quinquennial period. The births over the deaths give nothing like such an increase. In towns where the death-rate is in excess of the birth-rate the population is nevertheless increasing. The departments which showed an augmentation of inhabitants were those in which foreigners are found. In twenty-nine inland departments the population is diminishing. In some places in France it was decreasing throughout the century, and the

Mouvement de la Population Etrangère de 1851 à 1886.



amiable object of the *bonhomme Normand* seems to be to revert to the paradisiacal condition of life, and have an Adam and Eve as the sole inhabitants of a canton or a commune.

If the foreigners were equally distributed over the whole territory their influence would be less felt and the danger feared from them would be minimised. But that is not so. The immigrants pursue a progressive march towards the interior. They cluster round the frontiers at first, and gradually spread over the neighbouring departments, but rarely penetrate into the heart of the country; and as the sturdy invaders advance the native French thin out to make room for them, just as the savage aborigine disappears when brought into contact with a higher civilisation. The mineral industries of the Nord have attracted (according to returns admittedly incomplete) 297,991 Belgians, 1,472 Dutchmen, and 1,345 Germans, or a total of 305,524 in a population of 1,670,184, which is 182 foreigners per 1,000. In the Ardennes there are 37,591 foreigners in a population of 322,759, or 112 per 1,000. In the Pas-de-Calais and in the Oise they are 30 per 1,000. The north-west corner of France owes its industrial activity and prosperity to these colonists, mostly Belgians, to whom the language of their adopted country presents no difficulty. They form the bulk of the miners, the factory operatives, the artisans, and are largely engaged in the cultivation of beetroot and in the sugar manufactories. Germans predominate in the north-east. In Meurthe-et-Moselle, in a population of 431,693, 32,884 are foreign, or 76 per 1,000. At Belfort the foreign population is 104 per 1,000. As we move inwards the numbers diminish, but in the departments of the Meuse and the Marne the foreign element still forms 30 per 1,000. The settlers are mostly Germans, who can easily master the language, and, in some instances, live down the animosity against them. These Teutons are sturdy, plodding, and industrious workmen, and are engaged as tradesmen, waiters, factory hands, and labourers. Continuing round the frontier, we next meet the Swiss contingent, which is 10,000 strong in the single department of Doubs. Migratory hordes of Piedmontese and Italians pour over the Alps, swarm in the valley of the Rhone, and spread themselves over the Mediterranean littoral. Rude, but industrious, living on little, content with small wages, these swarthy Italians are redoubtable competitors to the native workmen, whom they oust from the lower grades of manual labour. The Bouches-du-Rhône contain 77,512 foreigners. In the Alpes-Maritimes the proportion is 45,500 Italians to 238,057 inhabitants. There are 50,000 Italians employed in the dockyards, the oil and soap

manufactures in Marseilles. Italians are the navvies, the scavengers, the road-men, and the day-labourers throughout this region. They are also largely employed in ship-building yards. At Seyne there are 1,152 French and 1,071 foreign workmen; at Ciotat 1,798 French and 1,050 foreign; and at Menpenti 909 French and 304 foreign; and there are also thousands who are only temporary residents, like the Tuscan labourers and Lucquois who reap the crops in Corsica. Another continual flow of foreign labour comes over the Pyrenees. Spaniards people the departments nearest their own country to the extent of 50 per 1,000 inhabitants. There is a fair sprinkling of English in the seaport towns along the Channel, and Paris itself contains 213,529 foreigners of all nationalities, and engaged in the most varied occupations.

Among the aliens who seek a home in France there is a large criminal element, which has been a source of no little uneasiness to legislators. A tenth of the criminals tried before juries are foreigners, and the number of convictions against foreigners has risen from 17,011 in 1881 to 20,235 in 1885, which means 20 criminals for every 1,000, as compared with 5 amongst every 1,000 French. The Senate has passed a law with the object of excluding individuals likely to make undesirable citizens from the benefits of naturalisation.

When we consider the difficulties and the cost of becoming naturalised, the burdens the French citizen has to bear and the sacrifice he has to make, it is surprising to find that so many choose France not only for their home, but for their country. In 1872 there were only 15,303 naturalised Frenchmen; there were 77,046 in 1880, and 103,886 in 1886. The native foreign element, however, is very large. Of the 1,126,531 foreigners in the country, 431,423 have been born there, and 285,685 in the communes in which they were living at the time the census was taken. It must also be observed that the greater number of the immigrants are males. There are between 13 and 14 million adult males in France, and a calculation shows that there is one foreign male to about every twelve Frenchmen.

We have now seen how slowly the French race increase in numbers; we have traced the rapid growth of the foreign element—shown its repartition in nationalities and its distribution over the country. One thing remains to be done before leaving the statistical side of our subject: it is to note the steady decline of the birth-rate.

This is the most alarming symptom to be found in an examination of the whole population question in France, and it bodes ill for the future of the French race. Fortunately we have the latest data on this subject. The detailed result of the last census has at last, after two years' delay, emerged from the tangled meshes of French bureaucracy, and simultaneously with its publication, come the population statistics for last year. Unfortunately, however, no distinction is made between the offspring of natives and foreigners in the official returns, so that the sterility of the French is made less apparent than it really is, for infants and adults who are French by birth but still foreign by nationality number at least half a million. But with the prolific batch of foreigners thrown in, and notwithstanding an increase of ten millions to the population and a constantly diminishing death-rate, we meet this startling phenomenon: that the number of births in France last year was fewer than it had been throughout the century.

Between 1810 and 1815, when the population was 29 millions, the average number of births per year was 925,310. From 1820 to 1830 the births were 967,161 for a population of 32 millions; from 1831 to 1835 they rose to 974,955 for a population of 33 millions (the highest they have reached). Between 1851 and 1855 they numbered 939,799, and between 1856 and 1860, 967,387. In 1869 they were 948,526, in 1870 943,515, and in 1871 they sank to 826,121. This year was, however, exceptional owing to the war, and may be excluded when making a general comparison. The lost ground was recovered by next year, when the births rose to 966,000 for a population of 36 millions. In 1875 they were 950,975, in 1877 944,576, in 1881 937,057, and in 1887 899,333. But this is not all. Nor is it the worst symptom. We have seen that the birth-rate fell while the death-rate also lessened and the population diminished. It might be presumed that one cause of this has been that marriage has become a failure. But marriage has not been a failure. Unions have only become more sterile. The number of marriages has increased, while births have not, but on the contrary decreased, as this table shows:—

	Marriages	Births
1881	282,079	937,057
1882	281,060	935,566
1883	284,519	937,944
1884	289,555	937,758
1885	283,170	924,558
1886	283,208	912,838
1887	278,056	899,333

Had not the mortality improved by 17,425 last year as compared with 1886, the result would have been worse still. Another unpleasant fact to note is that the rate of illegitimates has been steadily rising since 1881. In 1881 the births were 866,978 legitimate, 70,079 illegitimate; last year they were 825,479 legitimate, 73,854 illegitimate.

Here is another interesting table showing the sterility and comparative fecundity of the 10,425,321 families who were in France in 1886:—

Number of Families		Number of Families	
2,073,205	without issue	936,853	having 4 children
	or 20·0		or 9·0
2,442,611	having 1 child	549,693	" 5 "
	" 24·4		" 5·2
2,265,317	" 2 children	313,400	" 6 "
	" 21·8		" 2·9
1,512,054	" 3 "	232,188	" 7 " or more
	" 14·5		" 2·2

This gives a general average for all France of 2·07 children for each family. We may well assume that the foreign contribution amounts to the fractional number, which leaves two children as the offspring of each marriage among the French. This is quite an ideal state of things, from the Malthusian point of view, if they all could be nurtured into maturity, but unfortunately they sometimes die prematurely. The married persons, however, are not the most numerous class in France. There are 20,012,498 celibates as against 14,959,335 persons living in a state of wedlock; there are 2,947,511 widows and widowers, and 11,415 *divorcés*. Thus 52·75 per cent. of the French people live in a state of celibacy, and after deducting those who are not arrived at a marriageable age, the celibates of the two sexes still represent 23·49 per cent. of the whole population.

II

THE cause of the infiltration of foreigners into France is not far to seek. Primarily it is not because the population of the country only augments feebly. However small the increase of population, if it kept pace with the material prosperity and the development of the natural resources of the country, there would be no special attraction for foreign settlers. But France is the richest, and the least developed, of the countries in Western Europe. It is the country capable of supporting the greatest population per square mile, and the specific density of the people is less in France than in the neighbouring States. There are only 71 inhabitants per square kilomètre in France as compared with 80 in Germany, 100 in Italy, 110 in England, 120 in Holland, and 200 in Belgium. Wages, as a necessary consequence of this, are higher in France than amongst the congested workers of Belgium or Italy. No

wonder, therefore, that they flee from want, over the frontier, to a country where they at least can get work. The wonder is that any responsible legislator in France should propose a measure to harass or expel them. Each foreign worker in France represents so much capital to the country. Some individual native workers may suffer through the presence of the aliens ; but, as we have already remarked, they are indispensable for the cultivation of the soil, the construction of public works, and the development of French industries, if France is to hold her own as a commercial nation. This is so palpably apparent that there is no need to insist upon it. [But more than that, it has been asserted that the French working classes absolutely benefit by the presence of their foreign competitors. This view is not generally accepted in France, but it is advanced by M. Leroy-Beaulieu, the eminent economist. Writing on this subject, he says :—

From the strictly national point of view we cannot condemn the arrival of bands of Italians, Spaniards, and Belgians who come to help us in harvesting and in the *vendanges*. They facilitate agriculture notably, for without them it would be much to be pitied. They enable the French resident workers, employed all the year either as farm or day labourers, to receive better wages. This is a fact which is not sufficiently recognised. Certain great agricultural operations finished—thanks to the help of the foreigner—in conditions relatively economic, it is possible for the cultivator to give better wages to his habitual and permanent assistants. In certain industries, notably sugar-refining, distilling, and oil-manufacturing, the help of the Belgians in the north and of Italians in the south, when we examine the matter closely, turns out to be ultimately advantageous to the French worker. If we study the distribution of labour we find that the French and the foreign workers do not compete with each other. The Italians and Belgians are almost all exclusively employed in those branches of labour which are the hardest, the most repulsive, and the least remunerative. The French workers, who will not do things of this nature, are employed at a better class of work, less laborious, requiring more knowledge or ability, and bringing in larger wages. Everyone knows that in industrial and commercial affairs, to economise in one part of the operations is a means by which we can expend more on another part. This happens with regard to the wages in the industries of which we speak. All economies realised on the wages of the Italians and Belgians who perform the inferior class of work enable the French workmen to receive higher wages for the superior kind of work. In fact, when we hear French workmen objecting to the foreign workmen, we think we are in the presence of sergeants and corporals who complain that they are given soldiers to command and would like to become recruits again. Proscribe the Belgians and the Italians, and the half of your distilleries, oil and soap manufactories will be stopped, as well as many establishments engaged in the export trade.

It is as M. Leroy-Beaulieu points out. The foreign workman is the hewer of wood and drawer of water to his French *confrère*. Your

Frenchman has grown to be a dainty creature who does not like to soil his hands with dirty work, or to perform any kind of drudgery. The chimney-sweepers of Paris are Piedmontese and the scavengers Flemings, and many of the agricultural labourers, navvies, or roadmen throughout the country are foreign.

But the immigrants are not all engaged in the lower ranks of life. Many of the leading Frenchmen of to-day are exotics. There is an intellectual vitality in Paris which attracts men of talent. The destinies of France have been largely influenced by men of foreign birth. They have been conspicuous in all departments of French history. The Buonapartes were Corsicans of Italian extraction; the Medicis came from Florence; the De Broglies were originally the Broglios of Piedmont; many of Napoleon's best generals, such as Ney, Saxe, Kleber, MacDonald, Berwick, Kellermann, Rapp, and Massena, were foreign like himself. The Florentine descent of the Mirabeaus has been questioned, but the great French Minister Mazarin was a pure Sicilian named Giulio Mazarini. Necker was a Swiss; his wife was a Swiss, and so, therefore, his brilliant daughter, Madame de Staël, must also have been. George Sand was of foreign descent; Rousseau was born in Geneva; Lally Tollendal, who distinguished himself at Fontenoy, and fought gallantly for the French in India, was Irish; Bourbaki was a Greek; Lorenz, the celebrated French bibliographer, was born in Leipzig. Cassini, the French astronomer; Hanberg, the chemist; Catalan, the mathematician; Hollard, the naturalist; Jahr, the introducer of homœopathy; Sismondi, Louis Blanc, and Guizot were all exotic Frenchmen.

If we turn to modern times, we find there is a constant infusion of foreigners into all the higher walks of life. Leaving out of account artists and musicians, who are more or less cosmopolitan, we find among prominent statesmen and politicians Gambetta, who was a naturalised Frenchman; M. Steenackers, the organiser of the pigeon post during the war, is a Belgian; Spuller is the son of a German from Baden; the Waddingtons are English; Marshal MacMahon is of Irish origin; M. Tirard is Swiss; M. Wilson is the son of an English ironfounder; M. Steeg is a German, and M. Thomson, of the deputies for Algeria, is an American; M. Johnston, a Buonapartist deputy, an Englishman. There is a good sprinkling of officers of foreign extraction in the army, and there are three admirals bearing the names of O'Neill, Brown de Coulston, and Johnston. In literature we have Zola, the son of an Italian; Alexandre Dumas, who has negro blood in his veins; Alphonse

Karr, the novelist, was not a Frenchman until 1848; and Cherbulliez, who is Swiss. Paul de Kock was foreign; Victor Tissot, the anti-German, is a Swiss; and many other writers, such as Erckmann and Chatrion, come from Alsace and Lorraine. If we take the great publishing houses, the foreign element is represented by Calmann Levy, Hetzel, Ollendorff, and Fischbacher. There are numerous professors who come under the same category, such as Loewy, the astronomer, Jules Oppert, Milne-Edwards, and Brown-Séquard. Amongst economists, Léon Say is of Swiss lineage; the able economist, Molinari, is a Belgian; Maurice Block, the first of French statisticians, was born in Berlin; Sophie and Arthur Baffolovitch are Russians; Bartholdi, the most famous French sculptor, had an Italian father and an Alsatian mother; De Brazza, the greatest living French explorer and governor of the French Congo, is an Italian. If we took maternal ancestry into account, it might be pointed out that Boulanger had an English mother, and that De Lesseps, who claims descent from a Scotchman named Lascelles or Lessels, who was in the old Scotch Guard, had a Scotchwoman named Miss Kirkpatrick for his mother.

Foreigners swarm in all branches of journalism. Buloz, who founded the *Revue des deux Mondes*, was a Swiss; the *Nouvelle Revue* is now edited by a Russian, M. Cyon. The *Figaro* is edited by a Belgian. Senator Shérer, the successor of Sainte-Beuve, a Swiss, edits the *Temps*. Marinoni, the son of an Italian workman, directs the *Petit Journal*. A Pole edits the *Journal Officiel*, there is nothing French about the editor of the *République Française*, and the *Matin* is managed by an Englishman. M. Colani, the brilliant journalist who has lately died, was a Swiss; M. Hubbard, the financial editor of the *Française*, is English; Weiss, the professor and journalist, is Swiss; Albert Delpit, the critic, was born in New Orleans; M. Sigismund Lacroix, a deputy and journalist, is a Pole from Warsaw, who in his native country answers to the name of Ksynasowski, for it often happens that the naturalised Frenchman changes his name as well as his nationality. When the French deputies bring forward their proposals for taxing foreigners, they ought, as consistent protectionists, to make them sweeping enough to include this galaxy of intellect.

There is still another important class of residents—the wealthy cosmopolitan visitors, who produce nothing, come into competition with no one, but simply spend millions of francs in the country every year. The commercial activity and prosperity of Paris depend entirely on its pleasure-seeking guests, and fluctuate as their number rises and falls.

The good which this class does lies on the surface, and is seen even by the purblind protectionist. What he does not see is the good which the working-class guest does. The rich visitor expends his capital in money; the poor visitor's capital is his labour.

We have disposed of the causes which lead to the influx of the foreigners; the causes which lead to the shrinkage of the French are not so easily solved. We have seen that the French race is decreasing at a progressive ratio every year, and that but for immigration the country would by-and-by become depopulated; we have seen that a large percentage of the population live in a state of celibacy, and that marriages are becoming more numerous and less productive, and that illegitimacy is increasing. We have here all the elements of physical decay and moral degeneracy. We have a solid basis whereon to raise columns of pessimistic generalisations. Most French writers who touch on the subject do not look upon the prospect cheerfully. Writing twenty-two years ago, M. Jules Simon, in reviewing the various causes at work to injure and deteriorate the physiological condition of the people, predicted that these influences would seriously menace and, unless remedied, ultimately compromise their political position, if not their national existence. The other day a member of the Academy of Medicine, M. Lagneau after a careful calculation, came to the conclusion that at the present rate of retrogression one hundred French families, each with three children, would in the second generation have among them all a total of eighty-three descendants; that in the fifth generation half those families would have no male representatives; and that in the fifteenth the family name in nine cases out of ten would perish altogether. That the French are hurrying on the road towards national suicide seems to be about the one subject on which papers of different politics agree. Here is the Opportunist *Temps* saying that 'to contend successfully with the depopulation which threatens us, and which, if not retarded, will bring on the degeneracy of the race, those who direct political affairs ought to occupy themselves before everything else with the study of the ameliorations of social life, in order to give to the nation an economic force which will enable it to create more children.' The independent *Liberté* follows with: 'In presence of the increase of population in other countries, this backwardness of the French nation is almost a symptom of physical decadence. At least this is a danger to which statesmen should pay attention. For some years they have been engaged in trying to diminish the death-rate, but it is the other side of the question, namely, the increase of the birth-rate, about which they ought to think.' The Radical *France* is equally pessimistic, and the Mon-

archical *Univers* says: 'We can fix the day, not a distant day, when by the perennial falling off of births France will have lost one-third of its population. The result is fatal. Within half a century France will have fallen below Italy and Spain to the rank of a second-rate Power. There is no denying the figures. If this continues, in addition to other causes of decadence, we are a lost nation.'

What are the causes operating on the body politic which indicate this decadence, and give rise to these gloomy forebodings? Are the French drifting towards a state of physical impotency which will end with the effacement of the race? And if so, why? One cause we have seen is partly hereditary—a racial characteristic. The French have never been a prolific race, but the phenomena which we are considering have become intensified in recent years. Social habits and the marriage customs of the people have something to do with it. Marriages are too often arranged without regard to the compatibility of the two contracting parties, which does not conduce to domestic felicity. There is frequently a disparity between the ages of the couples which leads to an abundant crop of young widows. For every 100 widowers in France there are 194 widows. The law of inheritance which compels the distribution of part or of all the property, on the death of the owner, amongst his children, is responsible, some think, for the limitation of the offspring. Compulsory military service has a demoralising effect on the manhood of the nation, and this also may have something to do with it. The fact that there are in France no fewer than 2,295,966 persons living exclusively on their investments and their capital limits the number of children, for the poor and labouring classes in all countries are the great propagators of the species.

Whatever the cause or causes, the population is kept down, not so much by prudent self-restraint, as by voluntary infecundity. The effect of this is physical deterioration. The laws of social morality cannot be outraged with impunity.

Without going over the whole gamut of social dynamics which this question raises, it may be pointed out that the difficulty does not seem to be in reaching the Malthusian ideal, but in staying there, and not going backwards. And when a nation is *en route* to the Malthusian elysium, other nations thrust their surplus population on it, so that the advantages gained are somewhat compromised. Something, however, might be said on the other side. The French people are the happiest in the world. There are more inhabitants between the ages of 15 and

16 in France, in comparison with the population, than in any other country. The equalisation of property has made most progress, and this is an element of human well-being. There are comparatively few poor people in the country, there is little drunkenness, and the standard of comfort is higher than in any other European country. And if the arbitrary division of property leads to excessive *morcellement*, it is better than the unnatural system which locks up the land in the hands of a few, and which, when it existed in France, led Arthur Young to say that the country was over-populated. If the birth-rate is low, the death-rate is not high, and the people are not guilty of the crime—too common in this country—of bringing more children into the world than they can provide for. One thing is certain, that France must naturalise the foreigners already resident and being born on her soil. This has been insisted upon with great force and much ability by the economist already quoted. 'Those who would proscribe the Germans, the Italians, or the Belgians are,' writes M. Leroy-Beaulieu, 'very short-sighted; we should on the other hand attract them. We should almost imitate the custom of new countries, and offer a premium to immigrants. They will prevent the nation from languishing and degenerating; they will introduce new and ardent blood into our veins, and form a stock of prolific families among us. It is this continual and pacific infiltration which only can prevent a violent migration. It imports only to Frenchify them as soon as possible. Open wide, therefore, the doors of France to the foreign workers who are willing to come, but hasten to naturalise them, or at least their children.'

This is all the more necessary if France is ever to enter into a death grapple with Germany. Germany and France were about equal in population in 1870. Germany has since then added nine millions to her people, while France has been at a standstill. The Germans draw their army from 47 millions of people, every one of whom, according to the new Emperor, are ready to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their Fatherland. The French have only 37 millions to recruit from. The instruments for human destruction have been greatly perfected since 1870. Swift will be the work of execution, and numerous will be the victims in the next great war. It will be a war of extermination. A defeat of the French will mean their extinction as a nation; if they hold their own, or overcome Germany, it will mean their extinction as a race. Meanwhile, if the French do not begin to absorb the foreign elements, the foreign elements will eventually absorb the French.

ROBERT DONALD.

Rodolph of Hapsburg

THE news has come, mournfully, painfully:
Death's deed is done.

'Tis a Prince who has gone to another realm,
As a Prince to be judged by the King of Kings
(God grant he be judged as a man!)
Escorted beyond by sable wings,
He has left to others his kingdom's helm;
And perhaps, some say—but who can tell?—

He has lost *two* kingdoms, and gone to Hell,
Straight to the bottomless place where those
Mourn that Judas-deed that has placed them in
throes

Worse than suffered on earth, midst friends, midst
foes.

But alas! who knows? 'Twere better not known;
One kingdom he's lost; in the other, we pray
His soul in blessed pity may find repose.

* * * *

Who made us men with passion and pain
Will He scornfully judge His work evil again?
Will He calmly so god-like for ever condemn
What He might have made into richest of gem,
But has left unheeded as dross, though begun,
Then bid us to murmur 'Thy will be done'?

Through the ages there rises distinctly and clear
The struggle with Gods whom men had to fear.
Are they merely traditions and fables that tell
How subtle Prometheus took fire from the gods,

How man had to struggle Olympus to quell
To wring pity from Him, who creatingly,
thoughtlessly nods?

Are we changed, are we Gods, or is God but a
theme

That has altered in tint like a wonderful dream?
Must we struggle for help, in the olden endeavour,
Prince, peasant, and pauper, for ever, aye ever;
Left alone on God's earth, His greatest creation,
Then doomed to perdition, eternal damnation?

God of mercy! not so! Thou *wilt* look below,
Thou wilt watch thy humanity struggle and grow
As upwards it turns its despairing gaze,
Thou wilt pity thy human created maze;
Thou wilt see that a Prince is but man in his day:
Prince, Peasant, and Pauper but pass the same way.

The World in February

THE last month has been fruitful in drama though the play has been upon the wider stage of Shakespeare instead of the boards of the theatre. From the farce of the election for the department of the Seine to the tragedy of Meyerling the range is wide enough to satisfy the greatest lover of sensation, and what with Parnell Commission, the censure of Sir Morell Mackenzie by the Royal College of Surgeons, Mr. O'Brien's fight for pantaloons and principle, the Samoan difficulty, the prosecution of the Bishop of Lincoln, the impugment of the Salvation Army, the attacks on Bismarck, and the elections for the London County Council, there has been no lack of topics to exercise society's conversational powers to their uttermost. More vital perhaps, and more significant for the future of English society, is the Nitrate King's 'Boom'—for no other word can express the peculiar quality and extent of the worship which has been paid at the shrine of Colonel North during the last few weeks. That a certain section of the press should fall prostrate before any business man who has managed to collect an indefinite number of millions, is neither surprising nor, humanity being what it is, wholly inexcusable; but that the notabilities of English society should rush to kiss the nitrate dust from the shoes of this shrewd uneducated speculator, should not only enrol themselves upon his boards and act as advertisements to his enterprises, but should even extend their gracious patronage to his social entertainments, and bring their wives and daughters to assist in the osculatory operation above mentioned, is a sign of the times indeed which is pregnant of warning for the future. Many times before in the

world's history has the needy aristocrat bowed the knees to the money-bags of the bourgeois, the necessity, if not the will, consenting; but here even that poor excuse of necessity has been wanting, and business men whose credit is still unimpeachable, and peers whose revenues are still adequate, and around whose names some halo of diplomatic divinity still lingers, have alike become subjects of the great Nitrate King. *Auri sacra fames!* it has seized them all alike even down to the great little apostle of Tory Democracy, to whom a too trusting nation once confided the guardianship of its finances. No one takes the trouble to even pretend for a moment that there is any other object in view than the gaining of a little of the 'golden dust of the golden dustman,' and for this purpose our proud leaders of society, who are but too apt to consider professional men unfit associates, to look down upon all our soldiers save a few chosen regiments which are recruited from its own class, to speak of authors as 'writing fellows,' and commercial men as shopkeepers, open their arms and press the portly form of the golden dustman to their exclusive bosom. Nay, there is even a whisper that the 'great Panjandrum himself, him with the little button on top,' has deigned to sit not unsmiling at the same social board with the enterprising Colonel, and become to some extent a participator in one of his enterprises.

Think of it—*Ladies and Gentlemen*—for it is your concern. Aristocracy is a proud inheritance—do not trail it in the dust—even though it be golden. Englishmen have put up, grumbling, but at heart a little proud, with your division of mankind into 'men, women, and "Herveys."' They only ask that the 'Herveys' shall be true to themselves. An aristocracy may or may not be a good thing; the point at least is arguable; but an aristocracy of shoddy, an aristocracy which only uses its privileges to fill its pockets, *must* be an intolerable form of society, and when forms of society become intolerable they—disappear. But the nitrate fever, embodied though it be in the personality of Colonel North, and peculiar from the position of those who have succumbed to its temptations, is only one sign of the change in the standard and the conduct of affairs of business, especially business which is connected with the Stock Exchange, which has been taking place of late years, and which has now almost transformed English undertakings. Speculation, once the exception, is now the essence and the rule of financial dealings; syndicates and 'corners' increase in number and in power every day, and purchase every day more openly the good word of those who would oppose them. The 'squaring' of officials, of pressmen, of influential dealers, of experts, of

everyone, in fact, who can put a spoke in the wheel of speculation, has attained almost to the limits of an exact science, and A will tell you with the utmost openness and the greatest certainty that if you want B to help you you must give so much, and go to C, who is the only man who can 'get at him.'

A most influential man of business told the present writer only a few days ago that in all his experience he had seen nothing like the 'gold-hunger,' as he called it, of the past few weeks, and described the attempts at bribery of which he was cognisant as absolutely astounding. Perhaps this is not the place to dwell at length on so grave a matter, but if these things are so it were well that they should be brought to light without delay. On another page Mr. Burdett exposes the state of affairs which has been brought about by the systematic neglect—a stronger word might probably be used with justice—and maladministration of the War Office, and next month we shall supplement this article by further revelations, and by formulating a scheme whereby such deplorable and culpable muddling may be avoided for the future. In the present the facts set down by Mr. Burdett—facts which are indisputably correct—speak for themselves. Our ships have no guns! That is scarcely an exaggeration. The money which has been voted for the purchase of these guns has not been spent for that purpose. Some one is to blame. Who? Something should be done to him. What?



The ill-feeling against Prince Bismarck, which has been smouldering in England since the Sir Robert Morier incident, has found forcible expression in an anonymous article lately published in a contemporary, which is more noticeable for the impression it has created than for any new light shed by the paper upon European politics. The contention of the writer that Prince Bismarck has been inspired in all his later political action by the single desire to create a Bismarck dynasty may be dismissed with but little consideration. It lacks the first essential of an hypothesis—it does not adequately explain the facts; but the virulence of the essay is certainly to be deplored, and in view of statements so injurious, so unsupported by evidence, and so calculated to rouse ill-feeling between the two countries, the lack of signature is scarcely excusable. The mere fact that the essay has been attributed to the inspiration of the Empress Frederick is sufficient to show one evil result therefrom; this rumour is, however, now disproved by the Empress's

own assertion, and the real author of the article is said to be a sort of journalistic Cerberus, two of whose heads are feminine, while the third is that of a well-known London editor. We should hardly have alluded to the matter in these pages were it not that the incident forms a striking instance of the occasional power of anonymous writing.

There is scarcely exaggeration in saying that no name which could have been put to the paper could have been half so material in producing a sensation as its publication in the present unsigned form. Speculation raged less on the statements than on the question of who had made them; and the mere rumour that the writer was the Empress herself excited curiosity to the uttermost. Viewed dispassionately the article is a clever but most prejudiced attack upon Prince Bismarck, in which the vital point is that he desired, even if he did not deliberately set himself to hasten, the death of the late Emperor. A considerable journalistic success no doubt has been achieved by 'The Bismarck Dynasty,' but we fear that this will profit us little in proportion to the ill-feeling that will be excited by its reckless charges. To insult the greatest foreign living statesman in a reputable journal under the disguise of anonymity is neither courageous nor politic, and should such a practice gain general acceptance Englishmen will have to look to it lest there be a so-called 'Reptile Press' at home as well as abroad.



No review of this past month would even savour of completeness which did not make mention of the disaster, the whole consequences of which are not yet suspected, which has overtaken the royal house of Austria. Whatever the future may reveal as to the precise circumstances of Prince Rudolph's death, it is scarcely possible that they will ever deserve a milder epithet than discreditable. The double suicide, now practically admitted, was but the culminating incident of a long series of marital infidelities which, though the world has learnt to tolerate in royalties past and present, are condemned alike by every dogma of religion and every precept which regulates social well-being. There is no need to dilate upon the theme upon which the reporters of the daily press, both English and foreign, have already exhausted their ingenuity of invention. As we write there comes from Paris what seems to be an authentic version of the tragedy, accompanied by the name of the Prince's fellow-suicide, and a translation of the letters written by the lover and his mistress on the eve of their death. With such details we have here, fortunately, no concern; they will be public property

long before these pages can appear, possibly by that time discredited or affirmed ; but there is a reflection which will occur to many of us that this is not an occasion on which the most fitting tribute to the bereaved Emperor is an ostentatious condolence, or a disquisition, futile even were it just, upon the merits of the dead man and the loss which Austria has sustained. For when with everything that the world can give there comes to a man such self-inflicted selfish ending, which recks nothing of obligation undertaken, or great destinies committed to his charge ; when we know that another young life has thereby been sacrificed fruitlessly, even if it were not wilfully taken, our wisest and our kindest course to those who have died and those who mourn their death is—silence.



The final act which marks the disappearance of a body which of late years has exercised enormous power, took place a few days since when the London County Council met for the first time in the hall of the Metropolitan Board of Works in Spring Gardens. That the new body will fulfil the duties of the old without being subject to its shortcomings, it is at least permissible to hope, but we may fitly say a word upon this occasion in memory of the services which the defunct body rendered to the citizens of London. Perhaps the most notable of these were due to the energy and the genius of one man, the chief architect of the Board, Sir Joseph Bazalgette ; who has this week retired into private life—too old to serve under new masters. Of the exact number of miles of streets of which he superintended the construction or reconstruction ; of the vast network of sewers, great and small, with which he burrowed London ; of the thousands of plans and millions of capital which he examined, drew, and administered, it were too long to speak—are they not all set down in the columns of the daily papers ?

But of his crowning achievement, the construction of the various Thames Embankments, it were ungrateful not to say on such an occasion that perhaps no more vitally necessary improvement has been effected in London during the present century, and that a large proportion of the improvements in the street architecture and increased facilities for traffic have flowed therefrom. Foreigners who have visited London and stayed too short a time to feel its charm or understand its beauty have called this great city of ours the ugliest in the world, and till lately we could scarcely point to any single spot therein which would shake their judgment. But since the Embankment has been constructed there is an answer always ready. We can take our German, French, or

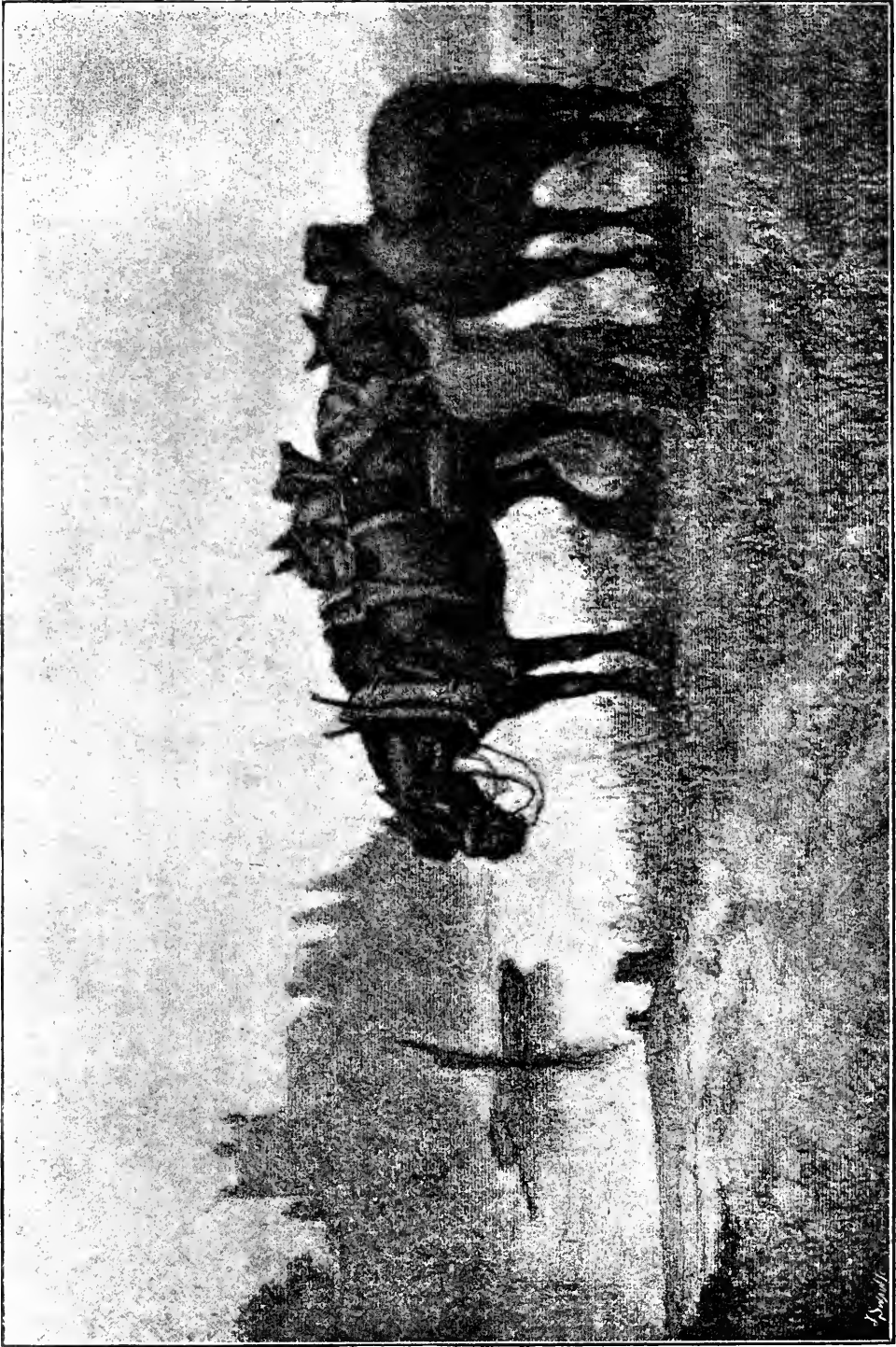
Italian friend down to Westminster and show him a river walk unequalled in the world, broad and light, garlanded by trees, overhung by massive buildings and splendid bridges, closed in on the eastward as with a crown by the domed mass of St. Paul's, and on the west intercepted by the fretted turrets of Westminster, standing it seems in the very river itself, softly grey against the smoky splendour of the sunset. We Londoners do not as yet half appreciate this beautiful spot, but the next generation will recognise their indebtedness to its beauty, its healthiness, its convenience, and let us hope to its architect.



There is little to record in the art world during the past month, and that little may be summed up as follows. The Exhibition of Old Masters at the Royal Academy is chiefly notable for the exhibition of a collection of Frank Holl's pictures and portraits. These prove the truth of the assertion made some months since in these pages that the influence which drew the painter from his first choice of rather mournful subject pictures, lost us a great artist, and only gave us instead a fine portrait painter. The *painter* quality improved in Holl up to the time of his death, his hand gained in freedom and his eye in certainty, but the penetration into the traits of feeling, and the sympathetic power of his earlier work disappeared little by little, and when we might have had an 'Israel's' we received only a *Carolus Duran*. At the Grosvenor the second series of old English painters is still interesting, but shows us nothing new, nor has the selection been made in all cases with adequate care for authenticity. The exhibition is respectable but not first rate. Probably the most essential incident of the month dispassionately considered has been the development of a species of art advertising as objectionable as it was till within the past few months unknown. This is the press puffing of an indifferent artist, not for what he has done, but for what he is going to do. In the experience of the present writer nothing quite so shameless, or quite so indefensible, in the department of art criticism, has been known as the systematic attempt, most marked perhaps in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, to advertise into notoriety the unfinished etching of Mr. Mortimer Mempes from one of Franz Hals' pictures. Long before even any of his work was before the public, there appeared paragraph after paragraph, and notice after notice, calling attention to the fact of Mr. Mempes being engaged thereon; these were followed by illustrated descriptions of the artist's house; these were succeeded by long accounts of the artist's Japanese costume ball for children; and then after weeks

of every variety of puffing, to which, it is worthy of notice, nearly the entire press lent itself, there appeared the preliminary notices of a private view at which the 'Great Dry Point' was to be exhibited. The eventful day came at length. More descriptions of the room in which the exhibition was held, of the visitors and their frocks, of Mrs. Mempes and the manner in which she dispensed tea, and lastly—*montes parturiunt, nascitur ridiculus mus*—the revelation of the startling fact that of the *great dry point* there were only two heads finished in the middle of the picture! but that in these the depth, the richness, the softness, the quality of colour, the subtlety of drawing, and all the rest of it, no words could speak of in terms of sufficient praise. To call this press *réclame* nauseating, would be to use too kind a term; it is degrading alike to the artist who inspired, and the journals which printed it, and if ever there was a sign of the depths to which the trickery of art dealers, and the pestilent conceit of young artists had penetrated, it is to be found in this fulsome laudation of a work of which, whether it be good or bad, nothing can possibly be at present known, and which would never have been heard of till it had been finished, had it not been that, by what means we know not, the art writers of the daily journals had been 'inspired.' We use the mildest term when we say that such proceedings are detestable, and that the public would be well advised to resent their introduction.

THE EDITOR.



THE END OF THE DAY. From the original drawing by Esther Isaacs.

The Indian Revenue

I

SALT AND ITS TAXATION¹

THE following paper will deal with the various descriptions of alimentary salt consumed in India, and the sources of their supply, with some account of the modes of manufacture and the system of salt revenue administration. Before, however, I pass to this main division of my subject, it will not be wasted time to consider briefly the origin of the various forms in which salt is found, the principal sources from which it is obtained, and the different regions from which the chief supply comes.

Salt—or, in the language of chemistry, chloride of sodium—has been in domestic use from the earliest ages as a seasoner and preserver of food, and is supplied by Nature to nearly every habitable region of the globe. It occurs in a dissolved state in sea-water, and is alike important to the ocean's system of circulation as it is to animal existence.

It is found in extensive deposits embedded in rocks or disseminated in minute quantities through the stratified portion of the earth's crust. Its other sources are salt springs (frequently serving to call attention to saliferous strata below), inland seas, salt lakes, pools, and marshes, besides numerous surface deposits, occurring chiefly in depressions in the great tablelands of Asia and Africa, which have never been covered by layers of other mineral formations.

¹ This paper is the first of a series, by different writers, dealing with the most important products of our Indian Empire and the revenue derived therefrom.—ED: *U. R.*

Salt is ordinarily recognised as of two kinds—rock and sea salt. What the origin of rock-salt deposits is, and how the waters of the sea originally came into possession of their solidity, are questions which cannot be easily and satisfactorily answered. Opposite theories have been advanced to explain the phenomena. According to some, rock-salt deposits are the result of igneous agency, or, in other words, were erupted by volcanoes ; while the salt of the sea was, in the first instance, derived from the waste of the rocks carried down by the washings of rains and rivers. Others maintain that the sea was salt as far back as the morning of the Creation, and that the salt of the rocks has been in every case deposited from solution in water.

These views are chiefly based on conjectures which necessarily differ according as their respective authors have adopted the nebular theory or any other of the hypotheses which science has advanced to explain the origin of the globe:

The most extensive beds of rock-salt are to be found at Wieliczka, near Cracow, in Poland ; in Transylvania and Wallachia, in the Tyrol ; Upper Austria, Styria, Salzburg, and Hungary ; and in England at Northwich, in the county of Cheshire. Those at Wieliczka, 860 feet below the soil, have been bored through as a mine for more than 600 years, and may be considered as inexhaustible. They are said to be 500 miles long, 20 broad, and 1,200 feet deep. Traditions have been published of their containing villages inhabited by colonies of miners who never saw the light, but they are altogether without foundation. The mines are worked by galleries, which are already about forty miles in extent, masses of salt being left as pillars to support the roof. In the interior there are two chapels hewn out of the solid mass of salt, and adorned with statues, images, pillars, and ornaments of the same material. All the furniture and decorations, including the doors and altars, are also of salt. When illuminated the effect produced is brilliant.

A similar description is given of the mines at Northwich by Sir George Head in his account of a tour through the manufacturing districts of England in 1835. These mines are also very extensive, and have been worked since 1670, and the quantity of salt obtained from them is greater probably than is obtained from any other salt mines in the world. A large deposit of rock-salt occurs at Cordova in Spain, which, being in the form of a mountain, 500 feet high, is worked as a quarry.

These lakes and mines are interesting monuments of the convulsions and transformations which the earth passed through before it reached its present condition. It is common to speak of the operations of Nature as carried on silently and in secret. But there are places where one can stand by and witness the process of saline deposits and lacustrine formations. In India the Chilka Lake, in the north-eastern corner of Orissa, is an example of this. It is, according to Sir W. W. Hunter, a shallow inland sea about 400 square miles in extent, and is for miles separated from the Bay of Bengal by a sandy ridge; it is connected with the sea by an opening only a few hundred yards broad, which is reported to be getting narrower every year, while, on the other hand, the long sandy ridge is increasing in width. During the first half of the year the lake becomes sufficiently salt to become the source of a good deal of local manufacture that is carried on; but from July to December, with the supply of water from the clouds and from rivers, the Chilka becomes transformed into a fresh-water lake. Then again, on the western side of the Indian peninsula is an extensive salt waste, called the Runn of Cutch, where it is easy to observe the process of evaporation and deposit in operation. A description of this singular region is given in Sir Charles Lyell's 'Manual of Elementary Geology,' and in other similar books of modern date. These accounts are taken from Lieut. A. Burnes's 'Memoir of the Indus,' published in 1834. The Runn covers an area of about 7,000 square miles, and extends from the delta of the Indus to the confines of Guzerat. It is flooded and becomes a salt-water lake for about six months of the year, from June to November, owing to the influx of the sea on the east and west through the Gulf of Cutch and the Kiri mouth of the Indus. In the dry season, after the water has evaporated, it becomes a desert of salt and is frequented by wild asses, the only quadruped, except antelopes, to be seen in this desolate region.

The whole tract (says Burnes) may be said to be a 'terra hospitibus ferox'; fresh water is never to be had anywhere but on islands, and there it is scarce; it has no herbage, and vegetable life is only discernible in the shape of a stunted tamarisk bush, which thrives by its suction of the rain-water which falls near it. It differs as widely from what is termed the sandy desert as it differs from the cultivated plain; neither does it resemble the steppes of Russia, but may be justly considered of a nature peculiar to itself. It has been denominated a marsh by geographers, which has given rise to many erroneous impressions regarding it. It has none of the characteristics of one: it is not covered or saturated with water, but at certain periods; it has neither weeds nor grass in its bed, which, instead of being slimy, is hard, dry, and sandy, of such a consistency as never to become clayey, unless from a long continuance of water on an indi-

vidual spot ; nor is it otherwise fenny or swampy. It is a vast expanse of flat, hardened sand, encrusted with salt sometimes an inch deep (the water having been evaporated by the sun), and at others beautifully crystallised in large lumps. So much is the whole surrounding country corrupted by this exuberance of salt that all the wells dug on a level with the Runn become salt.

The mirage is to be seen here with very vivid effects. Shrubs become magnified into forests, and sometimes assume various fantastic forms, as ships in full sail, or sea-breakers on a rock ; the hills of Cutch appear to touch the clouds, and the wild asses resemble elephants. When the sun shines the Runn may be mistaken for a vast expanse of water, owing to the reflection of light from its surface. There are several elevated tracts of considerable extent, which become islands in the season of inundation. The Runn has every appearance of having been once permanently occupied by the sea, and its present condition is attributed to upheavals by earthquakes, which are of not unfrequent occurrence in Cutch.

The several kinds of salt to which allusion has been made are all to be found in India. Mineral salt is obtained from mines in the salt range of hills in the Punjab running from the Jhelum to the Indus. These vast mines are said to have been worked before the time of Alexander, and their supply of salt is considered inexhaustible. It is extracted in a pure state, and has only to be pounded to be ready for consumption. It is of excellent quality, of transparent brilliancy and consistency, and is somewhat similar to the product of the mines of Cheshire and Poland. Hindoos hold it in great esteem on account of its purity, and on religious festivals in some parts of the Upper Provinces will have nothing to say to any other kind of salt. In Orissa a like prejudice exists among certain classes in favour of salt made by solar evaporations. The salt is excavated at the Government expense, and pays duty at the mouth of the mine. It is consumed in the districts of the Punjab and in a great portion of the North-West Provinces. Marine salts are manufactured at various salt works along the sea-coast, and at salt lakes in the interior of the country. The best quality is produced in Orissa, the province of Bengal which occupies the south-eastern seaboard. The chief salt-producing territory in Madras is the Northern Sircars along the eastern coast. On the west coast the manufacture is carried on in the island of Bombay, and more or less in every district on the seaboard of the Bombay Presidency, from Goa to the Gulf of Cambay. The supply of inland salt in that presidency comes from the saline desert called the Little Runn of Cutch. The best quality of lake salt is that which comes

from the Sambhur Lake in Rajputana, produced by solar evaporation. The process of collecting it is very simple. Wattle-fenced enclosures are formed, which become filled with water when the lake overflows during the rains; branches of trees are strewn upon the surface; the waters subsiding, evaporation begins, and the enclosure becomes filled with brine; the purest salt is that which crystallises on the branches. The shores of the lake, with the retirement of the water, become encrusted for miles around with a deep layer of salt, though of an inferior kind to that which is deposited within the wattle enclosures. But there is a kind of salt in great demand in the North-West Provinces, to which but scant reference has hitherto been made: namely, salt produced by evaporation from well-water. It is manufactured in certain places in our own territory, but it is largely imported from Bhurtpore and other native states on the south bank of the Jumna, and is known under various names derived either from the real or the supposed place of manufacture—Salumbha, Balumbha, &c. Although it costs more to manufacture than Sambhur salt, it is able to compete with it in our territory because the manufactories are placed near our frontier.

In addition to marine salt, an inferior description of salt is made in the interior of the country for local consumption by the poorer classes. It scarcely forms an article of trade. The process of manufacture differs in different parts of the country, but the most common mode is the following:—A mound of common earth is mixed to a height of ten or twenty feet, and a hollow is formed on the summit to receive earth impregnated with salt obtained in the neighbourhood. Water is then poured over the earth collected in the basin, which dissolves the salt, and then percolates through a narrow drain into a masonry reservoir at the foot of the mound. The contents of the reservoir are then transferred into shallow pans, and left to evaporate until only salt remains. It is chiefly in the Madras Presidency that this salt is produced. A strange story is related of over-zeal in the prosecution of a poor widow for unlawful possession of this kind of salt. It was the camping season, and the policeman who made the arrest, hearing that the tents of the chief magistrate of the district had been seen a few miles away, and welcoming the opportunity for proving his zeal in the service of Government, made all haste there with his unwilling victim; but the magistrate, being of a roving disposition, had already departed for a more distant place. By forced marches the officer and his charge managed to reach the next camping-ground, but only to learn that the *hakim* had pushed on a further stage without halting. The pursuit was continued with

unabated zest, and it was not for several days that the wanderers came up to the white tents of the district ruler, stretched out beneath the spreading branches of a mango grove. After resting, the prisoner and her escort were taken into the magistrate's presence, and the *corpus delicti*, a cloth containing an unsavoury mass of some dirty powdery substance, was produced, which the presiding officer, to satisfy himself of its saline character, began to take up with his fingers and to taste, whereupon the accused set up a most piteous lamentation, exclaiming: 'Oh! Protector of the poor! what crime has your servant committed that she should suffer this dishonour? After being dragged through mire and jungle and over sandy plains for no fault whatever, she beholds the very incarnation of justice himself eating the ashes of her dead husband which she had collected from the funeral pyre immediately before she was arrested!'

There is another kind of alimentary salt in the North-West Provinces and Behar, viz. salt which is educed from the crude saltpetre during the process of refining at the various saltpetre works in the provinces. Salt in many places sprouts out in the surface of the ground. The earth is scraped up by the villagers into large shallow pans; the brine is then drained off and dried in the sun or boiled. The salt so educed manages to escape taxation, and there is reason to suppose that, where the saltpetre trade has flourished in this country, it has been by the profits of smuggled salt. In the Madras and Bombay Presidencies marine salt is made entirely by solar evaporation. In Bengal it is produced by boiling, except in the case of manufacture by solar evaporation on the banks of the Chilka Lake in Orissa. In its general features the process of solar evaporation is everywhere nearly alike. Broad shallow tanks or reservoirs are made by banking up the ground, into which the salt-water is introduced through small canals cut from the lake, or from small inlets that abound along the coast. The tanks vary in depth, and as evaporation goes on, the brine is daily transferred from one tank to another, beginning at the shallowest; by about the fifth day there is a large accumulation of brine in the deepest tank, which has acquired by evaporation sufficient strength or saltiness to be ladled out into adjoining pans a few inches deep and about five feet square. After it has remained here during the heat of the day, the salt is scraped out of the tank, and the manufacture is complete.

Salt occupies an important place in the fiscal regulations of India, from the fact that a large amount of revenue is derived from its consumption.

The systems under which the Government connection with the salt trade is carried into effect are three :—¹

- (1) Charging a customs duty on all salt imported into British India.
- (2) Charging an excise duty on all salt manufactured in British India by private persons on their own account.
- (3) Manufacturing salt by Government on its own account, either by hired or contract labour, and selling it at a price sufficient to cover the cost of so doing, together with a fixed duty equal to the customs or excise duty.

Under the first two systems Government confines itself to taxation ; under the third it undertakes the functions of a private manufacturer in addition. In former days the Government was not only a manufacturer but an absolute monopolist ; but in 1836 it so far abandoned this position, on the recommendation of a Committee of the House of Commons, as to throw open the salt import trade to private enterprise, retaining a monopoly of local manufacture only. From that date onwards it has been gradually relinquishing direct manufacture in all cases where the necessary supply of salt to the public could be ensured under either the customs-duty or the excise-duty systems.

The three systems at present prevail in the localities described below :—

- (1) *Customs duty*.—Bengal (including Behar), Assam, and British Burma.
- (2) *Excise duty*.—Western India, from the Tapti River south to Cape Comorin, Berar, and the south-west portion of the Central Provinces ; also a few spots in Bengal and Orissa, and to a limited extent in Burma.
- (3) *Manufacture and monopoly*.—The east coast of the Madras Presidency, the rest of the Central Provinces, Bombay north of the Tapti, Scinde, the Punjab, the North-Western Provinces and Oude, Rajputana, and Central India.

This classification is, of course, in very general terms ; the different salts compete with each other on the boundaries, and interlace in their areas, according to local taste and preference, and not price alone ; but it may be considered substantially correct.

The administration of the salt-tax a few years ago was a much more troublesome matter than it now is, chiefly in consequence of the system of differential rates of taxation which obtained in the various provinces. Thus, before 1869, the rates were 3 rupees 4 annas in Bengal, 3 rupees in the North-West, Punjab, Oude, and the Central Provinces, 1 rupee 8 annas in Madras, Bombay, 8 annas in Scinde, 3 annas in Burma, and a duty varying from 2½ to 4 annas in the trans-Indus districts of the Punjab on salt produced at the Kohab mines. This unequal incidence of taxation has never been satisfactorily explained. When, in 1869, the Government of India suggested the expediency of raising the

¹ Resolution of the Government of India, No. 325, dated 17th January, 1882.

duty generally to the Bengal standard, objections were raised to this levelling-up process by the local authorities where the lower rates prevailed. A battle of rates began, and some sought to justify the lower incidence of the tax by a reference to conditions of life necessitating a larger consumption of salt than in the more highly taxed territory, to the incidence of other modes of taxation, to the facilities which existed, either in the province itself or neighbouring native states, for illicit manufacture of salt. For example, it was urged from Madras that the incidence of the land-tax was heavier there than in Bengal, and that the extensive seaboard offered great opportunity for illicit production, while the peculiar circumstances of Scinde, a country dotted with saline tracts, traversed and bordered by native states in which the manufacture of salt was largely carried on, were appealed to as grounds for maintaining a low rate of taxation in that territory. These arguments prevailed, but only for a time. In 1869, in view of an apprehended deficiency in the general revenue, the rates in Bombay and Madras were raised to 1 rupee 13 annas 1 pie, and later on, in 1878, the rates were fixed at 2 rupees 14 annas for Bengal and 2 rupees 8 annas for other parts of India, except Burma and the trans-Indus districts of the Punjab, where the old rates were continued. The existence of a poll-tax in Burma is the justification of so low a rate as 3 annas in that province, and this only applies to imported salt. The position thus established was that, whilst the inhabitants of Bengal and Northern India were relieved of taxation, those of Madras, Bombay, and the native states of Rajputana and Central India were obliged to pay a higher price for their salt, but the number of persons relieved far exceeded the number on whom additional taxation was imposed. The equalisation of the duties in all the Presidencies had for some years been contended for by the Liverpool Salt Chamber of Commerce, and their chairman, Mr. H. E. Falk, who visited India in 1874, and again in 1879, on each occasion advocated the cause so effectively that Government at length became a convert to the doctrine, which is now its settled policy in salt administration. Accordingly, in 1882, advantage was taken of the existence of a surplus, though at the sacrifice of a considerable amount of revenue in Bengal, to fix a uniform rate of 2 rupees for the whole of India, except Burma and the trans-Indus districts. The reduction in the Bengal Presidency did not meet with general approval, and it was urged both in Council and in the press that it was unnecessary, as the incidence of the tax was so slight as to be practically unfelt; it was also argued that, as the consumption of salt had already reached its natural limits, the large sum which Government had abandoned would

find its way, not into the pockets of the people, but into those of traders, so that neither cost nor hardship would be decreased by a reduction of the duty. The salt duty at that time, it was further pointed out, was practically a capitation-tax of about 5 annas a year, and was about the only contribution made by the bulk of the population to the revenues.

But bolder counsels prevailed, and the loss of revenue in Bengal was counted as naught in comparison with the advantages expected to accrue from equalisation of duties, especially the strengthening of the financial position, which is thus described in the official despatch on the subject :

I have said that by reducing the salt duty the general financial position will be strengthened. We hope that we shall be able to maintain the duty at 2 rupees a maund, and we have at present no reason to suppose that we shall be unable to do so. By a return to a higher rate we should of course, to some extent, at all events, sacrifice the main object we have in view—viz. to afford some relief from taxation to the poorest classes. At the same time I should observe that, if any unforeseen circumstance, such as a heavy fall in the value of silver, takes place, and if at the same time the reduction in the salt duty does not result in any considerable increase in the consumption of salt, *it would be open to us to return temporarily to a higher rate.* This is an expedient to which the Government would have recourse with great reluctance. I allude, however, to the possibility of its adoption, for it is clear that, should an emergency arise of a nature to diminish our other sources of revenue or to increase our expenditure, we shall be in a better position to meet it if the salt duty is 2 rupees a maund than if it were levied at a higher rate.

Besides furnishing a convenient basis for the future financial operations of Government, the equalisation of the rates relieved a numerous body of the public, mostly of the poorer classes, from peculiar hardships incidental to the maintenance of the former system of duties. Under that system customs lines had been established between the various territories in which different rates obtained. There were several such lines, but the longest and most important was that known as the Imperial Customs Line, 2,500 miles long, and extending from Searla, the most north-western point in the Punjab, and running in devious ways the whole breadth of India to Bond, on the Mahanuddy, in the province of Orissa on the east coast. In some parts the line was a protection against native states where salt was manufactured, but a considerable portion of it ran through our territories only. This line was marked by an impenetrable hedge of thorny trees and shrubs, ten to fourteen feet high and six to twelve feet thick, and at every point of intersection with a road it was guarded by officials, at whose discretion

travellers were liable to be constantly stopped and searched. Sir George Campbell, when Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, wrote on this point in 1868 :

Throughout the Chief Commissioner's tour it has seemed to him that the customs line has been felt by the people as a greater grievance than all other grievances put together. No one can travel along the valleys of the Nerbada and the Wardha without being liable to constant search by endless customs officers of low degree, posted at very short intervals, armed with iron search-forks of the nature of cheese-tasters.

Previous to the establishment of the customs line, Chhattisgarh was the home of Banjaras, who used to take grain to the south in large caravans and return laden with salt from the east coast, which they carried over all parts of Chanda and Chhattisgarh. The trade was a very important one, and rendered salt cheap and abundant in the wildest tracts. But the restrictions of the customs line, not the duty on salt, have nearly destroyed this trade; many of the Naiks have been ruined, and most of the clans have emigrated—a result deeply to be deplored.

It was clear also, from various other reports, that smuggling, with its demoralising results, was largely practised along the line. A portion of this line had already been given up under salt treaties, whereby the Government engaged to make certain payments to native states, in return for which the states in question leased salt sources to Government, as, for example, the Sambhur Lake in Rajputana, or agreed to suppress manufacture within the state itself, or transferred to Government the right to levy duty on salt consumed by the subjects of such state. The equalisation of rates made it possible to abolish the rest of the line which lay between parts of our own territories, and thus freedom from annoyance and petty exactions was secured to the public. The annual cost of maintaining these lines was about 18 lakhs of rupees. The acquisition by Government from the Portuguese of the salt works at Goa was another advantage, as it put a stop to a great deal of smuggling along the west coast. Persons who are engaged in salt traffic have by no means an easy life, owing to the numerous restrictions with which, apart from the old customs lines, the movements of salt are regulated and watched. The restrictions apply to imported salt as well as to salt manufactured in the country, to the commanders of salt-trading vessels, the manufacturer, the bonder, the warehouse keeper, the merchant, the retail dealer, the persons engaged in transporting salt, and the conveyances themselves, whether carts, boats, or railway wagons. As soon as a salt vessel enters port limits, it is as closely watched as if its cargo were gold. Preventive officers are posted to the vessel, the hatches are sealed down, and only allowed to be opened in the presence

of the officers, and never between sunset and sunrise. The salt is carefully weighed and tallied into boats, but not until numerous documents have been prepared for its protection in transit. The master of the vessel is bound to account for the full quantity of salt taken on board at the place of lading, and though it is the invariable rule to admit deficiencies where the cargo has been damaged by bad weather, or has been loaded in wet weather, or otherwise accidentally injured, unless there is reason to suspect fraud, yet it is always incumbent on the master to fully explain the shortage to the satisfaction of the customs authorities before the wastage allowance is granted.

The manufacture and sale of salt in Bengal and Bombay are carried on under a system of excise, and in Madras, under a system partly of excise and partly of monopoly. Under the latter system the salt is manufactured for Government at selected sites by native contractors, who stipulate to deliver their salt to the Government agent at a price agreed upon ; the agent then stores the salt and disposes of it to dealers at an enhanced rate, regulated from time to time by Government. In the lower provinces of Bengal the manufactured salt comes from the alluvial tracts of country situated within the deltas of the Brahmaputra, Megna, Ganges, Mahanuddy, and other smaller rivers, and extending along the seaboard of the Bay of Bengal from the southern extremity of the Chittagong district on the east, to the south-western extremity of the Chilka Lake on the west side of the bay. The lands comprised in this tract are all, more or less, impregnated with brine, and have, from time immemorial, been the source of the salt supply to the people of Bengal, Behar and Orissa.

The manufacture and traffic in salt have never been free. Under Mohammedan rule the privilege of manufacture was subject to imposts, and the transportation of salt from the places of manufacture to the interior of the country was regulated by the levy of an *ad valorem* duty of 5 per cent. from Hindoos and $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. from Mohammedans, upon all salt passing the town of Hooghly, thus including nearly all the supply to the Lower Provinces, excepting what was consumed in the eastern districts.

When the East India Company began to acquire the command of the salt trade, the duties imposed took the form of a ground rental on the salt works as well as transit dues, but in 1762 they became consolidated into a single duty. In 1765, after the Company had assumed

the direct administration of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, the inland trade in salt was vested by Lord Clive in an exclusive company for the benefit of the European servants of Government, who enjoyed the profits of the concern in lieu of salary, one half being distributed among them and the other passed to the credit of the company. The salt was required to be sold in lots solely to natives at 200 rupees per 100 maunds. The annual yield to the company was estimated at from twelve to thirteen lakhs of rupees, and so profitable was the business that the company was enabled in the course of six years to smuggle salt to such an extent as to defraud the Government of duty to the extent of forty lakhs; and this was carried on for some time after it ceased to exist as a company in 1768, when the Court of Directors abolished it and issued an order insisting that the manufacture and trade should be thrown open to all natives, subject to the payment of a moderate tax.

Thus was introduced a free and open system of excise, which continued until 1772; but as the results were very unfavourable to the revenue, which fell from about twelve lakhs to less than half a lakh in the course of five years, it was resolved in that year to again assume the management of the manufacture of salt for the benefit of Government. Then ensued a complicated system of farming, which did not succeed, and had eventually to be abandoned in favour of a scheme devised by Mr. Hastings in 1780, under which the salt-producing tracts were divided into district agencies, each presided over by a civil officer, himself subject to a comptroller, to whom the whole department was subordinate. The comptroller and agents were paid partly by salary and partly by a commission of 10 per cent. on the net profit. The salt-makers received advances, and stipulated to deliver their salt when manufactured to the agent at a price agreed upon and to none other; and the agent stored the salt and sold it to wholesale dealers at a price fixed from year to year by the Government. This system continued in force, with a few modifications regulating the price of the salt and the mode of selling, until the year 1863, when, in spite of opposition, through the instrumentality of Sir Charles Wood, the Secretary of State for India, acting under pressure of salt merchants in England, the Government monopoly was abolished, leaving the supply of salt, either by importation or excise manufacture, to private enterprise.

The several salt agencies were situated in the province of Orissa, and in the districts of Chittagong, 24-Pergunnahs, Jessore and Midnapore.

Since the cessation of Government manufacture the imports of salt have greatly increased in Bengal. The bulk of the salt now consumed in that province comes from Liverpool, and is brought to the ports of Calcutta and Chittagong, where it is either placed in bond or at once sold and distributed through the country.

Monopoly, it is true, is opposed to principles of free trade, but, as already explained, Government was practically forced, by the failure of the excise system, to assume the responsibility of providing the requisite supplies. In Madras the monopoly dates from 1805, but in 1876, after a forcible representation against the maintenance of that system by Mr. Falk, the chairman of the Liverpool Salt Chamber of Commerce, the Government appointed a Commission, consisting of revenue officers from Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, to consider the question. The Commission were not in favour of a general reversion to the excise system, but recommended its introduction into two of the coast ports which had easy communication by rail with the interior. In Lower Bengal, as above remarked, salt is produced by boiling, except on the banks of the Chilka Lake. The manufacturing depôts are generally situated on the banks of large tidal rivers. A high and dry spot being required for storing the salt, the sites of the warehouses are usually fixed in the interior, and the salt is conveyed on bullocks or in boats or carts. Each consignment must be protected by a pass, specifying the weight, the route, and other particulars, and, when it reaches the warehouse, the officer in charge examines its condition, and if satisfied that it has not been tampered with, allows it to be stored; but if it appears to have been tampered with and that there is likely to be a deficiency of more than 1 per cent., the entire despatch may be weighed, and is liable to confiscation if the above limit of deficiency be exceeded. The duty is levied on the salt as it leaves the warehouse. An allowance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. is made for wastage, which is ascertained by periodical inspection and weighing. For any deficiency in excess of the usual allowance, the owner of the salt is required to pay the duty leviable; but this rule is worked very liberally, and is only strictly enforced where fraud is suspected. The salt is sold to middlemen, and by them to smaller dealers, and so on, until it reaches the public, and can be said to pass into consumption.

During the conduct of the several operations above mentioned, from manufacture to consumption, considerable inducements to smuggling exist, and great facilities for carrying it on, spite of the numerous checks

provided by Government for its prevention. The following are some of the modes by which smuggling may be carried on :

- (1) The use of earth-salt. Along the line of the seaboard there are vast tracts of low, swampy, saline ground, where, by lixiviation and evaporation, earth-salt, or spontaneous salt as it is also called, can be readily produced.
- (2) Smuggling at the salt works, by the carrying away at night of salt which has been left to dry at the pans ; by unlawful manufacture at night ; by manufacture in excess of the licence and contriving to get the excess quantity without storing at the depôt.
- (3) Smuggling on the way from the salt works to the warehouse or depôt.
- (4) Smuggling at the depôt by selling, with the connivance of the officials, some portions of the salt just brought in from the works, but not yet measured and stored ; by excess deliveries at the time of sale, or by falsifying the wastage account.

Besides the above modes of fraud there are other forms of smuggling which have to be guarded against : namely, smuggling of imported salt from ships, and smuggling carried on in the tracts of country where no excise manufacture takes place. In the law and rules on the subject, provision is made for the employment of a large preventive establishment for the protection of the revenue, and for its concomitant, the rowannah system, under which salt, while under transport within certain defined limits, is required to be covered by a protective document called a 'rowannah,' and to be conveyed by certain specified routes and pass stations under penalty of confiscation.

The attention of the preventive service is directed to the detection of the removal of spontaneously formed or illicitly made salt, the checking of fraudulent surplus storage and sales, and the prevention of smuggling of imported salt from ships. The chief provisions of the rowannah system are as follows :—Every person purchasing salt in a larger quantity than five seers, whether from shipboard or from a private store, or the Government bonded warehouse, is required, first of all, to obtain a rowannah, either from the Board of Revenue or the district collectors authorised to issue them, specifying the quantity of salt to be transported, its description, the place where the salt is deliverable, the

mode of conveyance, the destination and route. Salt is required either for sale within limits, or to be conveyed to distant marts or warehouses situated beyond the limits. In the first case the rowannahs have a currency of six months, but a renewal can be granted if the salt be not all disposed of within that time. As sales take place, the dealer is required to note them on the back of the rowannah; and as soon as the entire despatch has been disposed of he must, within seven days, deliver up his rowannah to the officer in charge of the police-station within which the last sale was effected. While the salt is in transit within the limits, the person in charge of it is bound to stop at certain police-stations on the line of route mentioned in his rowannah, which have been determined upon and duly notified by Government as pass stations, to have the rowannah endorsed by the chief officer at such station. Also on the arrival of a despatch of salt at the warehouse or shop of a trader, situated within the limits, the fact has to be notified to the collector of the district within twenty-four hours. In this way a record is kept up of all salt retained for consumption within limits. A similar check is maintained over salt passing out of the limits for consumption in the tracts beyond.

The rules require that the rowannahs covering such salt should be surrendered before passing out of the limits at the last police-station within those limits. The price itself of salt has always been very much less than the duty imposed on it; the incentive, therefore, to smuggling has been, and is, great. The revenue from salt forms an important item in the finances of the country, and to protect this revenue the preventive system was introduced. Without rowannahs it would be impossible to distinguish between licit and illicit salt. As soon as salt passes out of saliferous limits it becomes free and requires no rowannah to protect it, but within those limits it has hitherto been considered to be most unsafe to allow salt to be kept or sold without rowannahs. Harassing though these resolutions are to the trader, it is generally admitted that the salt law in India is administered with much moderation and judicious management. The records of crime in certain years may show numerous prosecutions, but it will be found that the punishments inflicted were by no means severe, except in the case of smuggling from salt vessels—which, as a rule, it may be remarked, can only take place with the connivance of the customs officials. 'The salt-tax in India,' wrote Mr. Alonzo Money,¹ 'is a very different thing from any salt-tax which has ever been levied in other countries. The comparison between it and

¹ Late member of the Board of Revenue, Calcutta.

the old French *gabelle* is an incorrect one, for the *gabelle* was a Government monopoly, and pressed on working classes who, in other forms, bore already the chief weight of the national taxation. Moreover, the administration of the salt monopoly in France was exercised with great rigour and cruelty. In the fifteenth century hundreds of men were condemned to death and executed for salt smuggling. Later, the pain of death was not enforced, but the salt code was still most cruel. It is calculated that under Louis XIV. each year saw some three hundred salt smugglers sent to the galleys for life. In India the highest punishment which can be inflicted under the salt laws is confiscation of the article and imprisonment for a period of twelve months.'

Although existing arrangements do not give great cause for dissatisfaction, still the amelioration of the conditions of the salt trade is a desirable object, and the question to be solved is how this can be best accomplished without risk to the revenue. For my own part, I am not in favour of half measures, and should be inclined to try the bold experiment of entirely abandoning the rowannah system, and leaving salt, whether imported or locally manufactured, free from supervision, after it has once paid duty and passed the customs or excise barrier, confining protective measures—strengthened, if need be—to the places of import, manufacture and storage. In this way the rowannah system, which has been termed the second line of defence, would disappear, and only the first line of defence would remain—viz. the preventive forces concentrated at the headquarters of salt operations. The arrangements for unloading salt from vessels at Calcutta are antiquated and tedious, and the introduction of improved scales and weights and modern appliances is a much-needed reform, though this is a matter which more concerns the shipper and the merchant than calling for Government interference.

The construction of jetties at the Sulkeah salt warehouses, large enough for vessels to unlade there, instead of, as at present, in the stream, would not only cheapen and facilitate bonding operations but also tend to reduce the cost of preventive measures; should, however, provision be made at Kidderpore, where the new docks are in course of construction, for landing and bonding salt, the retention of the present warehouses will probably be no longer necessary. Elaborate inquiries have from time to time been made to ascertain the annual consumption per head of population of duty-paying salt in the several provinces of India, but, owing to a variety of circumstances, the recorded results are

far from trustworthy. The officially accepted figures, according to the last census, are as follows : Madras, 12 lbs. ; Bombay, 10 ; Bengal, 9·1 ; Punjab, 7·5 ; North-Western Provinces and Oude, 6 ; Scinde, 5. The remarkable divergencies are due to differences in the climate and in the character of the staple food of the population. People like the inhabitants of Bengal and Southern India, who live on rice and green vegetables, require for health and comfort a larger allowance of salt than the people of Northern India, whose staple food consists of wheat-flour and pulse.

This paper will not be complete without some reference, however brief, to the effects produced by the various changes, already noticed, which have at different periods been introduced into the system of salt-revenue administration. To begin with the abolition of the Government monopoly in Bengal in 1864. This measure gradually gave a stimulus to the export trade of India, by encouraging salt-laden vessels to visit the port of Calcutta, which in turn attracted the productions of the country. During the last twenty-five years the Calcutta shipping has enormously increased, and the chief inducement to ships to bring out salt is not so much the profit to be derived from the transaction, as the return cargoes of jute, oilseeds, wheat, rice, and other articles of Indian produce. The imports of Liverpool salt are therefore no proper measure of the demand ; continued arrivals of salt-ships, with speedy discharge of cargo, denote no more than a brisk export trade paying good return freights ; during a period of trade depression, as has happened since 1883, vessels will remain in port for months with their salt cargoes untouched rather than accept homeward freights at low rates.

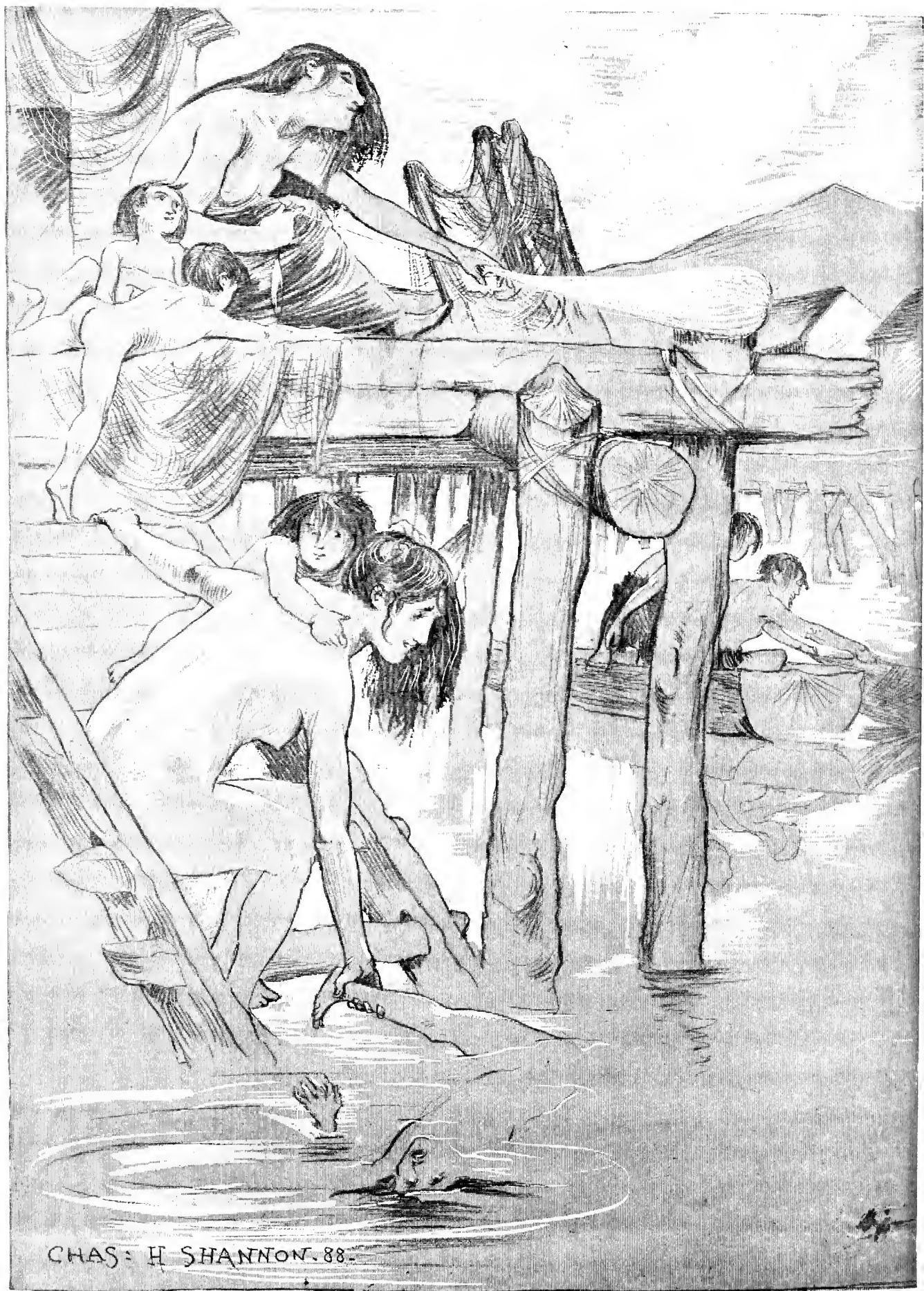
Among the salt treaties which were made under Lord Lytton's government with native states, to facilitate the abolition of the customs line, the most important was that with the independent state of Rajputana, which resulted in bringing Sambhur Lake salt within the revenue system of India. Previously it had paid tax at the line, but had not much interfered with British produce. When Government, under the treaty, took a lease of the lake it became the great source of salt supply for the whole of the central districts.

Then came, in 1878, the partial equalisation of rates, which gave a duty of 2·8 rupees generally, with 2·14 rupees in Lower Bengal, thus handicapping Liverpool salt to the extent of one pound sterling per ton as against the North-West and the Punjab. When the duty was 3·4 rupees

on Liverpool salt and 3 rupees on Punjab salt the two salts met at Patna, which was the furthest point up country to which the former could penetrate, and the position of Liverpool salt was not improved under the new regulations. It had now to compete with Sambhur Lake as well as Punjab salt. But very soon after the complete equalisation was carried out in 1882 Liverpool salt began to drive back other salts and to supply places in the interior as distant as Fuzabad.

It was expected that the reduction of duty which took place simultaneously with the equalisation of rates in 1882 would stimulate consumption, and, coupled with the extension of railways, the conditions attached to the salt trade were regarded as being especially favourable to Liverpool salt. But these anticipations have not been realised, though in the first few years of the operation of the new scheme the results were so far satisfactory that, in introducing the Indian Budget in 1885, Lord Randolph Churchill was able to announce that, notwithstanding the remission of duty of 28 per cent., the salt tax in 1884 had yielded 5,862,000*l.* as against 5,736,000*l.* in 1874. This favourable state of things has not, however, lasted long; and, owing to this cause, coupled with diminished opium receipts, increased expenditure on account of Burma, and a continued fall in silver, the Government, early in the year, in pursuance of the policy announced in 1882, determined to restore the equilibrium of the finances by raising the salt-tax to 1 rupee in Burma and to 2·8 rupees in the rest of India, except the trans-Indus districts.

It is a significant fact that the increase has roused but a faint outcry of opposition, and that only from philanthropists and grievance-mongers, who have proclaimed the customary platitudes about imaginary hardships inflicted on the poorer classes by a tax on a necessary of life, either ignoring or being ignorant of its extremely low incidence, which barely amounts to sixpence per head per annum; and when it is borne in mind how small the value of salt is in comparison with the duty, it will be at once perceived at how little cost a family can procure its daily or weekly supplies. Indeed, most of the humbler classes get their salt gratis, or think they do, which amounts to the same thing, for it is the custom in many parts of India for the shopkeeper, after the customer has bought his supplies of rice, wheat, or pulse, to throw in a modicum of salt. Indeed, there never has been any popular outcry against the tax, nor is there likely to be so long as it is kept within reasonable limits.



CHAS: H SHANNON. 88.

A PRIMEVAL BATHING-PLACE. C. H. Shannon.

A Day With Primeval Man



'OO wonderful!' said Tom, with a sneer. 'How do you account for it? Something had happened to the Clock of Time, I suppose, while you were asleep.'

'Either that,' I replied calmly—for I knew Tom Diddymoss of old, and was prepared for his stupid incredulity—'either that, or else there was more in the theory of Peter Simple's friend, the ship's carpenter, than his messmates, and indeed the world in general, or perhaps even

Marryat himself supposed. It may be that scenes and events repeat themselves every 57,396 years. All I know is just what I have told you, that I fell fast asleep about two o'clock one November afternoon on the seat at the corner of the "putting-green" in front of the Golf Club House at the edge of Wimbledon Common, and that when I awoke the whole scene was absolutely changed. It had become glacial. The grass and heather, the boulders and the gravel-pits, the blackberry bushes on the brow of the hill, and the hazel-copses lower down the slope, had disappeared as if by magic. Combe Wood was as clean gone as if a prairie fire had passed over it. The trees of Richmond Park were as though

they had never been. The sweet dim lines of that wooded country which rises tier above tier to the south-westward beyond Kingston had hardened into the sharp knife-edge of the snow-ridge, and all that fair valley that stretches away towards Malden lay, stark and rigid as a corpse—a waste of desolate snow-fields, broken only here and there by black lines and patches of stunted fir.

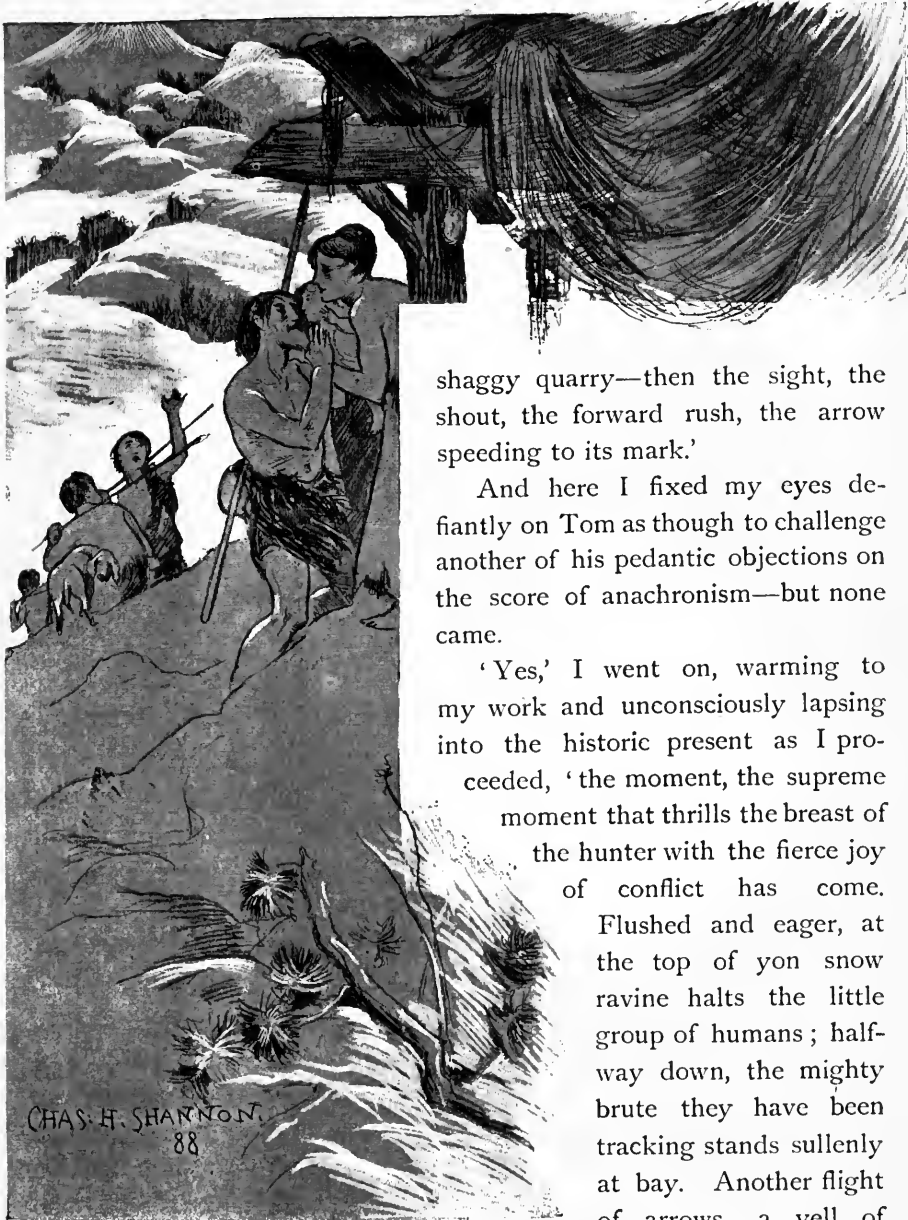
‘I had not done rubbing my eyes at this extraordinary spectacle when my ear caught the dull sound of galloping hoofs upon the snow. I turned and saw a horned animal of gigantic stature flying at full speed down the steep declivity towards the road, or what had been the road, which leads to the Robin Hood Gate of Richmond Park. He was pursued by—Heavens!—a hunt of naked men. I counted five of them, scudding along in the tracks of the quarry with a swiftness almost equal to his own. He was within a few feet of the bottom of the hill when the foremost of his pursuers flung a lasso round his antlers, and brought him thundering to the ground. In a moment the whole truth flashed upon me. Something *had* happened to the Clock of Time, or Marryat’s ship’s carpenter was an unappreciated seer, and scenes and events *did* repeat themselves every 57,396 years. There could be no doubt about it. It was Primeval Man in the hunting-field, and our old friend the Irish elk.’

‘Ha! ha!’ jeered Tom, ‘Primeval Man with a lasso. You might as well have given him a sporting-rifle at once. And how did you know it was the Irish elk?’

‘Because,’ I replied, ‘my aunt used to have a splendid specimen of the skull and antlers of one of these animals hanging up in her hall.’

This turned the laugh against Tom, and he had the good taste to apologise.

‘Besides,’ I continued, ‘the evidences multiplied every moment. I had not only seen Primeval Man in pursuit of game, but his primeval dwelling was before me. On the precise spot which before my nap had been occupied by the Golf Club House, there now stood a rude log-hut, or rather shed, its roughly shapen beams of drift-wood supported in their places more by their own weight than by the twisted withies which bound them here and there together. In front of it, and peering out over the snow-waste, stood—yes, there was no doubt about it—a Primeval Woman with a Primeval Infant in her arms. The whole stern idyll of the day unfolded itself before me in her wistful look. In imagination I saw the leave-taking of the early morn, the child held up to receive the kiss, which the father lingers to bestow upon it, while the voices of the youths impatient for the chase ring loudly in his ear. Then the long day’s tramp through the snow on the track of their



shaggy quarry—then the sight, the shout, the forward rush, the arrow speeding to its mark.'

And here I fixed my eyes defiantly on Tom as though to challenge another of his pedantic objections on the score of anachronism—but none came.

'Yes,' I went on, warming to my work and unconsciously lapsing into the historic present as I proceeded, 'the moment, the supreme moment that thrills the breast of the hunter with the fierce joy of conflict has come.

Flushed and eager, at the top of yon snow ravine halts the little group of humans; half-way down, the mighty brute they have been tracking stands sullenly at bay. Another flight of arrows, a yell of

exultant blood-thirst, and the hunters dart wildly down the slope. Light foot goes for little in that heavy snow. The youths labour in it; the father flings it from before his feet like the spray that spurts from the flying bows of a boat. Easily he distances his companions; downward he speeds, a stout flint-knife between his teeth, another grasped in his sinewy hand. Nearer, nearer, nearer—thud! and clearing the last six feet with a bound he flings himself with his whole weight upon the



CHAS. H. SHANNON.
88

bear. Twice the creature's bulk could scarce have withstood that furious impact. Backward he falls like a huge log, and over and over roll the struggling pair in the ensanguined snow, the hunter with his left hand firmly twisted in the wool of the huge neck, while the other, the knife-armed hand, hovers close above it, and ere the brute has had time to recover from the shock and rally his unwieldy strength, delivers one swift, transverse stroke which lets out the savage life in a mighty rush of blood.

'Such was the scene which presented itself to my

imagination as, following the gaze of this woman, who had just uttered a cry of joy, I saw a party toiling up the snow-slope at my feet with the carcass of a bear suspended feet upwards from a pole. In a few minutes they had reached the plateau on which I sat, and flung down their burden, exhausted, at the door of the hut. That they saw me I felt perfectly sure, for I distinctly saw them look in my direction; but, strange to say—or so I thought it at the time—they took no notice of

me whatever. They passed into the hut, or rather shed, and left me sitting unaccosted on my seat.'

'Your seat, eh?' interrupted Tom, with a grin; 'then *that* had not, I suppose, been suddenly converted into "Early English." That was still the same nineteenth century bench on which you had fallen asleep.'

'Of that,' I replied, 'I know nothing. The seat is the property of the Conservators of the Common, to whom,' I added severely, for I saw the company was with me, 'any inquiries of that sort should be addressed. But to proceed. The bear was skinned with extraordinary rapidity, a fire was lighted, and, in what seemed to me scarcely more than five minutes, the party were slicing juicy steaks from the carcass, and grilling them, spitted on their spear-heads, over the flames. Their cheerful chatter as they feasted—for their language, though I can give you no idea of it whatever, was quite intelligible to me—diverted me much, and I was filled with curiosity when one of the youths of the party broke into a song.

'Judge, however, of my astonishment when (I quote from a metrical translation I have since made, and which, though free, is fairly accurate) he began thus:—

Hard was the lot of our fathers, the men of the early world,

("Good heavens!" I exclaimed, "the 'early world!' what on earth does he call himself then?")

Beast-like, scratching the earth for a niggardly dole of her fruit.
Wedge'd in the clefts of the hills, in the hollows of tree-trunks curled,
Groping in glooms of the cave, starving on berry and root.

Shelterless, weaponless, weak, a haggard and wandering brood,
Seared by the brand of the sun, by the whirlwind scattered and toss'd,
Buried in drifts of the snow, whelmed by the rivers in flood,
Flayed by the scourge of the storm, scarred by the dagger of frost.



A wretched and barbarous race, unskilled, at the mercy of all,
 In haste to escape from its foes to the hiding-place of the dead ;
 Hunted of hunger and lean, whose life was a piteous crawl
 From the dark of the womb to the dark of the grave through the shadow of
 dread !

But we ! we are cunning and strong, we have made all wisdom our own,
 We have mastered all arts, we have tools and raiment and roof overhead,
 We laugh at the shriek of the winds, we dance on the brute overthrown,
 With his skin we have clothed us about, with his flesh we are fillèd and fed.

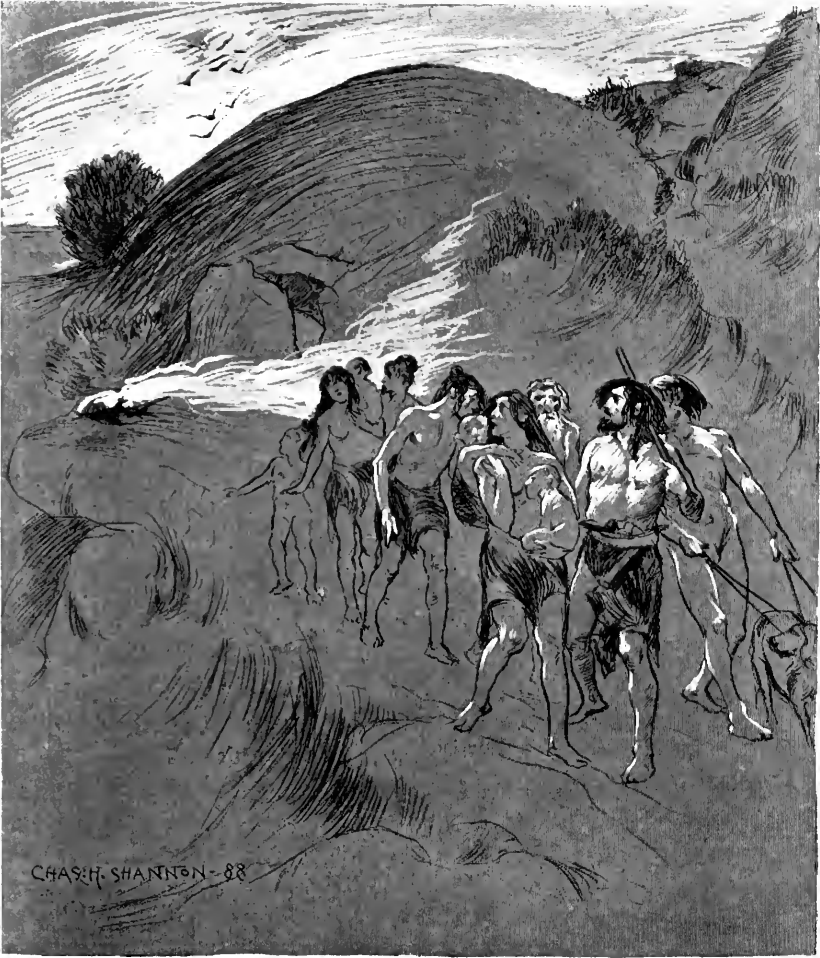
Our fathers, the cowering men of the caves, were the cave-bear's prey ;
 They fled him, we seek him ; the snows with his blood, not ours, shall be
 dyed ;
 We follow his tracks through the drift—ha ! ha !—we spear him and slay ;
 We feast on the fat of his ribs ; we comfort our loins with his hide.

O marvellous progress of Man ! O race of unspeakable craft !
 O strikers of Fire from the heart of the rock in a fortunate hour !
 Who have fitted the sharpened flint to the wonderful pine-wood haft—
 In the day of your weakness and want, who dreamt of the day of your power ?

We are masters and lords of the world ; all beasts in it live for our use ;
 Of its flesh and its bone and its skin every creature its offering brings.
 They are ours to be smitten or spared, we possess them to bind or to loose.
 We have climbed from the depth to the height : we stand at the summit of
 things.

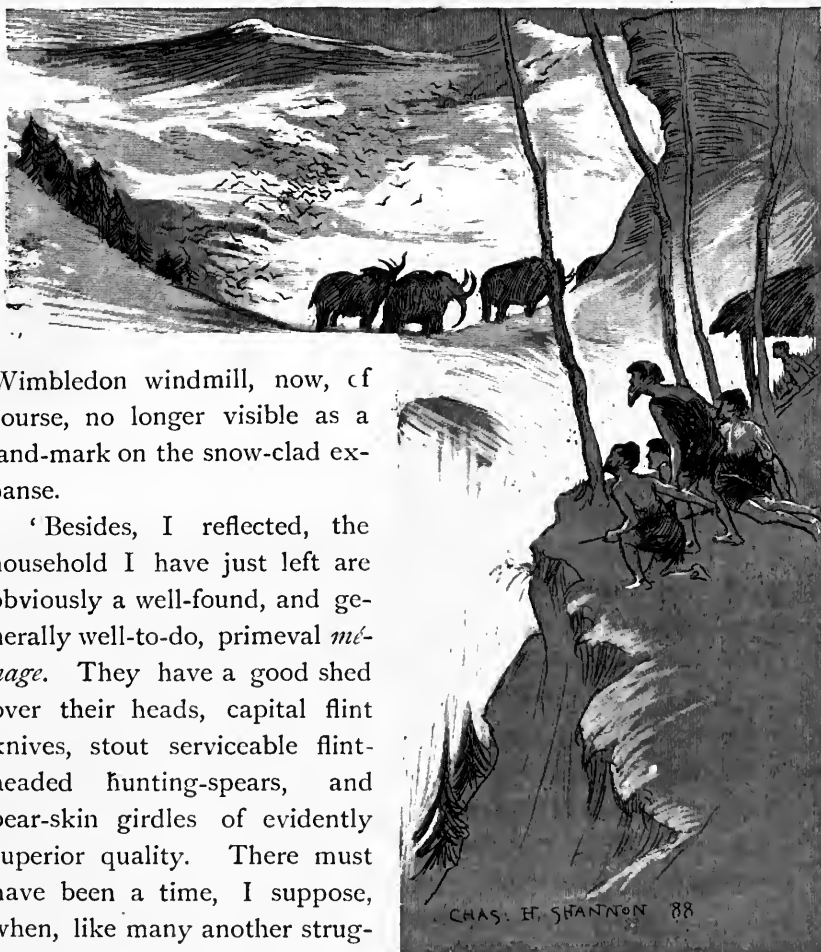
‘ I listened to these strange outpourings of primeval optimism with the deepest interest. Is it possible, I said to myself, that the conceit of Progress can have sprung up so rapidly in the human breast ? And yet on reflection I was obliged to admit that it was only what I might have expected. Man has nothing to compare himself with but his predecessors ; and I am not so sure but that the difference between that worthy young hunter and his ancestry is greater than, say, the difference between a Board-school boy who has earned the grant for special subjects and Squire Western. To eat a bear instead of being eaten by him represents a more important advance on what may be called the arts of life than we have ourselves made during the last century, or perhaps than the human race has ever made since this same emergence from the category of the Eaten into that of the Eaters. No wonder that young man regards himself as at the “ summit of things.” However, I am not quite as sure of it myself as he seems to be. The cave-bear and the Irish elk are all very well in their way, but I should like to see him tackle the mammoth.

‘ Thus musing I strolled slowly away towards the site of the famous



'With the eye of imagination I can see them now descending yonder hill-side under the reddening dawn, the embers of their camp-fire smouldering behind them.'

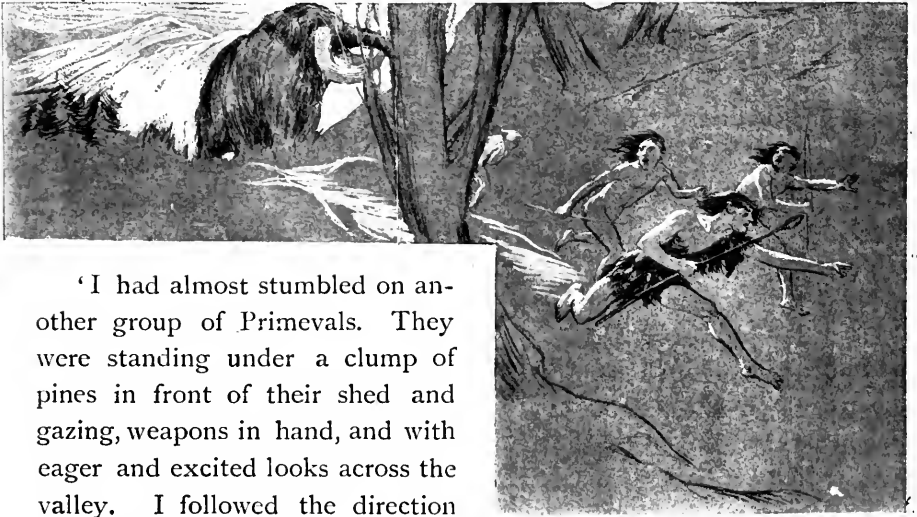
C. H. Shannon.



Wimbledon windmill, now, of course, no longer visible as a land-mark on the snow-clad expanse.

‘Besides, I reflected, the household I have just left are obviously a well-found, and generally well-to-do, primeval *ménage*. They have a good shed over their heads, capital flint knives, stout serviceable flint-headed hunting-spears, and bear-skin girdles of evidently superior quality. There must have been a time, I suppose, when, like many another struggling family, they have tramped these icy hills for weeks or months of weary days and nights in search of some spot where game was plentiful enough for their continuous subsistence, and where they might rest from their wanderings in a permanent home. With the eye of imagination I can see them now descending yonder hillside under the reddening dawn, the embers of their camp-fire smouldering behind them—three shivering generations; the mother, marching with her load of naked babes, by her husband’s side, the aged grandsire, wintry as his very background, tottering behind. *Pellitur paternos*, I continued—for Horace obtrudes himself upon me at all sorts of unseasonable times—*In sinu ferens deos* (ahem! *that* incumbrance has yet to be added to the *impedimenta* of migratory man) *Et uxor et vir, sordidosque natos*. Poor wretches, they have got a miserable— Hallo!’

‘And I stopped as suddenly as if I had been shot.



‘I had almost stumbled on another group of Primevals. They were standing under a clump of pines in front of their shed and gazing, weapons in hand, and with eager and excited looks across the valley. I followed the direction of their eyes, and started at what I

saw. Along the summit of the ridge which forms the limit of the shorter rifle-ranges stalked, in slow and majestic procession, a file of mammoths! I watched them till they disappeared behind the brow of the hill, which they descended in the direction of Queensmere. Stealthily the hunters followed them, and, keeping well in their rear, I followed the hunters. Would they dare, I wondered, to attack this whole cavalcade of giants? Or were they dogging the footsteps of the monstrous brutes in the hope of overtaking a straggler? The question was soon answered. Their keener vision had detected an object which my eyes had failed to catch—the figure of a single mammoth standing in solitary dignity on a slight eminence at the farther end of the little lake. To reach him by land it would be necessary to re-ascend the hill and make one’s way to the head of Queensmere by a rough and circuitous route. The hunters hesitated not a moment. They plunged into the icy waters, and with spears carried in one hand “at the slope,” or held transversely in their powerful jaws, swam swiftly towards their gigantic quarry. It was a strange sight to see them breasting those waters into which the by-laws now forbid you to throw so much as a stick for your dog to fetch. I watched them for a few moments, but, not feeling equal to following their example, I climbed the hill again and made my way round as best I could to the head of the lake.

‘I feared, however, that I should be too late; and I was. Before I could reach the spot my ear caught the shouts of the landed hunters, followed by a shriek of terror and despair. Then wild and confused cries, a crashing of branches, a tramp of earth-shaking footsteps, and I

arrived at the spot to find the whole party flying at full speed from their gigantic enemy. The whole party did I say? There was one horrible exception—a crushed and blood-stained mass, lying hideous on the trampled snow, on the spot where the monster had for a moment, and a moment only, planted the huge column of his leg on the wretch's prostrate body.

'I need not tell you that I made my own way back to the entrance of the ravine again at the best of my speed, and paused not till I found myself once more opposite the hut so lately quitted by the unlucky hunters. I had hardly reached it before the breathless and terrified fugitives themselves arrived.

'In front of the hut stood a very aged Primeval, with a beard descending to his waist and a countenance strangely expressive of the combined emotions of scorn and sorrow. He gazed for a moment or two at his dispirited kinsmen, who had flung themselves in every attitude of exhaustion on the ground; and then proceeded to deliver himself, in a long, low chant, of the following jeremiad:—

What ! burns the torch-flame of your blood so low ?
 Have your snug bear-hides left your hearts so cold ?
 By this, by many a sign then, well I know
 The race is growing old.

The skill-less creatures of the flood and rock,
 The great dumb brutes that man was born to sway,
 Foresee their hour approaching, and make mock
 Of their proud lord's decay.

'Twas not our naked fathers' wont to flee ;
 Man had slain mammoths as he slayeth bears,
 Had *they* but hunted with such arms as we,
 Or we with hearts like theirs.

They lived the life from which brute valour springs,
 They slept the sleep that hardens men to die ;
 Their shaggy skins their only coverings,
 Their roof the bitter sky.

Thus throve their mighty sinews, thus they waxed
 Tall, straight, and strong as pine-boles on the heights,
 Not yet made soft by flesh-food, or relaxed
 By sickly warmth o' night.

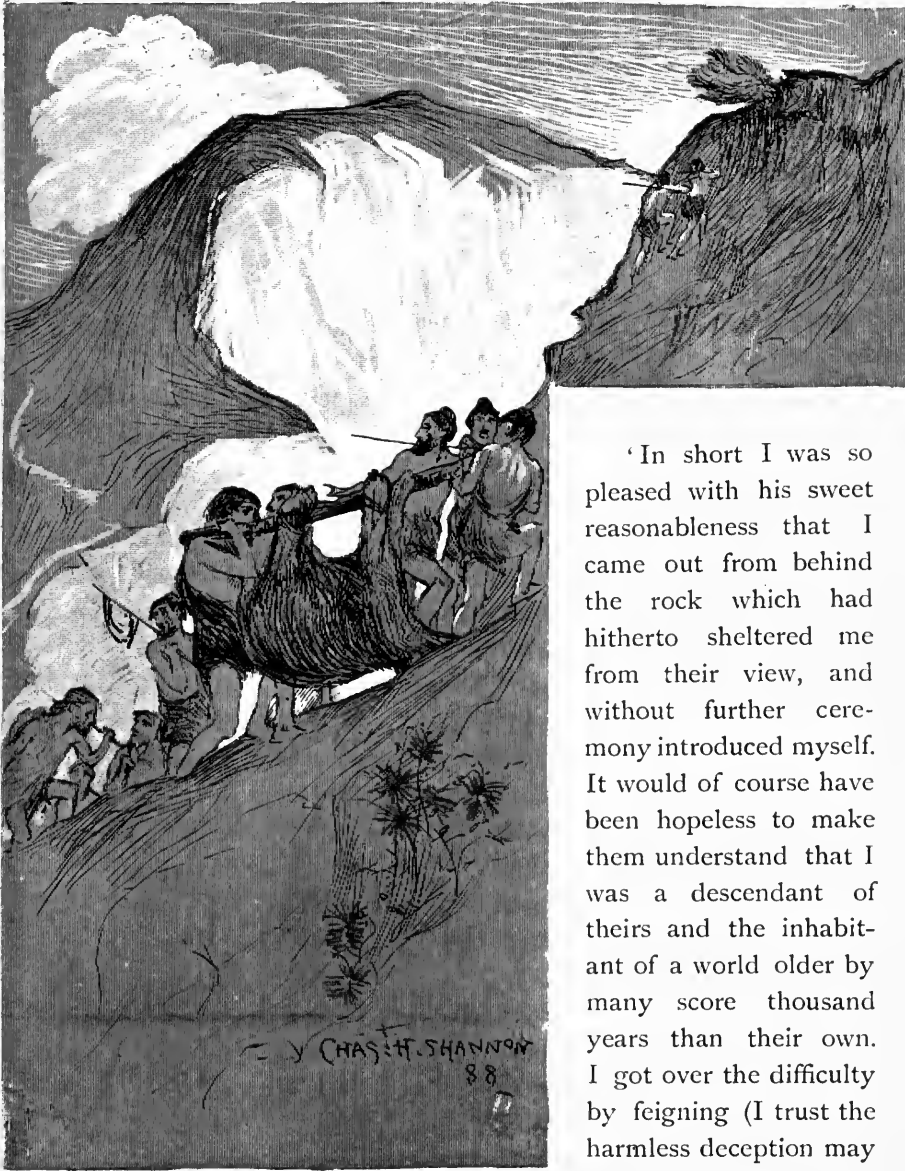
Ill has it fared with us since arts began—
 Curst arts unteaching us our virtues rude—
 And luxury's creeping lichen overran
 The cliff of fortitude.

Return, return to Nature, O my sons !
 Away with bear-meat, and bear's weakening wool,
 Live like those hardy, old, ungirdled ones,
 Of roots and berries full.

Arrest the hastening progress of decline,
 Lest earth, indignant at our waning powers,
 Efface us, and our heritage assign
 To stronger hands than ours.

“Good!” I exclaimed to myself when the old man made an end. “We have at any rate a fair representation of parties. I am glad to see that Toryism has not left itself without witness even in this early stage of the race. But stay! here is one about to reply to him. Can this be a Unionist Liberal? No doubt he belongs to a Third Party of some sort. He is of that middle age which has the surest eye for the falsehood of extremes.”

‘Substantially I was right. The Middle-aged Primeval pointed out to the others (in a song, which I have not yet Englished to my satisfaction) that the aged singer who had preceded him was, in fact, a croaker—that to some people the past would always seem more attractive than the present or the future, but that there was, on the whole, no reason in the world to suppose that the human race was retrograding. Cunning, he observed, and not strength, was the quality on which man principally relies to secure the dominion over the brute creation, and whatever creatures were still too powerful for him to cope with must be circumvented by guile. In the meantime animals dangerous to hunt might be avoided, and man should endeavour to find new and easier kinds of prey. In this connection he referred to the recent invention (apparently unknown to the Aged Primeval) of fishing-nets made of fibres, and boats hollowed from the trunks of trees. These two appliances were undergoing trial, he said, with the greatest success, at that very moment on some neighbouring waters, which, from his description of them, I recognised as the Penn Ponds in Richmond Park. The middle-aged Primeval, in fact, was evidently a very sensible fellow. It was clear that he had no very extravagant opinion of man or of his future, but saw no immediate reason to despair of either.



‘In short I was so pleased with his sweet reasonableness that I came out from behind the rock which had hitherto sheltered me from their view, and without further ceremony introduced myself. It would of course have been hopeless to make them understand that I was a descendant of theirs and the inhabitant of a world older by many score thousand years than their own. I got over the difficulty by feigning (I trust the harmless deception may be forgiven me) that I

possessed the power of foreseeing the future ; and on the strength of this I assured the Middle-aged Primeval that his view was the correct one. The whole party then gathered round me in much excitement, and as their poetic form of expression, or what they imagine to be such, is easily picked up, I soon found myself sustaining my part without difficulty in the amœbæan performance, which I have since rendered as below. It began by my declaring, in the best verse that I could command, that man would assuredly become lord of the creation. Upon which—

THE YOUNGEST PRIMEVAL IN THE COMPANY.

Thou hast said ! thou hast said !

I have seen it, and known ;

'Tis no vision displayed

To thee, stranger, alone.

I too, have beheld it, and know that mankind shall make all things their own.

Our race shall not die,

I know it : I see.

Let the aged deny ;

It is certain to me

That, as we are more wise than our fathers, our sons shall be wiser than we.

MYSELF.

Your sons ! As a flake

In the falling of snow

That alights on the lake

And is lost, even so

Shall be merged in the vast of their knowledge the sum of the things that ye know.

All secrets of Earth

They shall inmosty scan,

From its lifeless dim birth

In the void, through the span

Of the measureless years of the rocks to the speechless beginnings of man !

The starry array

They shall number and name,

They shall measure and weigh :

And the sea they shall tame,

And shall gird with a girdle of lightning and pierce with the shafts of its flame.

And Man, at the length,

They shall search and explain

In his weakness and strength,

In his pleasure and pain,

In the beat of his heart, in the growth of his limbs, in the thoughts of his brain.

Ay, even as a flake

In the falling of snow,

That is lost in the lake,

Even so— even so

Shall be merged in the vast of man's knowledge the sum of the things that ye know

THE MIDDLE-AGED PRIMEVAL.

It is good : we rejoice

In your vision, O Seer ;

In the word of your voice

There is comfort and cheer.

We believe, we believe, that mankind shall be rulers and conquerors here.

We believe all that is,
 All that shall be, shall bow
 To his power ! Yet of this
 Thou hast told us not—how
 He shall conquer that foe who pursues him, whom no man conquereth now.

He comes on the foot
 Of the mammoth and bear,
 In the fang of the brute,
 In its claw, he is there ;
 He is in them, but greater than they are, for no man hath tracked him to lair.

He bids us arise,
 And we follow ; he saith
 ‘ It is time,’ and our eyes
 At the blast of his breath
 Die out like our torches. Ah ! how will men slay him, our enemy Death ?’

MYSELF

(*a little taken aback*).

‘ How slay him ? They will not.
 His armour is sure.
 No ! Death they will kill not—
 His power is secure ;

All others shall perish and pass of man’s enemies ; Death will endure.

This last utterance of mine produced a marked effect upon my hearers, who exchanged glances of consternation with each other. Then—

THE MIDDLE-AGED PRIMEVAL.

Ah, stranger, what word
 Has thy wisdom let fall ?
 Shall He still be lord,
 We slaves at his call ?

What avails it to conquer all others if Death shall subdue after all ?

MYSELF.

Nay, he doth not subdue,
 For he cannot efface.
 Men perish, ’tis true ;
 Man holdeth his place :

On the race he is helpless for harm, and ye live in the life of the race.

THE MIDDLE-AGED PRIMEVAL.

So be it ; then say
 To what end is *that* life
 With an age for a day
 And no aim of its strife ?

Why live it ? Why fight it ? What ailed us to fashion the flint to a knife ?

(*An awkward pause.*)

You know not? the lake
Of your wisdom, 'tis plain,
Has absorbed the snowflake
Of our knowledge in vain,
For that which is not in its waters is greater than all they contain.

'Of course there must be some reply to this, and I was just on the point of attempting to throw Comte's *Cours de Philosophie Positive* into half-a-dozen vigorous stanzas when—well it may seem absurd to you, but you know how little things sometimes affect one—I became suddenly conscious for the first time of the costume which I was wearing, and the nature of which was so unfamiliar and embarrassing to me that I hastily withdrew.'

'Costume!' exclaimed Tom, incredulously, 'what *was* your costume then?'

'The ordinary dress of a gentleman of the period,' I replied.

'Oh, indeed,' continued Diddymoss, thinking no doubt that he had caught me romancing. 'Then pray how did you come by your own clothes again. Where were they?'

'Where were they?' cried I triumphantly. 'Why, where your clothes usually are when you are dreaming between the blankets. On a chair by the bedside.'

H. D. TRAILL.

The Romance of the House of Commons

'A Page Roughly Torn Out'

THE very origin of the House of Commons as a separate chamber has a flavour of romance about it. Some folk trace the election of Commoners back to the Parliament held at Oxford in the fifteenth year of the reign of John. Others say that the Oxford assembly was no Parliament at all, but a military camp. None can fix when the first Speaker was chosen by the first House. In the reign of Henry III. it is certain that Commoners (Knights of the Shire) were elected to Parliament, but even then it is not quite certain at what date these Commoners precisely began to sit separately. The Lords 'Journals' commence 1 Henry VIII., but the Commons 'Journals' do not begin until November 8, 1547 (1 Edward VI.), though the Statutes are preserved on the Parliamentary Rolls from the Statute of Merton, 20 Henry III., and these Rolls show Sir Peter de la Mare Speaker in 1376, and Sir Thomas Hungerford Speaker in 1377. Beatson gives the names of three earlier Speakers, with the note that two of these 'must have been Speakers to both Lords and Commons.' To Simon de Montfort is given the glory of first summoning, on December 14, 1264, citizens and burgesses to the Parliament which met on January 20, 1265; but Parry in his learned work notes that 'it is a singular fact that neither the continuator of the history of M. Paris, nor the annals of Waverley, nor the chronicles of Mailros, though minute in describing the events which preceded and followed and all favorable to the Earl of Leicester, do not even notice this Parliament.'

The oath question, recently set at rest by the Oaths Act (1888), comes into the romance, if not of the separate House of Commons, at any rate of Parliament, as early as 1163, when Parliament assembled at Northampton, in one of those quaint *Mare Fair Houses*, as all good Northamptonians firmly believe. John the Marshal made charge against Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Archbishop was tried by Parliament, ever most romantic when acting in a judicial capacity. John Marshall came with the King's writ into the Archbishop's Court, 'and swore upon a tropaz, or book of old songs (as Gervase of Canterbury calls it), which he drew from under his coat; and the Justices of the Archbishop's Court accused him for swearing upon that book, when he ought to have been sworn upon the Gospels.' The King commanded a Parliament to meet at Northampton to try à Becket the third day before the feast of Calixtus the Pope, but 'the Monk of Canterbury' came not, being sick or indisposed, and the King was very angry. Poor Thomas Becket when he did come might as well have been an Irishman in modern times before a removable magistrate; so it is not wonderful to read that at the end of the proceedings he told the Parliament, as if it had been a bench of resident magistrates at Carrick-on-Suir, 'I retire from hence—and so made his escape.'

Great pains were taken in its really romantic days to exclude from the House of Commons all 'low and improper persons,' and therefore all 'gentz de ley' were disqualified by 46 Edward III. (this being only repealed by a very recent Statute, 1871), and as late as Richard II. 'persons of ill-fame, practising lawyers,' were ineligible for election. The 5 Henry IV. prohibits the election of 'men of the law.' I pass this hastily, and without attempt at explanation, for I dare not, having in view Sir R. Webster, Sir Henry James, and Sir Charles Russell, speak of any 'home de ley pursuent busoignes en la Courte le Roy' as a low and improper person, and of ill-fame.

In these good old days, despite the guarantee of free speech, discussions on the King's civil list were not unattended with danger. In 1397 Sir Thomas Haxey had carried through the Commons a Bill 'that the great and excessive charges of the King's household should be amended and diminished: to wit, of the multitude of bishops who have lordships, and with their retinue are supported by the King; and also of many ladies and their attendants who dwell in the palace of the King and at his cost.' Richard II. was terribly wroth, stopped the progress of the Bill in the Lords, and on February 2, 1397, passed an ordinance

declaring it treason to move Parliament to remedy anything appertaining to the King's person, rule, or royalty. The Speaker was commanded to declare the name of the daring financial reformer who introduced the Bill, and Sir Thomas Haxey, being surrendered, was condemned to death, and only escaped by 'his clergy,' on the intercession of the Bishops. On October 6, 1399, in the first Parliament of Henry IV., on the petition of the Commons this iniquitous judgment was reversed.

We hear in modern times of packed juries, but it is gravely alleged that Richard II. packed his later Parliaments, and especially the one which assembled at Shrewsbury in 1398. It is certain that the first Parliament of Henry IV., taking this view, made a sweeping repeal of all the statutes of 21 Richard II. It was in the 2 Henry IV. that Parliament ordered William Sautre, found guilty of 'damnable heresie,' 'to be put into the fire, and there in the same fire really to be burned.'

In the good old romance days of Henry VIII. Parliament men had many pains which we escape, but they had also many privileges which we have lost. One George Ferrers, M.P. for Plymouth, was arrested for a debt of 200 marks, and taken to the Compter in Bread Street, and an order of the House was forthwith made that the Sergeant-at-Arms should at once go to the Compter and demand the release of the imprisoned member.

The sergeant went accordingly to the Compter, and declared to the clerks there what he had in command ; but they and other officers of the city were so far from obeying the said command, that after many stout words they forcibly resisted the sergeant, and an affray ensued within the Compter gates between Ferrers and the officers, so that the sergeant was driven to defend himself with his mace, the crown of which was thereby broken, and his mace was stricken down.

Is not this veritable romance? Let the present members for Plymouth try and picture one of their twain in like custody, and an attempt to rescue him from the city officers by our sedate Sergeant-at-Arms, the sacred mace being used as a most unwieldy weapon.

During this brawl the sheriffs of London came thither, to whom the sergeant complained of this injury, and required of them the delivery of the said burgess, as before. But they, taking part with their officers, made little account either of his complaint or of his message, rejecting the same contemptuously with much proud language : so that the sergeant was forced to return without the prisoner, and finding the speaker and all the knights and burgesses set in their places, declared to them the whole cause as it fell out ; who took the same in so ill part, that they altogether (of whom there were not a few, as well of the King's privy council as also of his privy chamber) would sit no longer without their burgess,

but rose up wholly and repaired to the upper house, where the whole case was declared by the mouth of the speaker before Sir Thomas Audley, Knt., then Lord Chancellor of England, and all the lords and judges there assembled, who judging the contempt to be very great, referred the punishment thereof to the order of the commons house. But before the sergeant's return into London, the sheriffs, having intelligence how heinously the matter was taken, became somewhat more mild; so as upon the said second demand they delivered the prisoner without any denial.

The House of Commons was even then unappeased, and sent sheriff, sheriff's officers, and plaintiff all to the Tower. And the least romantic part of such commitments was that there was no getting out again from custody until the fees of the Sergeant-at-Arms were duly paid.

On April 18, 1523, Cardinal Wolsey, who was then Chancellor and Prime Minister, went down to the Commons to try and frighten them into voting 800,000*l.* for the 'King's necessary expenses.' The great Cardinal was accompanied by other peers, going in state 'with all his pomp, with his maces, his pillars, his pole-axes, his cross, his hat, and his great seal too.' This not being effective as persuasion, independent members speaking against the vote, Wolsey came a second time, delivered a fierce harangue, to which no answer was made except by the Speaker, Sir Thomas More, who, 'falling on his knees,' answered the Cardinal 'that his coming thither was neither expedient nor agreeable to the ancient liberties of the House.' After fifteen days' debate the Commons made a grant, but it was for a much smaller sum, and payable by instalments over four years, and on 'June 22, on a motion for an increased supply, doubt arising whether the Yeas or Noes had it, the House divided—the Citizens and Burgesses by themselves, and the Knights on the other side. The former affirm that the motioners are enemies to the realm. The King, being informed of the proceedings, threatens to behead a member for his opposition.' Naturally, supply was voted next day.

I do not know—as a devout follower of Izaak Walton—whether to rejoice or mourn over an early entry on the very first page of the Commons 'Journal,' under date November 15, 1547, of 'the Bill for destroying of Fry of Pikes and Roches,' followed next day but one with an enactment of 'felony against Egyptians,' and in December with one which may be commended to William Morris, poet, if not romancist, and much given to praise those good old times. It is of a Bill 'for vagabond vagrants, poor people and slaves.' A constantly recurring entry in the reigns of Elizabeth and James is of Bills 'against conjuration, witchcraft, and dealing with evil and wicked spirits.'

In modern times members of the House of Commons are sometimes charged with obstructive speaking, but in the good old romance days such a charge would have been full of risk to the audacious accuser. Under 'Lunæ 17^o Aprilis, 1559,' when good Elizabeth was fresh on her throne, there is the solemn entry 'that Thrower, servant to the Master of the Rolls, did say against the state of the House, that if a Bill were brought in for womens wyers in their pastes they would dispute it and go to the question, and that he had heard the Lords say as much at his master's table,' and though Thrower stoutly denied such irreverence towards the House, he was committed to the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms. I am half afraid that the Commons revenged upon men like poor Thrower such blows as it meekly received from that very mighty personage the Virgin Queen, for the 'Journals' tell how the House resolved 'to have a publick fast,' but Her Majesty, having 'great misliking of the proceeding,' sent a message expressing 'her great admiration of the rashness of this House in committing such an apparent contempt,' whereupon the House tendered 'its most humble submission and asked pardon for their error.'

The following entry in the 'Journals,' 'die Saturni, 24^o Martii, 1604,' reads like romance, though it is not. 'Complaint was made of certain pages, who disorderly and violently, upon the Parliament stairs, had taken a cloak from one Richard Brocke, a young youth, servant to a member of this House, and carried it to the sign of the Gun, a tavern in Westminster,' where they left it in lieu of payment for such wines as they called for. And the House gravely ordered the cloak to be given up, and committed the vintner and his man into custody.

Mr. John Fey, on April 16, 1604, appears to have wished to introduce a Bill concerning drapery. 'But,' he wrote Mr. Speaker, 'it pleased you to distaste my motion, and without question to the House of allowance or disallowance to clip me off'; and next day, 'This manner of writing to Mr. Speaker was conceived not to be fit,' and to save still further clipping Mr. John Fey acknowledged his error publicly, and 'so was pardoned by the House.'

As Liberal and Radical Unionists are all most grave and sober realists, they may hardly see the romance which I find in the speech of James I. to his faithful Commons on the union of Scotland with England.

What God hath conjoined, let no man separate. I am the husband, and the whole Isle is my lawful wife. I am the head and it is my body. I am the

shepherd and it is my flock. I hope, therefore, no man will be so unreasonable as to think that I, that am a Christian king, under the Gospel, should be a polygamist and husband to two wives: that I being the head should have a divided and monstrous body; or that, being the shepherd to so fair a flock, whose fold hath no wall to hedge it but the four seas, should have my flock parted in two.

Sir Thomas Shirley being in custody for debt in the Fleet Prison, at the suit of one Simpson, the House ordered his release. John Trench, the warden of the Fleet, was obstinate in keeping Sir Thomas Shirley in custody, and was therefore committed to the Tower, but the warden's wife still kept Sir Thomas prisoner, and 'die Mercurii nono Maii, 1604,' it is entered, 'the sergeant returneth from the Fleet: said he demanded the body of Sir Thomas Shirley three times, and called upon him at his chamber window. That the warden's wife had taken all the keys and discharged her servants from attendance on the prisoners: cried out, that if they would call her husband he would satisfy the House.' Mr. Secretary Herbert reported that His Majesty 'was graciously pleased to leave it to their liberty to proceed in the case of Sir Thomas Shirley as they thought fit,' and it was resolved 'that six gentlemen of the House be selected and sent to the Fleet with the sergeant and his mace,' to 'require the delivery of Sir Thomas Shirley, and if it were denied to press to his chamber, to free him with force.' But when this had been carried, the Speaker 'putteth the House in mind' that the six gentlemen might get into trouble for prison-breaking, and so they did not go. The following letter from Mrs. Trench, the warden's wife, is worthily preserved in the romantic records of the Commons:—

May it please you Mr. Speaker, and the rest of the Honorable House of Parliament, The Perplexity I have dwelt in, since it pleased your honorable Court to commit my Husband to the *Tower*, moveth me, your distressed Prisoner, humbly to prefer my Miseries to your merciful Considerations. The Sergeant at Arms was Yesterday at the *Fleet* and demanded the Body of Sir *Thomas Sherlye*: I confess I dared not absolutely bid the Sergeant take him: I had the commandment of my Husband, on *Monday* last (since which Time it pleased you, by close Imprisonment, to divorce me his Presence) to the contrary. His Majesty's Prison is disordered, waiting him, or a Deputy of Trust (which he never had), and I am only left, without either Guide, or Counsel, and ignorant of all Mens Causes: There is Murmuring and Muttering: many I fear plotting to escape; and I and my Children thereby utterly undone. I am so far from Contempt of this Court, as if it seem pleasing unto you to certify me, under the Hand of the Three Chief Justices that it is no Escape; or to send for *Simpson*, and persuade him to release all Escapes; or Sir *Thomas Sherleye*, to put in good Security for his true Imprisonment; or to invent any Ways for my Safety, whéreyby I and Mine perish not in the Street; I am in all Willingness, ready to

obey and discharge Him in an Hour's Warning, and shall think myself everlastingly bound unto you for the same. And so humbly praying your favours in the premises and submitting myself as shall best seem unto you I humbly take my leave. From the *Fleet* this present Thursday, written with tears,

the distressed and oppressed wife
of the Warden of the Fleet,

ANNE TRENCHÉ.

For answer the House again sent the Sergeant-at-Arms, who reported 'that meeting with Mr. Warden's wife he demanded the body of Sir Thos. Shirley. She answered, If she might hear from Mr. Trench she would deliver him, otherwise not. And she did not, but said, If he carried away Sir Thos. Shirley: he should carry her dead. He offered to take her by the hand: she fell down and began to cry aloud,' and the Sergeant-at-Arms came back to the House without Sir Thomas Shirley. The warden of the Fleet was then again brought to the Bar from the Tower by his keeper, 'and the House finding him still perverse in refusing to deliver Sir Thos. Shirley, Mr. Speaker pronounced his judgment, that 'as he doth increase his contempt so the House thought fit to increase his punishment, and he was committed to the prison called *Little Ease* within the Tower.' The mere fear of *Little Ease* proved too much for the warden, who offered, through the Lieutenant of the Tower, 'to most humbly submit himself upon Monday in the morning to deliver the body of Sir Thos. Shirley unto the sergeant;' but on Monday Sir Herbert Crofts, who had been appointed by the House to visit the Tower, to see whether the warden was actually in the *Little Ease* dungeon, reported 'the Loathsomeness of the place called *Little Ease*, an engine devised by Mr. Skevington, sometime Lieutenant of the Tower, called Skevington's daughters, or *Little Ease*, the warden's insolent carriage, and that the Lieutenant had not satisfied the desire and pleasure of the House for the warden's restraint,' whereupon many motions seem to have been proposed at once, 'to fine the Lieutenant of the Tower 1,000*l.* for not doing his duty;' 'to fine the Warden of the Fleet 100*l.* for each day that Sir Thos. Shirley is detained;' 'to petition for King's help in this case.' Oh! most weak House of Commons! 'To send six gentlemen of the House to assist the Sergeant to deliver him by force;' and oh! still more weakly, 'to rise if we have no means to execute our privileges.' But on this the Clerk of the House has noted the arguments possibly of Sir Francis Bacon, who spoke twice, and wanted to speak a third time, but was overruled. 'No suit to the King because he cannot do it; and it is a Disclaimer of our Power. Not to rise like sullen fellows—that is, to give over our privileges to wind

and weather. No members of the House to assist the Serjeant—judges cannot be ministers.’

Ultimately the House made another order ‘to bring forth the body of the said Sir Thomas according to known and ancient privilege,’ and that ‘the warden in the meantime and that presently be committed to the Dungeon in the Tower called Little Ease,’ and there is further entered on the ‘Journals’ this curious ‘*Memorandum*.—It was observed that Mr. Vice-Chamberlain to the King, was privately instructed to go to the King and humbly desire that he would be pleased to command the Warden, on his allegiance, to deliver Sir Thomas, not as petitioned by the House but as of himself found fit on his gracious judgment.’ The poor warden of the Fleet does not seem to have had much liking for Little Ease, for he sent two letters to Mr. Speaker, ‘the one dated in the morning, the other in the afternoon,’ expressing his penitency for his former obstinacy and his willingness to deliver the prisoner. Mr. Speaker ‘answered, he said, the Lieutenant by writing that if the warden would yield the prisoner presently, he would take upon him, that he might be spared the Dungeon till this morning. Upon that answer he caused Sir Thomas to be delivered. Immediately upon this report Sir Thomas was said to attend at the door. Sir Edward Hobby being one of the Lord-Steward’s deputies, went forth to give him the oath of supremacy, and after the oath was taken he was instantly admitted to sit in the House.’ And so Sir Thomas Shirley is at last free, but the Warden of the Fleet was yet a prisoner, as appears from his letter to Mr. Speaker, where he states, ‘I hoped upon delivery of the prisoner, I should receive my liberty,’ and he piteously adds that whilst he is a prisoner in Little Ease he has news from the Fleet Prison of which he is warden ‘that some of my prisoners do mutiny.’ The House, however, continues the warden in custody until he shall ‘acknowledge his offence at the bar, and humbly pray favour on his knees,’ which was done on May 19, 1604, when Mr. Speaker, ‘by direction of the House, pronounced his pardon and discharge, paying ordinary fees to the Clerk and Serjeant.’ There was still in custody William Walken, the bailiff who originally arrested Sir Thomas Shirley for Simpson’s debt, and on his petition for release, printed at full in the journals, the grave Clerk has noted in the margin ‘a point which may haply move compassion.’ The ‘point’ is: ‘Your poor suppliant keepeth of alms and charity four fatherless children of his dead brother’s who are otherwise left to the world ; and a blind sister of your orator’s who otherwise must either beg or perish.’ The ‘point’ was effectual, for a week later ‘the House was pleased to discharge

the poor sergeant without calling to the bar or other submission.' Simpson, the plaintiff at whose suit Sir Thomas Shirley was arrested, was kept in the Tower until June 19, when he was ordered into the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms to be released on paying 'the fees and duties, due as well on his own restraint and delivery from thence, as upon the imprisonment and discharge of the Warden of the Fleet, late prisoner there.'

On March 29, 1604, 'a poor minister' Bryan Bridger handed to Mr. Speaker, in Westminster Hall, a petition in which he informed the House 'that the Bishops that enforce men to subscribe to the ceremonies of the Church of England are therein and so far forth antichrists.' For this he was committed close prisoner to the Tower, and was forgotten until May 16, when the Lieutenant of the Tower 'putteth the House in mind' of this 'Bridger the poor minister,' and the House being of opinion that Bridger was 'a poor simple man or a madman,' it was resolved that 'the poor minister shall be delivered presently,' but next day came a warrant from James I. directing that Bryan Bridger should not be released except on the King's own order, on the ground that the 'poor minister' was 'found to be possessed with sundry heretical opinions in matters of religion,' and that there were 'sundry informations of divers malicious humours and practices, whereof the consequences may be dangerous to the State.'

There is, on May 21, 1604, a quaintly worded though rather lengthy report in favour of 'free trade,' setting out that 'although there may be now some five or six thousand persons, counting children and prentices, free of the several companies of the merchants,' 'the mass of the whole trade of the realm is in the hands of some 200 persons at the most, the rest serving for a show only, and reaping a small benefit,' and it is pointed out that as 'proper fruit of monopolies' 'the custom and import of London come to 110,000*l.* a year, and of the rest of the whole realm but to 17,000*l.*' On the next day the House declined to consider factors 'such as dwell in the free towns of Germany, who have their stocks divided, solemnly recording 'Let us cherish our mother, not otherwise respect our neighbour.'

A curious matter commenced in the House on May 15, 1604—One William Jones, a printer, offered a Bill 'to the Speaker of the Commons House of Parliament, in his way coming towards the said House, he received it and brought it in, and being set in his chair after some time, did openly intimate the head or title of it, purporting a declaration of

treason practised by a magistrate of this land (concealing the name of the man and the particulars of the Bill) adding, that for special causes he hoped they would not meddle with it, or expect it should be read—Nevertheless the House inclined to have the Bill read but upon the said Speakers motion did forbear for that time expecting the return and reading of it when Mr. Speaker should think meet to give the House satisfaction which he promised shortly to do.' In the meantime Jones was ordered into custody, and 'that no man should be admitted to speak with Jones.' And afterwards the Speaker informed the House that a message was delivered unto him by a great Lord from his Majesty (James I.) commanding him to send the Bill unto him, and the King finding the Bill '(as was likewise pretended) properly and only touching himself, His Majesty assumed unto himself the examination of the Bill, and retained it in his own keeping.' Whereupon there was somewhat fierce debate, and the Clerk's notes are:—'Injurious that any Speaker should deliver a Bill to the King without the privity of the House.—No Bill whereof the House is possessed to be delivered to the King, or any other, without notice and leave of the House.—We lose our privilege if we lose our Bill.—Mr. Speaker to pray access to the King himself, and in the name of the House to desire the Bill from His Majesty.' The Speaker, Sir Edward Phelips, does not seem to have relished this last injunction, and ultimately the House, fearing conflict with the King, allowed the matter to drop, ordering 'that it should be precisely registered as a judgment of the House, That no Speaker from henceforth should deliver a Bill whereof the House standeth possessed to any whatsoever.'

Even in those days there were Irish questions, for there was on May 24 a report on 'the several wants merits and reliefs of Captains and other Commanders of that sort lately casht from Ireland.' 'Upon this report moved that other Captains as well as Irish may be relieved—to be feared, that out of discontentment if they be not some way provided for they will run to the Spanyard.' It being proposed that they should be relieved by a tax on ale-houses and tippling-houses, 'moved that relief is not fitly propounded out of so base a subject—that the King should give 1,000*l.*, the Lords 1,000*l.*, this House 100*l.*: that a fifteen may be raised from the kingdom.' Apparently, the King would not give the 1,000*l.*; as to the Lords I know not, and the House resolved that 'they could not think fit they should be relieved by Act.'

Lawyers will regret to learn that on the third reading of a Bill about 'Costs' on May 31, 1604, it is solemnly recorded in the journals:

During the argument of this Bill a young Jack-daw flew into the House called *Malum Omen* to the Bill.' The then Clerk must have been much of a wag, for the very next day there is an entry as to the Bill for union with Scotland: 'This Bill, likened to winter fruit, ripens slowly.' James I. evidently thought that the House was hardly doing enough work, for he sent a message by the Speaker complaining that 'so few matters of weight passed and that matter of privilege had taken much time,' and urging 'greater expedition in those things desired to be effected by him than before,' to which the House listened silently, if not meekly. A week later Sir Robert Wroth, having a week's leave to attend the King hunting in Waltham Forest, 'is ordered to send a buck to Mr. Speaker.' Some apology appears to have been offered to the King, and is commenced but not 'transcribed into the Journal, though several blank leaves were left for that purpose.'

The 'Commons Journals' in those days noted other matters as well as debates, for there is an entry on July 3, 1604, that Mr. Speaker and a hundred members dined with the Merchant Taylors: 'thirty persons above the number intended were present,' 'the King sent a Buck and a hogshead of wine,' and 'the Clerk presented the feast with a march-pane representing the Common House of Parliament sitting.'

Readers of Shakespeare need no explanation as to what march-pane is, but members of the present House would be startled indeed if grave Mr. Palgrave should take upon himself to present at the next Guildhall dinner a sweet spice cake representing the House of Commons sitting.

On Tuesday, November 5, 1605, the Journals have this brief but pregnant note: 'This last night, the Upper House of Parliament was searched by Sir Thomas Knevett: and one Johnson, servant to Mr. Thomas Percy, was there apprehended, who had placed 36 barrels of Gunpowder in the vault under the House, with a purpose to blow King and the whole Company when they should assemble.' Never a word that I can find in the Journals, that, as recorded in the State trials, the 'fellow standing in a corner there, calling himself the said Percy's man, and keeper of that house for him, indeed was Guido Fawkes, the owner of that hand which should have acted that monstrous tragedy.' Guy Fawkes is never mentioned in the 'Commons Journals.'

Numerous entries, brief and disconnected, tell how the House wished to be the actual Court to try the plotters; how the crowding at the Star Chamber trial was so great that members of the House of

Commons could not gain admittance, and complained bitterly. The many resolutions against popish recusants and popish books, and against hearing mass, are the quick panic echoes of the abortive powder plot.

The House determines 'to seek means to root out all popery.' Papists are divided into 'three sorts: 1—Papists old, rooted and rotten; 2—Novelists, the greatest danger; 3—The youth, the future tense of the Papists'; and on this last No. 3 there is this note attributed by the Clerk, let us hope wrongly, to Sir Francis Bacon: '3. Take care of marriages and christenings. Nip them in the bud.' The nipping in the bud was not easy, and the House was troubled with many rumours. On Saturday, March 22, 1605-6, when, if the Journals tell the truth, the House had been occupied at a very early morning hour in discussing a Bill for the better discovery and suppression of simony, there is the entry: 'Eight a clock in the morning—This hour there was a general brute that the King was slain in his bed at Oking: and thereupon all Bills reading stayed: the news, uncertainly brought by divers, did prove false.' And at last on April 4, 1606, comes the Bill of 'Attainder of some offenders in the late most barbarous, detestable, monstrous, and damnable Treason.'

Two pages, who had made a disturbance on Parliament stairs, were on January 28, 1605-6, brought by the Sergeant-at-Arms in custody to the bar, and the House ordered one of them to be whipped in the Town House by the Beadle of Westminster.

There was a discussion on ecclesiastical causes and ritual on April 29, 1606, a passage from which, not myself understanding, I commend for its clearness to the better brains of the learned counsel for the Bishop of Lincoln in the case now pending: 'Kneeling, like all hayle to Christ:—Cross, likè Broth at the Sacrament.—Surplice, like a Coat with many patches:—coat with four elbows.' Sir Francis Bacon's name stands as the utterer of this wisdom, and it is scarcely wonderful to read on May 3 that 'the Bishop answ. he could not tell what to make of it.' On the 14th 'A strange spanyell, of mouse colour, came into the House.'

In the discussion of February 13, 1606-7, of the articles of union with Scotland, Sir Christopher Pigott, Knight of the shire for Bucks, at first 'not standing up bareheaded,' 'entered into by-matter of invective against the Scotts,' 'using many words of scandal and obloquy,' and his speech 'was for this day, with a general amazement neglected

without tax or censure.' But on the following Monday 'his Majesty taking knowledge of the words, did much mislike and tax the neglect of the House, in that the speech was not interrupted at the instant and the party committed before it became public and come to his Highness's ear.' Whereupon the House, without protest, committed Sir C. Pigott to the Tower, and discharging him 'from his place of Knight of the Shire ordered that a new writ should issue.' Some eleven days later Sir Christopher Pigott petitions for his release from the Tower as 'sick of a burning fever and in danger of his life,' but the House did not venture to liberate until the leave of the King had been obtained, and then the resolution of the House, following closely the tenor of the message from James, directed that Pigott 'be forthwith freed and enlarged from his said imprisonment, and be at liberty to dispose of himself in some fitter place for the recovery of his health.' King James taking however too close an interest in the speeches made as to the union with Scotland, they at last resolved, though not with undue boldness, that his Majesty would 'be pleased, by some gracious message, to make known to the House, that his princely meaning was and is, that they should, with all liberty and freedom and without fear, deliver their opinions.'

To which Royal James made answer 'that he marvelleth much they should be jealous of him in anything' . . . 'and touching liberty of speech, he should not think him worthy of his place, that did not speak freely what he thought on the matter in hand, so it were bounded with modesty and discretion.'

A message having been sent to the House of Lords on March 4, from 'the Knights, Citizens, Burgesses, and Barons of the Commons Court of Parliament,' the Lords sent answer 'that they can never admit that any Baron of Parliament has place' in the House of Commons, 'and their Lordships further conceive, that this House is no Court, and that their House and this make but one Court.' The Commons reply that 'they found the appellation of Barons warranted by the statute of 6 Henry 8, and by the forms of the King's writ, which Mr. Peak, one of the Barons for Sandwich, offered to the view of the Committee,' and that 'they doubt not but the Commons House is a Court, and a Court of Record.' The Lords rejoined that 'though in all points they were not satisfied,' the matter might drop.

And on May 8, 1607, we find for the first time the since famous name of Oliver Cromwell; but it is not yet our Oliver, who is then only

eight years old, but that of Sir Oliver Cromwell, on whom one Throckmorton has served a Chancery subpoena in breach of the privileges of this House, for which offence Throckmorton is committed to the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms, and the Clerk adds a note 'this Throckmorton was Catesby the Traytor's servant.'

James I. was frequent in his messages to the House. On May 19, 1607, he sent word by the Speaker 'that a fame divulged, and made common in the mouths of many is now come to his highness's ears, touching some violent and undue proceedings in the Borders (with partiality to the Scottish)' and His Majesty being 'much grieved with the report' wisheth they would hear the relation of a Scottish Gentleman, one Sir William Seaton.' 'To this the House assented; but was much disputed (the precedent being rare) where Sir William Seaton should stand; whether without the bar or within. At last agreed out of respect to the King's Message, and the Scottish nation that he should stand a yard within the bar and be brought in with the Mace,' and the Scotch knight spoke from the bar for 'above half an hour.' On the following day the House was adjourned for a week by the King's desire, and on the reassembling 'Mr. Speaker offereth to deliver a message from his majesty, touching the late adjournment, but first he said he would clear himself, having been challenged to adjourn the Court without the privity of the House; wherein he taketh God to witness, he never had any intention to wrong the House.' 'As the House had power to adjourn, so had his Majesty a superior power; and in his name and by his direction he did it.'

The necessary amendment of the law consequent on the union of Scotland with England was a matter which of course especially interested King James, and in this he was not disposed to accord much discretion of speech to his faithful Commons. In the course of the legislation to give effect to the union it became necessary to repeal what were called the 'hostile laws,' *i.e.* laws which, on the English side, made it *inter alia* an offence to pass out of 'the realm' into Scotland or to take 'victual or other refreshment into Scotland,' or which authorised the grant of 'letters of mart, or reprisal, against the people of Scotland in case where the subject of England hath been spoiled,' or which forbad 'any lands or tenements on the borders to be let to Scotland,' and which laws on the Scottish side, amongst many prohibitions, forbad the buying and selling of English goods, forbad Englishmen to come into Scotland or Scottish Borderers to marry English

Borderers' daughters. These might have been called mutual boycotting laws, breaches being punished with terrific severity.

Apparently it was necessary before the Union to try Scotchmen in England and Englishmen in Scotland if either were to be found guilty on any charges of Border raiding, as, whatever the charge or evidence, Scotchmen accused of offences against Englishmen and Englishmen accused of offences against Scotchmen were reasonably certain of acquittal from a jury of their own countrymen. On this matter a Royal Commission on the state of the Borders, in order to procure 'the punishment of murderers, thieves, and robbers, and to disappoint offenders of all escapes, shifts, and subterfuges,' made a formal request or report understanding 'that divers of your grave and honourable House do distaste' some of the changes proposed, which changes were considered by the English Parliament to unduly favour the Scots.

On June 2, 1607, King James—who looked on matters with Scottish spectacles, whilst the House had tenderness for English Border men—wrote a long letter to Mr. Speaker, which, by the direction of the House, was read twice, and the first paragraph of which ran as follows: 'Having been informed that the Committees of the Lower House having so good care to prepare a Bill for abolition of all hostile laws as the same was in effect upon the point of a conclusion, if some new interruption had not happened by obtruding new clauses without any just reason, we thought it more convenient to impart our opinion of that proceeding by you, our Speaker;' and after much explanatory phrasing his Majesty winds up with the hope that the majority of the House 'will honestly and dutifully concur with that which tendeth to our reasonable satisfaction and divide themselves from any others that out of ignorance or humour should oppose themselves against the same.'

This letter, although read twice, was liked no better on its second reading than on its first communication. The House, after fourteen days, desiring 'to contest no more with the King,' and conceiving that 'his Majesty hath no meaning to infringe our privileges,' did not think fit to have it entered on the minutes, carefully ignoring that every word of the letter was already recorded on their Journals. A few days later James practically forbade the House to proceed with the consideration of a petition as to recusants. Many members protested that this was 'a great wound to the liberty and gravity of the House,' but 'Mr. Speaker replied that there be many precedents in the late Queen's time where

she restrained the House from meddling in petitions of divers kinds.' Nevertheless the House directed Mr. Speaker to 'let his Majesty know how much the refusal of this petition did grieve them.' On May 11 the Speaker was reminded that he had brought fifty-six or fifty-eight messages from the King since the commencement of Parliament, and Sir Herbert Crofts declared 'that it hath grown into too much custom that the Speaker should bring any message by the King except when he was sent by the House,' and Sir Wm. Twysden moved 'That Mr. Speaker is not to go to the King but by leave.' 'The Speaker not to go without company, or to deliver a message singly.' The very next day came another message from the King, and again on the next day another. Royal James was clearly a Stuart to the tongue-tip, notwithstanding the recent suggestion that the real James lies wrapped in cloth of gold under the floor at Holyrood. On May 21 his Majesty replied 'roundly and smartly : will not have any deliver the message but himself,' and orders 'the House to attend the King this afternoon at Whytchall.'

The 'pages of the stairs' seem to have been a pleasant set of young gentlemen, and on March 2, 1609-10, Sir Edward Hext made complaint that these pages 'draw servants of members violently downstairs and take their cloaks,' pledging these last for drink at the Prince's Arms ; and there is then the entry, 'The Master of the Tavern presently sent for by the Serjeant ;' but the vintner, not liking the invitation, kept out of Mr. Serjeant's reach, and his man was brought, who deposed 'that sithence the beginning of this session of Parliament Mr. Speaker's page was brought into his master's house by the Lord Willobye's page, the Lord of Oxford's page, the Lord Mounteagle's page, Sir Oliver Cromwel's page, Sir Robert Mansfield's page, and divers other pages, and called for wine, the reckoning whereof came to 4s. ; and saith that the said pages took from Mr. Speaker's page his cloak ; and that the same pages likewise brought in Sir Robert Drurie's page, and called for wine as much as came to 12s., and that the next day Mr. Speaker's page paid the 4s. and redeemed his cloak ;' and telling of like takings, drinkings, and cloak pawnings, adds, 'unto all which pages so brought in they gave an oath in a chamber whereinto they locked themselves ; but what the oath was he knoweth not.' These pages were to be brought up on the morrow ; but some of them being peers' pages the House directed 'precedent to be sought for pages of the Upper House,' and the tomorrow never came or the precedents were never found. There is no further entry as to these cloak-pawning pages, but an equally important matter occupied the House on March 12, when there was complaint that

'Cox the constable and the beadle at one a clock at night had cast a link in the faces of the watchmen,' and this was solemnly referred to the Committee of Privileges. Two days after, in a debate on supply to the King, the clerk notes, 'Our royal vessel leaks: it must be stopt.'

On March 31, 1610, 'one not of the House came in and stood awhile,' and he was arrested; but there was 'testimony by Sir Edward Sandys, his neighbour; his name Craford; his religion good; the second son of Sir William Craford.' There was long debate whether and how this intruding stranger should be punished, Sir Edward Sandys pleading strongly in his favour, and the House decided by 100 to 99, 'one difference,' that Mr. Craford, kneeling at the bar, be admonished by Mr. Speaker of his contempt, 'and then Craford was let out of custody.' On Saturday, May 5, the clerk winds up the day's proceedings with this note: 'Some fine wits made orations; being dismembered and disjointed would prove nothing but froth.' Happily for present members the Clerks at the Table keep their opinions on our speeches locked within their own breasts.

Curious cases of privilege for members and members' servants claimed, granted, or referred to committees, occur literally by scores during the Parliament of James I., but the strangest and most startling of such cases is that recorded on June 14, 1610, when Sir George Moore, 'that D. Steward's man, privileged was, for begetting a woman with child.' This was 'committed to the committee of privileges,' who on the 16th reported 'that he should have privileges' and 'consideration after to be had, who shall pay it.' On June 20: 'Mr. Speaker opened certain packets found at the door, because matter of scandal pretended, being superscribed with point of treason, delivered first to Mr. Chancellor, he to the Lord Treasurer, they both to the King.' Resolved to be burned by Mr. Speaker. History has no trace in it of the contents of these mysterious packets which went from Speaker through the Chancellor to the King, were returned by His Majesty to the Speaker, thought grave enough to be read to the House, and to warrant solemn resolution of burning.

On July 18 Mr. Speaker (Edward Philipps) reported to the House that 'Sir Edward Herbert challenged him on the stairs,' and 'popped his mouth with his finger in scorn; did again this morning do it in the street on horseback.' 'Sir Edward Herbert coming in, stood up, and said he meant no offence to the House,' 'that he meant no scorn to the

Speaker.' 'Affirmed by Mr. Speaker that he put not off his hat, put out his tongue, and plopt with his mouth.' Mr. Chancellor hoped that 'Mr. Speaker would hold himself satisfied,' but the concluding entry was 'Mr. Speaker worse satisfied than before.'

On May 13, 1614, there is a complaint by Sir R. Owen that, he being Chairman of Committee, Sir R. Killigrew had threatened to pull him out of the chair, and there is the Clerk's note: 'A good countenancing of the proceedings in the Irish Parliament,' which proceedings, I presume therefore, were lively in those days.

On May 25, 1614, and following days the members of the House debated whether they might commit to the Tower a bishop (Bishop Neile) who in the other House had said 'that if we should come thither to confer with the Lords we should utter matter of mutiny and sedition.' Some fear was expressed as to what course the King might take, and Sir William Chute stated—'that the King hath of late been ill-informed of this House—attended by his place (of cutter of his meat) the King last night at supper.—He discovered more than fatherly, his motherly affection to this House.' The King on May 27 wrote a letter to the House counselling forbearance in the matter, but it was protested, 'the calling, dissolving, and proroguing parliament is the King's only power.' Several messages passed between his Majesty and the House, and as the matter was persisted in, the King on June 1 sent message of his intention to dissolve the parliament, and, save a torn entry in the 'Journals,' there the matter breaks off. But the Commons 'Journals' in those times were not always complete, for on July 3, 1607, there is an order 'that between this and the next session of Parliament, the Clerk shall perfect his 'Journal' for these three first sessions; and that henceforth the Committee of Privileges do every Saturday in the afternoon peruse and perfect the book of entries.

And with this ends this page of Commons Romance, and even that page not complete, for it telleth nothing of 'Old Clark (the Fool),' whom the House immortalised with its formally recorded gift of 10s.; it omits all mention of the great strife over Dr. Cowell's famous book; and it breaks off just as the romance of Parliament is approaching the chapter when Parliament challenged the King, and the sceptre was broken.

CHARLES BRADLAUGH.



1872

'GET ON THE BOX WITH THE DRIVER, TROLLOP!' E. K. Johnson, R.W.S.

An Unfinished History

IV

NO. 101 Blank Square was more like an æsthetic barrack than a private house, and contained a small regiment of servants. The mistress, Mrs. Molyneux, a pretty, well-preserved, slightly affected woman of forty odd, was one of those superior beings to whom all forms of domestic life are abhorrent, who regard housekeeping as the degradation of the higher faculties, and motherhood as the punishment laid on woman for the sins of Eve. What affection she had she gave to her pets, which she said she preferred to human beings. Her pugs and parrots filled the place of her children; and while she neglected these she took a mother's care of those.

To the upper servants No. 101 Blank Square was one of the blue ribands of service. The coachman, the butler, the cook, the maid, the housekeeper, had all been there for many years, and there was every chance of their remaining for as many more. The under servants, on the contrary, were a floating population, few completing even their year. Mrs. Molyneux seldom noticed, and for the most part did not know of, this perpetual change. If by chance she asked why Thomas or William, Mary or Jane had gone—names and faces of footmen and housemaids to whom she had become accustomed—she heard what Staunton the butler or Mrs. Masters the housekeeper chose to tell her. They had been idle, insolent, careless in their work, disobedient to orders—what mattered the reason given? She accepted whatever she was told, and was no wiser than before. As for the under-housemaids, the kitchen-

maids, the scullery-maids, the knife- and-coal boys, the grooms—she knew absolutely nothing about them. They were her servants' servants, not hers, and were out of her horizon altogether. She supposed things were all right. She had every confidence in Staunton and Mrs. Masters, in Mrs. Johns the cook, Mrs. James the maid, and French the coachman; but she neither asked nor indeed cared. She had shifted her responsibilities on to the shoulders of her several captains, and she knew no more than what they chose should appear.

It was Mrs. Masters who had written to Mrs. Rose in the name of her lady. She always did. Was she not there as housekeeper to do the house-keeping business? And she always wrote the same form of letter on the 'family' notepaper, to which she had access and which she used at her pleasure. But the new comer had to reckon with her, not the æsthetic, dog-adoring mistress, who made the colour and arrangement of her furniture a matter of ethical principle, judged of her friends' morality by their taste, and measured their Christianity by their love for animals as against human beings. And Mrs. Masters was a hard one with whom to deal. Not that she was intentionally cruel. She was only unsympathetic, insensitive, a strict disciplinarian, and a profound believer in the mischievous instincts of youth. To her mind young people had to be kept under the harrow. They had to be taught with stripes and fed on the bread of affliction. Service was to be their discipline, punishment, and instruction combined, when their natural naughtiness had to be burned out of them. When they came to be head servants themselves they might then do to others as they had been done by in their own time of inferiority. Meanwhile, they would be ruled with a rod of iron and whipped with scorpions while she had the handling of them. It was her duty and for their good; and Mrs. Masters was nothing if not conscientious. On her mother's side she had the blood of Mrs. Brownrigg in her veins; and she justified the relationship.

Unlike her usual military punctuality, the housekeeper was late in meeting the train, which came in to its time. It was part of her conscientiousness to herself meet the young women who came up from the country. Such fools as they were sure to be, she used to say—pitying herself to Mrs. Johns the cook and Mrs. James the maid—no one knows what might happen to them. And if anything did, she should never forgive herself. So she hired her special cab once again, as so often before, and drove to the Euston station on this so frequent errand of receiving another victim from the country.

When she came on to the platform, now almost deserted, she of course recognised Elsie Birkett at a glance. She would have recognised

her in the quaintly picturesque formality of her dress just as quickly had the place been crowded. Not now sitting on her box, as at those cross roads when waiting for the coach, she was standing by it—the collapse of fatigue added to her natural listlessness. Mrs. Masters walked up to her as confidently as a detective who has ‘spotted’ his man, and with something of the same feeling. A gentleman was speaking to the girl, which was the very thing this handsomely dressed woman in her silks and velvets had always dreaded.

‘Are you Elsie Birkett?’ she asked in her sharp tones, her words curiously curt, as if bitten off at the end.

‘Yes, ma’am,’ said Elsie without animation, making her country courtesy.

‘A fool, and a deal too pretty and fal-lal,’ thought Mrs. Masters to herself. ‘*She*’ll have to be rallied, I reckon. Here, porter, take this box to that four-wheeler; and for God’s sake, girl, look alive and don’t stand staring there!’ she said aloud, angrily, and with unbounded insolence of manner.

It was her way with her inferiors. To Mrs. Molyneux and other ladies she was one of the most softly spoken, well-bred women of her class to be found in a long summer’s day.

Elsie started and looked alive indeed, in a painful way enough. The first touch of that whip of scorpions was sharp. The young man flushed. He had drawn off a step or two, and was now standing by the bookstall, still within hearing, covertly watching the two women whose relations he divined. He was a handsome young fellow and a gentleman; which made things worse in Mrs. Masters’s eyes; and when she had taken Elsie into custody and touched her up with that whip always lying handy, she turned round and ‘glared,’ as the phrase goes, at this undesirable person. To begin like this!—this prize Sunday-school girl to have allowed a strange gentleman to talk to her, the first thing she did on coming to London! Mrs. Masters put no great faith in innocence, wherever born and bred. She thought that, although country girls were fools, they had the naughty heart of their kind all the same as the sharper and more experienced. And here was a fal-lal who would have to be looked after as well as rallied, else she was no judge of men and maids!

‘Get on the box with the driver, trollop!’ she said angrily, giving Elsie a sharp push.

It was a cold, raw, drizzly evening in November; the girl was faint and weary and strange and unaccustomed; but Mrs. Masters respected herself and her position, her fine clothes and her dignity, too much to

allow one who was to be the second scullery-maid of the establishment to drive inside with her. 'Begin as you mean to go on,' was her favourite working motto; and this was one of her methods of beginning.

Elsie drew back and slightly covered with the involuntary action of fear. Was this harsh angry woman, who began by abuse, to be her mistress for life? She looked round as if to see how she could escape, but Mrs. Masters, giving her another push, 'rallicd' her effectually, and before she knew where she was or how she had done it, the country girl was on the box of the four-wheeler, driving through the darkening streets to 101 Blank Square.

The young man, always standing by the bookstall, watching them while affecting to study the literature provided for the public, jumped into a hansom as the four-wheeler drove off.

'Where to, sir?' asked the cabby through the trap door.

'Follow that four-wheeler,' answered the fare; and the man, with a rapid gesture to his mates, touched up his horse and followed the four-wheeler at a discreet distance, like one whose education in possibilities has not been neglected.

V

THE proper gradations of domestic aristocracy were well maintained at 101 Blank Square. The four superiors dined and lived together in their own well-furnished room—waited on by the middle class—the footmen and sometimes the head housemaid. These, with the kitchen-maids, messed together, waited on by the underlings. The underlings waited on themselves, and were the serfs to whose share fell the stripes and the scraps. This upper four lived luxuriously. The middle class were fed with the simple sufficiency of well-to-do artisans. The underlings had their leavings, cold and unappetising, and generally not nearly enough. It was the middle class and the underlings who did all the real work of the house. The superiors organised, superintended, perhaps put their hands to the finer edges, as the sculptor gives the finishing touches to the statue; but of work in the sense of labour they knew absolutely nothing.

When there was a dinner party, or a ball and supper to follow—and these were frequent—the scullery-maids had to sit up all night to scrub and scour and clean till everything was as bright as silver. Mrs. Johns demanded absolute order and cleanliness when she came down into the kitchen at nine o'clock in the morning to overlook things for the day. The kitchen-maid was responsible, though she was not an executant.



TIRED OUT. E. K. Johnson, R.W.S.

She passed that on to the scullery-maids, who had all the cleaning of every kind to do. As they were kept up on the 'company' nights till four or five in the morning, and as they had to be about their work of lighting fires, sweeping and scrubbing floors and steps, &c., by six, it was scarcely worth while to go to bed at all. And this, coming two or three times a week when the season was in full swing and Mrs. Molyneux kept practically open house, was scarcely a regimen suited to the health of still growing and undeveloped girls. Add to this a harshness of command, a brutality of manner and general conduct, and we can understand what a hell upon earth to some of its inmates was this beautiful home which the world was never weary of praising. For nothing could exceed the perfect management of 101 Blank Square—its faultless exactitude, its absolute cleanliness and order. That all this was got by human tears—by misery and despair often ending in a still lower degradation which offered a brief and feverish and garish respite, or in death which gave a final release—that the girls failed, and died in hospital, went to the bad or committed suicide—that was nothing to the purpose. The upper servants were irresponsible—autocratic like so many White Czars or Eastern Pashas—and the law which touches mines and workshops was inoperative here. The streets, the hospital, the river—these were the three issues from that underground world weeping and working at 101 Blank Square; that home of beauty, luxury, and hospitality, whose mistress had lost her womanhood in her fine-ladyism, her humanity in her sentimentality, her sense of duty in her æstheticism, and had delegated to others the responsibilities which belonged to herself alone.

When the cab arrived at the house Mrs. Masters sharply bade Elsie ring the bell. The girl, not knowing one thing from another as yet in London, rang the right-hand bell, which completed her introductory misdeeds and set her wrong with the household from the beginning.

'You'll come to no good, that I can see with half an eye,' said Mrs. Masters a little below her breath, 'brawling' not being allowed on the doorstep of 101. 'Go down those area steps, you bad girl, and look sharp about it, else you'll get more than your wages, I promise you!'

Again Elsie looked round as if for some way of escape. What way could there be? What could she do in this mysterious and dangerous metropolis, where she knew no one and no place, and was as entirely at the mercy of her new mistress as a kid in the talons of an eagle? She, too, like the kid, was taken as pabulum—if not to feed the eaglets, yet to sustain the proud position of these upper ten among servants. She could not escape. She had been taken in the net and

she must dree her weird, however hard. With a sick heart, dazed and terrified, she stumbled down the area steps, while Mrs. Masters passed through the hall ; and when the heavy door opened to admit her and her box she walked forward into the very jaws of hell—and when that door shut she was caged and trapped without the chance of release.

‘Well, Mrs. Masters, what have you brought us?’ asked Mrs. Johns as the housekeeper bustled down the carpeted kitchen stairs and came into the cosy, well-found housekeeper’s room.

‘A fool—a fal-lal,’ said Mrs. Masters shortly.

‘Oh,’ said Mrs. Johns dryly ; ‘she’ll soon have to learn better ways.’

‘Picked up already with a swell at the station,’ said Mrs. Masters, pinching her lips.

‘My word ! she has lost no time,’ returned the cook with ominous quietness.

She was as severe a moralist as Mrs. Masters herself—though certain evil-disposed people at Walthamstow, where she had a pretty little orphan nephew, did say that if Truth were fished out of her well she could tell some queer tales. Let that pass. Evil-disposed people are so common !

Mrs. Johns rang the bell which gave into the kitchen ; the kitchen-maid appeared.

‘Send the new girl,’ said the cook curtly.

‘Yes, ma’am,’ answered the maid respectfully.

In another moment Elsie appeared.

‘So, you are the new girl?’ said Mrs. Johns, like Mrs. Masters speaking sharply, as if she were angry.

‘Yes, ma’am,’ said Elsie with her country courtesy.

‘You don’t look good for much,’ returned the cook with a sniff.

Elsie did not answer. Pretty, slight, delicate, drooping, she certainly did not look fit for the rude life before her. But she would have to be made fit, or go under, as others had done.

‘Who was that young swell you were talking to when I came on to the platform?’ asked Mrs. Masters, heading the attack from another side.

‘I don’t know, ma’am,’ answered Elsie.

‘And you speak to a swell you don’t know!’ cried Mrs. Johns in an exalted voice.

‘There was no harm,’ said Elsie in a dazed one.

‘No harm ! Girl, what and who are you?’ said the cook. ‘No harm in speaking to a strange swell on the platform ? Where were you brought up ? Have we got a gay lady among us?’

Elsie looked from one to the other ; then, suddenly collapsing into

unspeakable despair, she turned her face to the wall, and burst into a bitter flood of tears.

'Oh! if you are coming that game, get along with you!' said Mrs. Masters, angrily pushing her towards the door.

'And if you think I'm a-going to be taken in by a few tears you are mistaken,' said Mrs. Johns, giving her another push. 'Here, Jane!' she called to the kitchen-maid, 'take your girl, and good luck go with her! We've had a parcel of fools here before, but this one's about the biggest of the lot as yet! If you can make a smart servant of *her*, I'll say you can make an ice-cream out of water-gruel!'

'What a softy you are to blubber to them old cats!' said Sarah Sams, the other scullery-maid, to whose companionship Elsie was relegated. She was a rough, coarse, good-natured kind of helot, as strong and grimy as a coal-porter. 'Never let them see as they can hurt you, and then they'll leave off a-trying. Two she-devils, that's what they are, and no mistake! But come and have a cup of tea. I've kept some warm on purpose. I knew there was a strange girl a-coming from the country, and I know what them old cats are—regular Tories and screws!'

But Elsie was too far gone to be comforted by tea or anything else; and after crying herself sick she was sent to bed as one in disgrace, and soon knew no more of life than the dull aching which accompanies even the sleep of the wretched.

The next morning her real initiation began, and before the day was out she had cause to envy the slaves for whose release so much blood and treasure has been spent.

If the artificiality of the rectory and the primness of the old servants had been difficult to bear, after the simple self-ordering of her life with Grandfather in his lonely cottage with the bees and the blackbird—what was this new state of things? Ill-fed and ill-lodged, cruelly overworked, struck when things went wrong, rated like a faulty hound to prevent them going wrong, with no relaxation, no kindness, no womanly consideration, no friend to protect her, no home to receive her, alone in the wilds of London, with all its mysterious dangers—what could she do? She was too proud to write to Mrs. Rose—was she not of the staunch old north-country blood?—and the alternative of leaving never occurred to her. If she did leave, where could she go? What could she do? It was all very well for Mrs. Masters and the rest to salve over their consciences with the glib formula—no one need stay who did not like. They knew it was often impossible for the girls to leave. They were between tyranny and destitution—the devil and the deep sea; and they had to put up with things they were not able to make better. As now was

the case with Elsie. She was not bound by material chains, but moral obligation and circumstance were as strong as a bar of iron. She had been placed here by the only natural superior she had, and here she must remain, as it seemed to her, till she died. And perhaps she should die soon. She hoped she should.



'Why do you want to go out, girl?'

VI

A MONTH had passed, and Elsie had not been once out of this dungeon-like house—not even to church nor yet for a walk. Her only breath of fresh air was what she got on the dark raw mornings when she was cleaning the area and the front-door steps.

'Why don't you ask for your afternoon?' said Sarah at last.

It was a dangerous house in which to interfere; but though, to the bold London girl, Elsie was just the biggest Stupid out, community of suffering had bred a certain friendliness of feeling, and Sarah was resolved to risk the danger of her advice.

'I don't like,' said Elsie wearily.

'You are a fool,' returned Sarah with candour.

The two were in the scullery together, early in the morning before the Superiors were about.

‘Go out into the park, you big silly, and you’ll maybe find a toff to stand treat, and take you to a show. We mostly do. But don’t you take up with no soldiers, except a sergeant. They’re no good. We have to treat them, not they us. They have no tin.’

‘I ’m not the kind to take up with nobody,’ said Elsie proudly.

‘No,’ said Sarah demurely. ‘We never do when we first begin. But go out. You’ll mope to death in this old hole if you don’t. But you must ask leave, you know. Them old cats would see you farther first, and then they wouldn’t, unless they were shamed into it.’

Which was true enough. But there was also mingled with the tyrant’s indifference to human suffering the older and more experienced woman’s knowledge of evil and fear of the harm that might happen to the young.

After some more prodding on the part of Sarah, Elsie plucked up enough courage to ask Mrs. Masters if she might ask Mrs. Johns for an afternoon—Mrs. Molyneux being slightly indisposed, and the work therefore a little slackened.

Even the two old cats, as Sarah called them, could see that this pretty country lass, who was so sweet a girl and so unsatisfactory a servant, looked thin and worn, pale and ill; but they were not of the kind to give way without a struggle.

‘Go out?’ cried Mrs. Masters, as if never such a thing had been asked before; ‘why do you want to go out, girl?’

‘Please, ma’am, I have not been out since I came,’ said Elsie, following Sarah’s advice.

‘You do only half your work, and have not earned a holiday,’ said Mrs. Masters severely.

Staunton, reading a newspaper before the fire, shifted his feet a little uneasily. What was sauce for his ganders of footmen as he administered it was too strong for these females’ goose, he thought; and they might let the girl have her afternoon without bullyragging her.

‘And who’s to do your work while you are trailing about the streets, I’d like to know?’ asked Mrs. Johns, cutting in with an unanswerable air.

‘Sarah says she’ll do it,’ returned Elsie.

‘Sarah, indeed!’ said the cook, with a toss of her head and a sniff. ‘I don’t know as how I like this kind of thing! Sarah here and Elsie there—as thick as two thieves you are! When girls get too thick the work’s sure to be slighted—as it is with you two lazy hussies.’

‘I don’t think we are very lazy, ma’am,’ said Elsie simply.

‘You bold pie! how dare you? You dare to argufy with me! My word, what next, I should like to know!’ cried Mrs. Johns, fuming.

‘Please, ma’am, may I go for a walk?’ repeated Elsie, without too much tact.

‘No, not if I know it,’ said Mrs. Johns.

Elsie looked as if she were going to cry; but she struggled with her tears, and turned to Mrs. Masters.

‘I can’t say you can if your mistress wants you,’ said the housekeeper coldly. ‘You should be a better girl, and then you’d get your leave like the rest.’

‘I did not know I was bad,’ sighed Elsie.

Staunton rustled his newspaper, and stole a compassionate look at the pretty girl standing there to be battered by those dreadful females. He got up to stir the fire.

‘Let her go,’ he whispered to Mrs. Johns, over whom he had influence.

‘I’ll ask Jane if you can be spared,’ then said the cook, still ungraciously but as if voluntarily relenting. ‘If you can, you may go for an hour, or an hour and a half—not a minute longer, else you’ll catch it, and so I tell you.’

‘Thank you, ma’am,’ said Elsie; and the cook, exchanging glances with Staunton, called Jane, who took her cue, and gave the enslaved prisoner an hour and a half as if the minutes had been so many golden nuggets.

Guided by Sarah’s directions Elsie threaded her way out of the square into the park. Drear and sodden, flowerless, leafless, it had still the look of nature. It appealed to the desolate young country girl as if it had been an old friend; and she smiled when she looked at the trampled turf and blackened branches as if she had looked into the faces of the loved and lost. Too tired to walk far, she sat down on a bench, looking at the dismal expanse before her, and dreaming back over her past. Grandfather and her happy life with him—Ned Scott, when he was like her brother—Mrs. Rose and the weariness of the few weeks she had been with her—that hateful Liz Troy, with her freckles and red hair—she thought of them all, her dilated eyes fixed on the vague distance, seeing nothing of what they looked on, while her mind saw all she thought of.

Suddenly she was recalled to herself by some one sitting down on the seat close to her, saying with a friendly accent, ‘What are you doing here?’

She started and came back from the past to the present, turning her

eyes on the speaker to see the gentleman who had before spoken to her at the railway station. He had recognised her as he was passing.

Her prettiness, and that subtle charm and grace which belong to mind rather than culture, were still on her. At seventeen sorrow refines and pales, but it does not wither ; and Elsie was perhaps more touching in her depression than she had been admirable in her happiness.

‘I have been looking for you,’ he said very kindly, ‘and have often been past the house where you live. Tell me about yourself, and how you are getting on. Are you well treated ? Are you happy ?’

Again the old feeling of release from the dumbness of despair came over Elsie, as it had when Ned Scott came to her in the garden on the day Grandfather died. Here was something that might pass for a friend—the most of a friend she had. It was the repetition which made the thing familiar and not terrifying. It was like Ned Scott himself in another form. This girl of absolute innocence and unconsciousness of evil—this bud as yet enclosed in the calyx without a thought of the time when it must blossom and open its heart to the sun and pour out its sweets on the air—this mere child had had, so far, no true friend in women, and only the doubtful sympathy of men. She was like some beautifully planned and slightly built derelict drifting helplessly on to the rocks ; no one to steer, to guide, to save ; abandoned to herself and her blind impulses.

Child as she yet was, with such prevision of womanly life as might be in her given to the vague image of Ned Scott, she foresaw no evil and felt none. In this new comer, for all that he was a fine gentleman, she recognised only a friend—the sole friend she had in the wide world. Her shyness passed ; those tears which mean confidence and the strain relaxed came into her eyes ; she held out her hand trustingly, almost affectionately, and before she well knew what she was saying she had poured out the story of her loss, her sorrow and her wrongs into the ears of a man of whom she did not know even the name.

Their championship may not be always safe, but the indignation of the most motherly woman in the world does not equal that of young men when they see the ill-treatment of girls by their own sex. Inequality of social condition does not count with them as it does with women. The poor little slavey, with grimed hands and face, is always a woman to them ; and where the irate cook hurls a half-heated ‘sally’ at a careless kitchen-maid, the chivalrous young gentleman of the establishment makes excuses for and does not complain of the careless housemaid. When Elsie told this young barrister, this Herbert Winter, of her troubles, she roused up in him all the desire for protection, all the

angry chivalry, natural to his age and sex. He raged inwardly, and outwardly swore. Through his mind went rapidly thoughts of how he could best serve and save this helpless girl—this forlorn child standing on the threshold of her desolate womanhood. He meant no evil—no more than Elsie herself. He was full of compassion only, of pure philanthropy, unmingled with any second intuition ;—and he would speak to his landlady. She was a good soul, and might help this unfortunate creature out of the pit into which she had fallen. At all events he would try. He could do no harm, and he might do good. His heart was very full for this miserable little sister, whom God seemed to have abandoned and for whom human charity was so scarce.

So they talked—she confiding, he heartening—till the time came when Elsie must go back to her prison. Meanwhile he took her name—her address he had—and bade her be of good cheer. He would be her friend, and she should not want a helper while he was alive. In a day or two he would write to her, and she was to write to him if she wanted him. It was a pretty little poem so far as it went. Who would have expected such an innocently intentioned idyl to be framed on a sad and sullen December day in Hyde Park, between a smart young London barrister and a miserable little scullery-maid, under the harrow in one of the finest houses of Blank Square ?

VII

HERBERT WINTER'S reckoning was of that time-honoured kind which sums up the bill without the concurrence of the host. When he spoke to his landlady, and told her of Elsie's sorrowful history, with a prayer to try and find a more suitable situation, he spoke to one as deaf as the companions of Ulysses when he stopped their ears with wax and the Sirens sang in vain. Miss Prothero, the genteel spinster who let lodgings to young men and looked sharp after their morals—Miss Prothero knew the world too well to be taken in by a cock-and-bull story of this kind. A girl who would speak to a strange young gentleman at the railway station or in Hyde Park, and tell him tales out of school, and make complaints of her mistress—no, she was not one of the right sort, and in nowise to be encouraged ! She was very likely an idle, good-for-nothing hussy, in a good place under a smart mistress who was doing her best to make a clever servant of her ; and she preferred, instead, to get hold of gentlemen in the park and tell them a pack of lies, which they were soft-hearted enough to believe. It was but the beginning of the end, and Mr. Winter must forgive her for being so bold. He was a gentleman and she was only a landlady—but her papa had been a gentleman,

too—and she perhaps knew more of girls than he did. She had had so many through her hands.

In the scene which followed, Miss Prothero unconsciously backed up Mrs. Masters; she did not believe in innocence when things looked crooked and the ways were dangerous. She made that mistake which is almost universal with women—she credited the young with the knowledge of experience, and therefore she did not believe in their ignorance of the evil which might result from their actions. To her mind it was clear enough. She assumed that it was as clear to theirs. And this thing—this Elsie Birkett, who trapsed into the park and talked with strange gentlemen on a bench—she was as bad as the rest, and Mr. Winter was a fool to be so gulled.

They had a long discussion. It began amicably and ended in anger. Miss Prothero had a temper; Herbert Winter had determination. The one was resolved not to aid in what she believed to be a plant and foresaw would end ill; the other was just as resolved to help this poor, pale, delicate girl, whose forlorn and miserable condition had appealed to him as nothing of the kind had done before. The rift in the lodging-house lute widened as the talk went on, and when it was finished Herbert Winter gave notice to leave and Miss Prothero went downstairs in tears.

This meeting with Herbert Winter was the most sacred secret of Elsie's life. She could no more have confided it to Sarah Sams than she could have thrown a child to the lions. When she went back, and her coarse, good-natured chum questioned her as to her adventures—had she found a toff?—where had she been?—in the park by herself?—get along with her for a silly!—she, the transparent Elsie, lied with the assurance of an old hand. She had seen no one and spoken to no one. She had got into a great green place with trees and railings, and she had sat down on a bench and thought of her old home and Grandfather. More than this Sarah could not drag from her, and with this she had to be content. And Elsie kept the sacred secret as if it had been her very life, and let herself drift down the stream of thought without making too sure of anything. Some day she would have another holiday, when she would again meet this beautiful gentleman, who somehow reminded her of Ned Scott and yet was so unlike; and she would feel as if she were back in Lingholme with Grandfather alive and the blackbird singing in the cage above the outhouse door. All of which pleasant dreams did not help her in her work, which was more often slighted than done with a will, and her lines were daily harder and harder.

At last it came, but in a different shape from what she had expected.

She did not see her new friend, but she heard from him ; and a letter to Elsie was a rarity. To be sure, Mrs. Rose had written to her twice, telling her to be a good and obedient and industrious girl ; and the old cook had written to her once, telling her to be sure and scrub her pots the right way round—also telling her that the neighbours talked a deal of Ned Scott and Liz Troy ; but they had not been asked yet, though folks did say as how they would before long. She had had three letters in all ; but this one was different from any. It was from Herbert Winter, asking her to go and see him in his rooms at the Temple. He had failed, he said, in getting her a better situation, but he still hoped he might be able to do something for her. It was a kind letter, but quite formal ; and, however little judgment there was in writing it at all, it was without evil design. It was simply an offer of kindness, perhaps of protection from unhappiness and misery ; and for all that nature and the world do not allow of such a protectorate from a young gentleman to a pretty servant girl, that does not say it may not be innocently proffered.

For once the keen eyes of the authorities did not see clearly. When Elsie asked for an afternoon about three weeks after her first essay, it was granted with the same amount of grumbling—but it was granted. She was a country girl accustomed to fresh air ; and though why she should care to gad abroad in this detestable weather neither Mrs. Johns nor Mrs. Masters could understand, yet—well ! there, then—she might go for a troublesome do-nothing trollop as she was ; but she was to be sure and be back to her time, else she would find a welcome she would not like. To all of which sourness Elsie answered never a word, but, dressing herself to the best of her ability, set out on her expedition.

With infinite trouble she found her way to the Temple, as she had been directed. With a strange bounding of her heart, but also as strange a leaden kind of reluctance in her feet, she found the staircase, and at last the door where Herbert Winter had painted his name. She knocked. A voice said ‘Come in !’

Then some one opened the door. It was her fine young gentleman himself—the apotheosis and divine transformation of her old friend Ned Scott.

‘Ah, Elsie, is that you ?’ he said with a smile, as he held out his hand. ‘It is good of you to come and see me. Come in and warm yourself. And now, tell me all about it.’

There was not much for poor Elsie to tell, but what there was she poured out more like a child than a woman. She had no sense of proportion. Grave sorrows were no larger than minor troubles, and all

were immense alike. She was so pretty, so helpless, so innocent, so ill-treated, that Herbert Winter felt his heart throb for pity and his blood boil for indignation. But what could he do? For all practical purposes he was as helpless as she herself, and his advocacy would be her greater damage. Her being here at all, harmless as it was, would be her ruin were it known. But—how pretty she was!—what a sweet and interesting moment this was in her life—this moment of unconscious girlhood, just before that of conscious womanhood! The young man's heart and fancy and imagination and humanity were all sincerely stirred. How he wished that he could help her!

On Elsie's side, over all her being stole a sense of warmth and trust, security and repose, such as she had not known since Grandfather died; and not even when he was alive with so much self-consciousness. These plainly furnished bachelor's rooms were to her temples of exquisite luxury, and yet a luxury to which she was not wholly strange. This handsome young gentleman, whose name she had only just lately known, and whom she had seen three times only, was as if he had been her childhood's playmate. In this quiet, uninterrupted, familiar *tête-à-tête* her body seemed to go to sleep and her soul to awake. Here was her heaven, her recompense for all the sordid miseries she had to undergo. When she could get leave she would come here to Mr. Winter's rooms to be strengthened and refreshed. She could bear better now the 'whips and scorns of time,' and all the hardships she had to undergo, if she might come here to drink at this divine fountain. She had found her talisman, and no one now could hurt her. If these words were scarce the exact symbols of her thoughts, her thoughts would fit into them, translated; and the result on her nature was the same. Then the time came when she had to leave, and with the feeling of going from heaven to hell—from life to death—she got up and said good-bye.

He should not have done it—no, he should not! And she—she should have screamed and fought and scratched his face, and loaded him with abuse—and alas! alas! she did not! On the contrary, when he took her in his arms and kissed her pretty, delicate, flower-like face, she rested there on his bosom tranquilly, contentedly, with the divinest sense of peace she had ever known. She had no tremors, no blushings, no shamefaced surprise, no bounding joy. She was simply as if at home, and in her right place. He was far more ashamed of himself than she could possibly divine; but, shame or not, he kissed her again, and again she took his caress with tranquil but exquisite pleasure—and then she passed away into the darkness of the black winter's evening.

The moral mysteries of life are many. Among them is the infinite cruelty done to others in the name and for the intention of good. The conscientious inquisitor is a case in point. Mrs. Masters, and Miss Prothero were of the same breed. To Mrs. Masters her first duty in life was to make clever servants out of the raw material sent to her. If they failed and went under, that was no fault of hers. She acted on the principle of the survival of the fittest, and the necessary going to the wall of the weakest. Miss Prothero's duty was to look after the morals of her young gentlemen, and not to let them be imposed on by jades and hussies. In her wrath at the loss of her 'drawing-room floor,' and her sincere belief that this Elsie Birkett, for whose sake this rift and final rupture had come about, was no better than she should be, she wrote an anonymous letter to the Lady of 101 Blank Square, which naturally fell into the hands of Mrs. Masters. In this letter she bade her beware of one of her maids, named Elsie Birkett, who was in the habit of going into the park and taking up with strange gentlemen. And such a girl, said the virtuously indignant writer, was not fit for an honest woman's house.

Mrs. Masters made short work of action when she had it to do. The instant she read the letter, which came in Elsie's absence, she went to the girl's miserable little den, opened her box, and found, folded up in a clean pocket-handkerchief, Herbert Winter's letter of invitation to his rooms in the Temple. Here then was proof positive of the writer's good faith, and corroboration of what had been said. And Mrs. Masters wanted no more.

Like a lion waiting for an antelope, like a cat watching for a mouse, or a hawk for a sparrow, she waited Elsie Birkett's return. And when the girl came in she was sent to the housekeeper's private room—to receive her deserts. Had Mrs. Masters really believed in her unconsciousness of evil, she might have spoken to her as a mother, mildly, with less anger than warning. As she did not, she spoke to her like a Megæra. All the blood of Mrs. Brownrigg surged in her veins. She struck the girl more than once; she called her foul names, of which Elsie knew only half the significance; she accused her of sins but ill-understood; she pictured a future of unspeakable, but still obscure degradation. She showed that future as it had been a world of snakes and scorpions, of devils and demons intermixed in one seething mass of infernal fire—and it bore the name of Herbert Winter. If ever she went to his rooms again, said the housekeeper, she would be a lost girl—lost, soul and body—for time and for eternity. Now she knew her fate, and as she chose, so would she choose salvation or damnation. Then she let her go, frightened, bruised, and

desperate; and the woman thought, as the girl turned away, that she had done her duty by this ignorant little fool and saved her from the lowest deep into which a woman can sink.

Elsie went back into the kitchen and through to the scullery, where, fortunately or unfortunately, no one was at the moment about. Quick as a flash, she ran up the area steps and was out in the streets and the darkness before she well knew what she had done. She ran along the square and turned into the crowd of Piccadilly, always feeling that some one was behind her—some one on her traces. But she walked on so rapidly that soon she felt she must have distanced her pursuer, and was now safe in the crowd and the darkness. She went on she knew not where, lost in unknown streets. Men turned round and looked at her; some spoke to her; policemen scanned her curiously, as she walked on, ever on, she knew not where and she cared not whither. She had but two thoughts—to ask a home and protection of Herbert Winter, or to kill herself, she did not quite know how. It must be one or the other. To go back to 101 Blank Square was impossible.

Always walking rapidly and without fixed intention, she found herself on a bridge where few people were passing. She stood still, looking over the parapet. The black river rolled silently below—a grave without the need of making by men's hands! One spring and she would be free. She would have shaken off all her sorrows in this world, and would have joined Grandfather in heaven. But God would be angry, and would not let her go to heaven! Mr. Rose had said so in his sermon, when Frank Gray had hanged himself on that old oak-tree in the lane. And hell was a worse place than even this cruel and unkind world. Then she thought of Herbert Winter—of his warm and, to her, luxurious rooms—of his kindness, his sympathy, his offer to help her—and, finally, of his kiss. The thought of that kiss brought into her mind and blood something that the reality had not done; and she felt her face crimson with a sudden rush of shame—and something that was not shame. She felt as if she could scarcely go back to him now. It would be like asking him to kiss her again. And yet, if *he* asked *her* she would not say him nay!

Standing there, dreaming vague dreams of strange joy, she heard the loud laughter and rude voices of a party of drunken men and women as they came reeling and rollicking along the pavement. She turned to look at them; and now she understood Mrs. Masters. This, then, was to be her end if she went on that way? Through the Gate Beautiful of love she would come to this deadly decline—this way of unutterable degradation. Mrs. Masters said so, and she knew. Oh! but that

hour in those friendly chambers was sweet! that moment of love in those strong arms was divine! And the river was so cold and black, and the leap so high—and she was yet so young! And God would be angry, and she would not get to Grandfather and heaven.

But neither there was there a heaven for such as she had just now seen—these nameless infamies of humanity. Which should it be? Across the river the lights shone like stars, beckoning her to the man who was now the whole world to her; under the gaslight stood that drunken, hollow-eyed tawdry thing which she, too, would become if she went over to that accursed but yet so tempting Gate Beautiful of love; below her feet rolled the river where was death and, beyond death, damnation. Which should she choose of these two paths, where human cruelty and tyranny had thrust her? Where each was sinful alike, how could she remain innocent? The sorrows of life, the bitterness of virtue, the charm of love and the degradation to follow, the wrath of God and the eternity of hell; but ah! the ineffable delight, the sacred splendour of that glorious Gate Beautiful, over there where the lights shone like stars!

E. LYNN LINTON.



A MODERN HEROINE. Fanny Bertie.

The Modern Young Man as Critic

FRANKLY, I do not know what the Modern Young Man is coming to! The young man of my own early experience was feather-headed, but earnest; impulsive and uninstructed, but sympathetic and occasionally studious; though his faults were many, lack of conviction was certainly not one of them. He dreamed wildly of fame, of fair women, of beautiful books; and when he read the Masters, he despaired. A great thought, even a fine phrase, stirred him like a trumpet. For him, in his calm and waking moments, female purity was still a sacred certainty, and female shame and suffering were less a proof of woman's baseness and unworthiness than one of man's deterioration. He lifted his hat to the Magdalen, in life and in literature. The human form, even when wrapt in the robes of the street-walker, was still sacred to him, and he would as soon have thought of laying sacrilegious hands upon it as of vivisectioning his own mother. In Bohemia he had heard the bird-like cry of Mimi; in the forest of Arden he had roamed with Rosalind. For him, in the light-heartedness of his youth, the world was an enchanted dwelling-place. The gods remained, with God above them. The heaven of his literary infancy lay around him. Out in the darkened streets he met the sunny smile of Dickens, and down among the English lanes he listened to the nightingales of Keats and Tennyson. But *now*, with the passing of one brief generation, the world has changed, the youth who was a poet and a dreamer has departed, and the modern young man has arisen to take his place. A saturnine young man, a young man who has never dreamed a dream or been a child, a young

man whose days have been shadowed by the upas-tree of modern pessimism, and who is born to the heritage of flash cynicism and cheap science, of literature which is less literature than criticism run to seed. Though varied in the species, he is invariable in the type, which includes the whole range of modern character, from the young man of culture expressed in the elegant humanities of Mr. Henry James and Mr. Marion Crawford, down to the bank-holiday young man of no culture, of whom the handiest example is (as we shall see) a certain egregious Mr. George Moore. The modern young man, whether with or without education, has no religion and no enthusiasm. Nourished in the new creed of Realism and *Art pour Art*, he is ready, with De Goncourt and Zola, to 'throw a woman on the dissecting table,' and cut the beautiful dead form to pieces, and content, with Paul Bourget (*ridiculus mus* of a social mud-heap in parturition), to take Love 'as a subject,' and call it a cruel enigma. Even the insufferable Gautier was superior to all this; he was not too clever to live, not over-full of insight to write. But the modern young man is the very paradox of prescience and nescience, of instruction and incapacity. He writes books, which are dead books from the birth; he formulates criticisms, which are laborious self-dissections, indecent exposures of the infinitely trivial; he paints, he composes, he toils and moils, and all to no avail. For the faith which is life, and the life which is reverence and enthusiasm, have been denied to him. The sun has gone out above him, and the earth is arid dust beneath him. He has scarcely heard of Bohemia, he is utterly incredulous of Arden, and he is aware with all his eyes, not of Mimi or of Rosalind, but of Sidonie Risler and Madame Bovary. He has looked down Vesuvius, out of his very cradle. In Boston he has measured Shakespeare and Dickens, and found the giants wanting; in France he has talked the *argot* of *L'Assommoir* over the grave of Hugo; even in free Scandinavia he has discovered a Zola with a stuttering style and two wooden legs, and made a totem-god of Ibsen; while here in England he threatens Turner the painter, and has practically (as he thinks) demolished the gospel of poetical sentiment. And yet, curiously enough, he has done nothing, he has given us nothing; for he *is* nothing. He is appearing before us, however, in so many forms of pertinacious triviality, that it behoves us to take a passing glance at him, and to inquire, however briefly, into the phenomenon of his existence. To study that phenomenon completely would far transcend the limits of a brief article; so I must confine myself at present to the consideration of the young man in one capacity only, that of Critic, though he is nothing indeed if not critical, as we shall see. From the day when Goethe sent.

forth his 'plague of microscopes,' to the day when Matthew Arnold defined poetry itself as a 'criticism of life' (committing poetical suicide in that preposterous definition), everybody has been critical, and of course our young man is no exception to the rule. Of the Modern Young Man as Critic, then, I propose to furnish some few easily selected illustrations, subdividing my types as follows: (1) The Young Man who is Superfine; (2) the Detrimental Young Man; (3) the Olfactory Young Man; (4) the Young Man in a Cheap Literary Suit; and (5) the Bank-Holiday Young Man—the last pretty much the same as discovered in real life and classified by Mr. Gilbert. All these young men have drifted into literature, and, though there is an immeasurable distance between the distinction and culture of type number one and the unkempt barbarity of type number five, they have all certain characteristics in common—an easy air of omniscience in dealing with the great problems of life and thought, an assumption of complete familiarity with the 'facts' of existence (they are all, in a word, wonderfully 'knowing'), an open or secret disrespect for average ideals, a constitutional hatred of 'conventional morality,' an equally constitutional hatred of 'imagination,' and, above all, a general air of never having been *really* young, of never having loved or worshipped, or been mastered by, anything or anybody, on the earth or above it.

Taking the types in their intellectual and natural order, for I propose to work down the scale from the highest note to the lowest, I can find no better example of the Superfine Young Man than Mr. Henry James, well known as the author of several minor novels and numerous minor criticisms. Highly finished, perfectly machined, icily regular, thoroughly representative, Mr. James is the educated young or youngish American whom we have all met in society; the well-dressed person who knows everybody, who has read everything, who has been everywhere, who is nebulously conscious of every astral and mundane influence, but who, as a matter of fact, is most at home on the Boulevards, and whose religion includes as its chief article the well-known humorous formula—that good Americans, when they die, go to Paris. No one can dispute Mr. James's cleverness; he is very clever. He is, moreover, well-spoken, agreeable, good-tempered, tolerant. He can even upon occasion affect, and seem to feel, enthusiasm; can talk of Tourgenieff as 'lovable,' of Daudet as 'adorable.' For the first quarter of an hour of our conversation with him we are largely impressed with his variety, his catholicity; after that comes a certain indescribable sense of vagueness, of superficiality, of indifferentism; finally, if we must give the thing a name, a forlorn

feeling of vacuity, of silliness. With a sigh we discover it: this young man, with all his information, with all his variety and catholicity, with all his wonderful knowledge of things *caviare* to the general, is, *au fond*, a fatuous young man. Startled at first by our discovery, we turn away from him; then, returning to him, under dishallucination, we perceive that he does not really know so much, even superficially, as we imagined, that his easy air of omniscience is a mere cloak to cover complete intellectual indetermination. For him and his, great literature has really no existence. He is secretly indifferent about all the gods, dead and living. He takes us into his confidence, welcomes us into his study; and we find that the faces on the walls are those, not of a pantheon, but of the comic newspaper and the circulating library. He appears to recognise the modern Sybil in George Eliot; and why indeed should he not take that triumphant Talent seriously, when the inspiration of his childhood was the picture gallery in *Punch*, when he sees a profound social satirist in Mr. du Maurier, and when he can fall prone before the masterpieces of that hard-bound genius *in posse*, Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson? These, then, are the glorious discoveries of the young man's omniscience—George Eliot, Alphonse Daudet, Flaubert, du Maurier, Mr. Punch, and the author of 'Treasure Island.' With these, one is bound to say, he is, like all well-bred Americans, thoroughly at home. He says charming things concerning them. He finds more than one of them (adopting that hideous French phrase) 'adorable.' He becomes the little prophet of the little masters, and he publishes a little book¹ about them—a book full of the agreeable art of conversation, such as we listen to in a hundred drawing-rooms. Nor is it at all out of keeping with this elegant young man's character that his talk about his literary ideals is, when it is most admiring, most patronising. He keeps in reserve a latent scepticism even concerning the *dii minores* of his microscopic religion; nay, he suggests to us that his remarks concerning them are merely lightly thrown-out illustrations of his own superabundant sympathy—that, if you really put him to it, he *would* read Shakespeare with appreciation, and *could* share the boy's enthusiasm about Byron.

Very characteristic of Mr. James is his neat little paper on Alphonse Daudet—a quite marvellous example of how not to commit oneself in criticism, how to burn incense with one hand and snap the fingers of the other. He begins by saying that 'a new novel by this admirable genius is to my mind the most delightful literary event that can occur just now;' he ends by 'retracting some of the admiration' he has

¹ *Partial Portraits*. By Henry James.

‘expressed for him,’ and saying that he has ‘no high imagination, and, as a consequence, no ideas;’ and finally, as an afterthought, to conciliate his Famulus Mr. Facing-both-ways, he cries, ‘And then he is so free!’ and ‘The sight of such freedom is delightful.’ This inconsistency, it will be admitted, is rather hard on an author of whom Mr. James also remarks: ‘If we were talking French, nothing would be simpler than to say that Alphonse Daudet is *adorable*, and have done with it.’ The ‘admirable genius,’ a book from whose pen is ‘the most delightful literary event that can occur,’ who is so ‘free,’ and whose delight and freedom consist in ‘having no imagination, no ideas,’ must be a little puzzled by such treatment; but after all, it is only the superfine young man’s way of telling us that he is really so omniscient as to have no clear opinion at all on that or any subject. In one of the best things in the book, a conversation about ‘Daniel Deronda,’ in which the interlocutors are a literary gentleman and two talkative ladies, he is seen at his best, or worst—now panting with admiration for George Eliot’s genius, again inferring that she had no genius at all, trimming, finessing, explaining, blaming, excusing, till the poor puzzled reader exclaims in despair, ‘O this superfine young man! What *does* he mean? What *does* he feel? Why does he not speak out his mind, and have done with it?’ This, however, is not Mr. James’s method. His desire is to convince us at any expense that he sees every side of a question, is familiar with every *nuance* of a subject; and in the eagerness of this desire he is paralysed out of all conviction. His perceptive faculties are good enough, naturally; his temper is highly agreeable and his style affable in the extreme; but his courage is as non-existent as his opinions. So clever yet so half-hearted a gentleman never yet committed himself to criticism. Not less amazing than the fact that he should consider a drawing-room discussion on ‘Daniel Deronda’ really worth printing, is the fact that he should labour under the impression that he has really pronounced any dictum on any subject. One can understand the critics who *have* opinions, wise or unwise. One can follow with amusement the subacid sneers of Hazlitt, the florid flourishes of Macaulay, the sledge-hammer blows of Carlyle, the screaming invective of Mr. Ruskin, because all these writers have something to say and contrive to say it; but when we enter the *salon* and encounter the superfine young man, who is neither bitter, nor florid, nor brutal, nor shrewish but is in all respects perfectly well-behaved, we are not amused or edified—we are bored. It matters little whether he is pattering to us about George Eliot, or about ‘his friend’ Tourgenieff, or about Alphonse Daudet, or about the caricatures in *Punch*, or about the Art of Fiction—

the effect is invariably the same. No sooner is one opinion advanced than it is qualified with another ; scarcely is one view taken when another is substituted ; an endless succession of personal pronouns—‘*I think,*’ ‘*I will admit,*’ ‘*I consider,*’ ‘*I suspect,*’ &c.—covers a total absence of critical personality. The young man’s very religion is ‘qualified.’ His mind is bewildered by its dreadful catholicity. He has not a spark of hate in him, because (with all his admirations and ‘adorations’) he has not a spark of love. As was said long ago in another connection, ‘How sad and perplexing it must be to be *so* clever!’

One regrets not a little that the final impression left by a young man of such cultivation should be one of dulness, of silliness ; yet so it is, and it is only another proof that education is sometimes a very misleading thing. I can quite imagine that Mr. Henry James, had he read less, travelled less, known less, might have become a highly interesting writer ; but early in his career he appears to have quitted America for Europe, and to have left the possibilities of his grand nativity behind him. To be born an American is surely a great privilege ; yet nearly all Americans of talent flit moth-like towards the garish lights of London or Paris, and hover round these lights in wanton, not to say imbecile, gyrations, till they pop into the glare, drop down singed and wingless, and are forgotten. No individual is so catholic as an average American of culture ; no individual is, *au fond*, so worldly, so supremely trivial ; and Mr. Henry James is this average American *in excelsis*. A good deal of this is, of course, matter of temperament ; a good deal more, matter of training. Youngish men like Mr. James have refined their perceptions to so thin a point that they are only fit to commemorate the judgments of the drawing-room on the one hand and the smoking-room on the other. The air of free literature asphyxiates and paralyses them. Outside of society and Paris, they are far too clever, far too educated, to breathe or live at all.

It is Mr. James’s privilege, or perhaps his misfortune, to write for the English public, but I strongly suspect him of a hidden longing to cater for the public which is Continental. If he were not doomed by his nationality to be a superfine young man, he would perhaps choose to become a Detrimental one, like his friend M. Paul Bourget, who dedicates a book to him and claims at least two-thirds of him as thoroughly Parisian. The Detrimental Young Man, to whom I now come by a very natural transition, is quite as pertinacious as Mr. James, though far less cautious ; fully as omniscient, but not nearly so self-

assured; far more audacious, but in reality quite as dull. He is a refined or superrefined sort of naturalist, to whom the coarse method of Zola appears very shocking, and who, before he 'dissects' the human subject, is careful to *wash his hands*; nay, he goes further, and washes his subject too, that the spectator may be spared disgust and pain as far as possible. An elegant young man, with a certain amount of surgical skill, he affects to have studied profoundly the morbid anatomy of the female character; but alas! we soon discover that his elegance is merely that of a man about town, while his science is only a device to hide the tastes of the *boulevardier*. Two or three feeble novels, and a few flabby criticisms, form his literary credentials; so that he would be scarcely worth considering if he were not the type of a very numerous class. Like his fellows, he parades a 'method'; like his superiors, he vaunts the dogma of *Art pour Art*, which, in other words, is Art without the aspirate, without any heart at all. The world is beginning to discover, by the way, that the moment a writer begins to talk about his Art, he is forfeiting its privileges. It is quite true, moreover, that Art has nothing to do with morality, directly; but it has a great deal to do with it, indirectly; for (as I attempted to show years ago) if a work of Art is beautiful, it *must* be moral. This, of course, is not saying that it may not offend against conventional canons. But all the palaver about Art of such writers as Flaubert was merely a feint to disguise a radical defect in sympathy, an incapacity for imagining greatly and feeling either deeply or profoundly; and it will be found generally that the writers who echo the palaver are, like Flaubert, workers in *mosaic*—artists who, instead of working under special inspiration or with inspiring passion, take little bits of subject and piece them together, sometimes with very charming effect, but never with the genius of great literature. The talk of Art for Art is, in short, disingenuous, being used almost invariably to excuse or to justify trivialities of invention and temperamental want of creative insight.

What kind of a person the Detrimental Young Man is may be gathered from a reference to one of his well-known stories, 'Un Crime d'Amour,'¹ a work so far critical that it seems to embody the writer's theory of social life. It is the very commonplace history of a *boulevardier's* love for his friend's wife, his seduction of her, and the consequent misery and dishallucination. In the opening chapter we are introduced to the only three *dramatis personæ*—the husband, the wife, and the lover. 'Le petit salon était éclairé d'une lumière douce

¹ *Un Crime d'Amour*. By Paul Bourget.

par les trois lampes—de hautes lampes posées dans les vases de Japon, et garnies de globes sur lesquels s'appliquaient des abat-jour simples de nuance bleu pâle.' This 'nuance bleu pâle' is the only thing which differentiates 'Un Crime d'Amour' from other idylls of adultery, and the only quality which distinguishes M. Paul Bourget's 'method' from that of other foolish young men. It permeates the story and the style, it sicklies o'er the countenances of the adulterers and the author, it is used in lieu of honest daylight to give artistic seeming to a theme which is radically prurient yet absurd. In one consummate chapter we are treated to a detailed description of the furnished house which Armand, the lover, takes for his mistress, and in which, dazzled by the 'nuance bleu pâle,' 'elle venait de sentir, sous les caresses de cet homme qu'elle aimait si profondément, une émotion inconnue s'éveiller en elle.' Then the same 'nuance' travels on to the husband, who in course of time, poor fellow, gets very blue indeed; rests on the wretched woman, who deceives her lover as well as her husband and then cries, *in articulo mortis*, 'C'est cette souffrance qui m'a sauvée, c'est par elle que j'ai jugé ma vie;' and finally transfigures the Detrimental Young Man himself, while he informs us that 'une chose venait de naître en lui, avec laquelle il pourrait toujours trouver des raisons de vivre et d'agir: la religion de la souffrance humaine.' This is the moral, that experiences of the sort I have described make even a detrimental young man alive to the fact that treachery and seduction turn life into Dead Sea fruit and lead married ladies into much trouble. We have heard it a thousand times before, we shall hear it a thousand times again; for our modern young men are honest enough to admit that love is not a thing of cakes and ale. No; it is the prerogative, it is the glory, of the detrimental young man to pose himself in the pale blue 'nuance' of a picturesque unhappiness. In his sad perception of the sorrows of *crim. con.* and the dreariness of infidelity, he resembles our own glorious Ouida; and he resembles that classic of the Langham in other respects—in a feverish appreciation of millinery and upholstery, in a love of subdued lights and soft odours, in a rapturous inspiration to paint the splendours of the bedpost and the mysteries of the bath-room. Indeed, if we could imagine Zola and Ouida collaborating on a story to be afterwards revised by Mr. Henry James, we should get a very good idea of a work by M. Paul Bourget. We should have all the nastiness *plus* all the niceness, and the whole carefully supervised by a master of the super-fine.

In another novel, 'Cruelle Énigme,' the detrimental young man

goes further, and for the edification of his friend Mr. James, to whom the work is dedicated, 'throws a woman on the dissecting table' and vivisects her, arriving, after much more millinery, at the conclusion that Love, like life, is 'a cruel enigma.' The poor woman deceives everybody, even the very young lover whom she adores, and is, in fact, just the familiar tame-tigress of French fiction, but she is specialised again for us by the pale blue 'nuance' producing in this case an anatomical study much in the manner of the eccentric artist Van Beers. All this might be very interesting, no doubt, if there were any science in it. Readers who know what Balzac has done in this way would certainly not deny the attraction to be found in the morbid pathology of the female character. But Balzac was a Man, not a *boulevardier*; and even Zola is a Man deformed. One page of the 'Human Comedy,' or one chapter of 'La Joie de Vivre,' is worth all that M. Paul Bourget or Mr. Henry James ever wrote or dreamed of writing. And if I return without apology to our superfine young man in this connection, it is not that I am unaware of the ethical distinction between him and the detrimental young man. But there is an ethical resemblance also, though it does not lie upon the surface. It is the business, it may, for all I know, be the boast and pride, of Mr. James and his compeers, to translate the fiction of the French Empire and Republic into a vocabulary suitable for the perusal of young American ladies; and young ladies, in England and America, read their dreary books—compared with which, the literature of the 'Lamplighter' and the 'Old Helmet' is edifying. To call *them* immoral would be exaggeration; they are not vital enough to be immoral. But they, too, parade the pale blue 'nuance' which is to redeem insipidity and impertinence, and turn commonplace into Art. In their cold-blooded self-sufficiency, in their indomitable triviality, in their stupendous dulness and omniscient vacuity, they suggest Zola (a dullard *au fond*) under ruthless expurgation and Gautier without the flesh. For, the modern French theory of writing being that nothing is too trivial for a subject so long as it gives opportunity for narrative and analysis, French novelists escape dulness by choosing subjects which, though trivial, are suggestive or unclean; and our *Art pour Art* novelists of English race choose, in secret emulation, subjects which, though trivial almost to fatuity, are prurient in their supreme affectation of moral catholicity.

But let me put it in plainer words, in clearer English. There is neither flesh and blood, nor virility, nor manly vigour, in these young moderns, either in France or England; they breathe no oxygen; they

display no intellectual or moral health. They hang about the petticoats of young women, in the 'nuance bleu pâle' of a moral atmosphere of their own making. Contrast a book like 'Un Crime d'Amour' with a book like Murger's 'Vie de Bohème,' and note the difference between two generations. Compare the 'Sappho' of 1887 with even the 'Dame aux Camélias' of 1850. To go even a little further back, the jaded young man of Alfred de Musset still preserved his hallucinations. Rolla saw his ideal naked, not on the dissecting table, but *alive*—

Et pendant un moment, tous deux avaient aimés !

He was not a nice young man, with his shirt-collar turned down *à la* Byron, and his addiction to absinthe; but, compared with this modern young man, he was a gentleman, a poet, and a dreamer. And then, if you will, compare such books as 'The Portrait of a Lady' with the early girl-studies of Trollope, a novelist ever thin and trivial enough in all conscience. *There* was the fresh flush of English life, the breath of English homes; *here* we get only the simper of the superior person, the drawl of the superfine young miss etherealised into a heaven of small sensations, small intuitions, and small, infinitesimally small, conversation. It is nothing to the purpose to explain that Mr. Henry James is a strictly moral writer in the ordinary sense of the word, and that M. Paul Bourget is a highly immoral one. My own impression is that the two gentlemen are more nearly akin, both in mind and morals, than either would care to admit. Though one is superfine, while the other is detrimental, both are omnisciently silly; neither has one spark of the vitality, one flash of the insight, which made young men write books a generation ago.

Whose children are these? Who is responsible for the appearance of these young men in society and literature? I think their literary genealogy, though here and there obscure, may be traced with quasi-Biblical accuracy on both sides of the Channel. *There*, our own Byron begot Alfred de Musset, and Alfred de Musset begot Dumas *filis*, and Dumas *filis* begot Daudet, and Daudet begot Paul Bourget. *Here*, Richardson begot Jane Austen, and Jane Austen became the mother of Theodore Hook, and Theodore Hook begot Anthony Trollope, and Anthony Trollope begot Henry James. In either succession there was a gradual process of deterioration, resulting at last in what physiologists call 'an exhausted breed;' nor is the present threatened intermarriage between Parisian impertinence and English triviality likely to improve the stock. Meantime, the great masters, Balzac and Hugo, Fielding and

Dickens, appear to have left no lawful descendants. Look back again at the Paris and the London of a generation ago! How fresh and living, how full of wild enthusiasm and delightful temper, was literature! Here and yonder, the breeze blew lightly from Bohemia. Art was sunny, life was free. The young Frenchmen swaggered like Fluellen, forcing all and ready to honour the green leek of Romanticism. The young Cockneys swarmed everywhere, full of the new gospel of Dickens and a robustious Fairyland. Young writers were neither cynical nor cautious nor 'knowing'; they were mad with the exuberance of their vitality. Since the old boys were childishly reverent and happy, why should not the young boys be so too? In those days there was little or no thought of 'dissecting' women, only of loving and honouring and embracing them; no care to hang round the skirts of young ladies, analysing their intuitions, but rather a desire to roam in Arden with them, or to join them at 'Roger de Coverley.' There were girls then, as there were boys. Alas, there are now neither girls nor boys, only nasty little men and women! I rather fancy that the easy descent of Avernus was begun when Thackeray drew Blanche Amory and Becky Sharp, and painted his good women without brains; for though Thackeray had been in Bohemia, and never quite forgot the soft sylvan susurrus of its green glades, he created a school of young cynics who have something in common with the young realists of to-day. Be that as it may, the time of cheap pessimism has come, and good cheer and animal spirits, poetry and enthusiasm, have now no abiding place in literature.

Next on my list comes the Olfactory Young Man, whom I shall deal with very briefly, as he differs from the Detrimental Young Man only in a few minor particulars, and, like him, is French by nationality. M. Guy de Maupassant, in his introduction to Flaubert's 'Correspondence with George Sand,' entreats us not to get angry with any one artistic theory, 'since every theory is the generalised expression of a temperament asking itself questions;' in other words, he contends that it is the business of the artist, not to ascertain truth absolute, but to describe the effect of social phenomena on his own organs, his own temperament. This being admitted, he contends, taking his own point of perception, the only point of view possible to his temperament, that it is a very ugly and a very nasty world. His sense of unpleasant odours in life leads to the most grievous of all afflictions, naresmia. He goes through life and literature following his unlucky *nose*. All the meaner phenomena of life, all its baseness, all its triviality, allure and fascinate him, while he is blind, and glories in being blind, to its subtle suggestions, its higher

meanings. A critic and a novelist, he parades his little gospel of realism, and declines to subject either his thought or his style to any disturbing influence. But after all the main thing in life of which he is conscious is the sexual instinct, and the sexual instinct on its most physical side. His lovers find out each other, like animals, by the sense of *smell*. From the scent of a rose to the perfume of a petticoat, life is conditioned by its olfactory peculiarities; beneath and within it all is the odour of decaying moral vegetation, the stench, faint or overpowering, of the human dead body, of the tomb. I suppose M. de Maupassant is an artist; he is careful to tell us that he is. For my own part, I am content, with only this stray reference, to pass him by. A young gentleman who threatens to become, like the famous Slawkenbergius of Sterne, 'all nose,' would be very useful company for a sanitary inspector or a member of the Board of Works, but fortunately, literature is much more than osmology, and the world contains something beyond and above its social sewers.

It is a relief, after discovering such subtleties of refinement, literary and olfactory, to come face to face with the good, square, honest, unintelligence of the Young Man in a Cheap Literary Suit. Mr. James, M. Bourget, and M. de Maupassant are models of literary elegance, and would look aghast on the loud, showy, every-day dress of tweed which forms the literary attire of Mr. William Archer, a young gentleman from Scotland who has attained to the proud dignity of being dramatic critic of the *World*; a saturnine and severe young gentleman, a young gentleman who has taken the drama under his protection, and writes in all seriousness about plays and players.¹ I have on a former occasion, in a very rough *ad captandum* fashion, described Mr. Archer's literary gifts. It is a curious fact, not to be overlooked in the present survey, that while the critics of twenty years ago were recruited from the ranks of literary aspirants, with special gifts and ambitions of their own in other directions, and while such critics were young men of enthusiastic temperament and with minds nourished on free literature, the most boisterous critics of the present moment are recruited from the ranks of the uninspired and unambitious, are, in other words, young men who seem never to have studied seriously or felt profoundly any literature at all. A little knowledge, a very little English, and much pertinacity, are at any rate Mr. Archer's equipment, enabling him to pronounce judgment on works of art, to talk glibly about the drama and its professors, and to deliver a lecture on his favourite subjects at the Royal Institution. The pet

¹ *About the Theatre*. By William Archer.

object of Mr. Archer's aversion is Mr. Irving. Our young man began his career by an attack on that gentleman, consisting chiefly of 'Bank-holiday' personalities. He qualified this attack a little later on by a pamphlet on 'Mr. Irving as Actor and Manager,' while his friend and quondam *collaborateur*, Mr. Low, laid at the popular idol's feet the dedication of a voluminous work on the drama. Still, Mr. Archer has nothing but scorn, open or disguised, for Mr. Irving as an actor, and for the 'poetical' productions of the Lyceum. Ranging further afield, he inveighs against the 'fanfaronade' of Victor Hugo, and finds his best dramas 'about on the level of Italian Opera;' while in Zola and Flaubert he discovers the kind of beauty which enables him to exclaim, 'This is true! this is real!' The public, it seems to Mr. Archer, 'is beginning to demand more and more imperatively that the dramatist shall be, not indeed a moralist (that may come later on), but an observer, and shall give us in his work, not a judgment or an *ideal*, but a *painting*;' and on this score, and on the score that he finds indications among dramatists of increased observation, he thinks that the drama is 'advancing.'

Mr. Archer, in fact, is nothing if not 'critical;' that is to say, his cheap literary suit is worn by him as armour against all the shafts of imagination. He pines for a drama where there shall be no 'ideals,' and which shall be an absolute and accurate 'transcription of life,' and he sees hope for it, finds hints of it, when he contemplates such splendid experiments as Mr. Pinero's 'Lords and Commons,' Mr. Grundy's 'Snowball,' and the 'Great Pink Pearl.' Poetical and imaginative plays he finds, on the whole, dull and uninteresting; not nearly 'knowing' enough, or severe enough, for this generation; and in his gloomy expectation of the hour when the dramatist shall be a 'moralist' (which is 'to come,' *mirabile dictu*!) he turns with all the eagerness of which he is capable to the latest dramatist of Scandinavia—to Ibsen, who is 'stumping' the North of Europe in the interests of so-called Scientific Realism.

Shrewd, clever, fearless, individual if not original, Ibsen has produced certain pamphlets which he calls plays, and in each one of which he advances one of those dreary ethical propositions which the world is now receiving *ad nauseam*. A quite loathsome piece of morbid pathology called 'Gengangere' is considered his masterpiece. It is a story of heredity, showing with what has been called 'relentless fidelity' how the sins of the parents are visited on the children—a thesis chiefly illustrated by two characters, a miserable and depraved young man who inherits insanity from a dissipated father, and a perkish young woman who takes

her foibles from a mother who 'went wrong.' As a realistic experiment this play is not uninteresting; as a work of art, it is on the intellectual level of De Goncourt; for it means nothing and is nothing, except a disagreeable reminder of facts with which every thinking man is familiar. A poet might have taken the subject, and stirred us by it. A dramatist would have made it live and move. Ibsen, after disgusting and horrifying us beyond measure, leaves the subject exactly where he found it—in the region of dreary and dirty commonplace. And as this arid writer deals with the subject of heredity, so does he deal with sociology, with morality, with religion, placing a smudgy finger on the black marks which disfigure the map of life, but seldom or never assisting us with any flash of poetic vision. Unfortunately for literature, his audacity in attracting the modern young man has infected a far nobler writer of his own nationality, the Björnson who imagined what is perhaps the divinest love-episode in any language, that of Audhild in 'Sigurd Slembe.' Of late years Björnson has been drifting towards the shifting sands of realism, attracted thither by the false lights set by Ibsen *et hoc genus omne*. But not in that direction, not in the way of cheap science and hideous human pathology, lies the freedom of art or the salvation of literature. When the prose of truth has been said, its poetry remains to be told; and when the great writer comes to deal with such themes as physical disease and moral responsibility, he will show us how impossible, how hopeless, how heartbreaking it is, to view these themes from the point of view of the pessimist or of the modern young man as critic. Fortunately, Shakespeare and fresh air remain, while the artistic progeny of Schopenhauer asphyxiate themselves in close chambers and try experiments on the dead or living subject.

If Ibsen is a great or even a good writer, as Mr. Archer and his friends assure us that he is, then the great writers of all countries have been from time immemorial hopelessly in the wrong—then we must accept M. Zola's dictum that the true method of literature is only just discovered. In that case, to be a great writer it is only necessary to be stupendously and supremely unimaginative, and to see nothing beyond the bit of tissue at the point of the scalpel. But Æschylus and Sophocles, Shakespeare and Fielding, Balzac and Victor Hugo (to go no further for examples) have warned us that literature can glorify Science while embracing it. Take a work of any of those masters, no matter how gross or how revolting the *subject*—choose the 'Agamemnon' or the 'Antigone,' 'Macbeth' or 'Lear,' 'Tom Jones' or 'Joseph Andrews,' 'Père Goriot' or the story of Fantine—and what impression remains?

The terror, the sadness, the pity, or (as it may be) the mad absurdity of life, but above all, its divine suggestions. What holds true of the masterpieces holds true of all literature which is sound and hale ; such literature explains by insight what is dark and horrible, redeems by insight what is base and mean, and instead of leaving the wound of a moral sore wide open to horrify humanity, heals it with the balm of a subtle interpretation. It is because Zola justifies himself thus occasionally, that even he, with all his banalities, is worth considering.

But naturally, the young man in a slop literary suit, sunk in the self-satisfaction of being completely though inexpensively rigged out and consequently overpowering, resents imagination. Great is the truth, he says, and it shall prevail ; but there is truth and truth, and what satisfies the needs of a small critic is wormwood to the soul of a thinker or a poet. A little culture is a dangerous thing ; for it encourages a dull young man of saturnine proclivities to decry the masters, to extol the dullards, and to pose as a superior person. Writers like Mr. Archer assert that literature may go wrong through too much sentiment, too much imagination, and that realism has been sent to put it right. Yet the outcome of the teaching of all great literature is that, while realism is the device of blind men and feeble intellects, poetry, not pessimism and cynicism, is the living *truth*.

It would be vain to follow our present young man through all the perversions caused by a hasty literary equipment and a morbid intellectual appetite. As the absinthe-drinker, rapidly losing the sense of taste, finds that only acrid wormwood will suit his palate, so Mr. Archer takes his Ibsen with a relish, and even thanks the gods for Mr. W. S. Gilbert, While he has not one good word for a Titan like Mr. Charles Reade, he waxes almost eloquent when his theme is a small cynic or a huge dullard. Great sentiments, great motives, great emotions, great conceptions, great language, alike repel him. By temperament and by education, he is, like his superiors with whom I have placed him in juxtaposition, wholly unimaginative and unsympathetic—a dreary young man, without one solitary redeeming literary vice, if we except bad English.

One word, before I proceed, on a point suggested by the growth in art of that diabolic love of the Horrible which is to be found among the class of realists so much admired by Mr. Archer and his friends. To those who imagine, as I do, that the world has been

growing too cruel and cynical to exist in any sort of moral comfort, there is more than mere social significance in the occurrence of such hideous catastrophes as Whitechapel murders and other epidemics of murder and mutilation; for they show at least that our social philosophy of nescience has reached a cataclysm, and that the world, in its despair, may be driven back at last to some saner and diviner creed. The lurid and ever-vanishing apparition known in the newspapers as 'Jack the Ripper' is to our lower social life what Schopenhauer is to philosophy, what Zola and his tribe are to literature, and what Van Beers is to art: the diabolic adumbration of a disease which is slowly but surely destroying moral sentiment, and threatening to corrupt human nature altogether. 'Jack the Ripper,' indeed, is a factor to be reckoned with everywhere nowadays, and it behoves us, therefore, to study him carefully. To begin with, he is an instructed, not a merely ignorant, person. He is acquainted with at least the superficialities of science. His contempt for human nature, his delight in the abominable, his calm and calculating though savage cruelty, his selection of his victims from among the socially helpless and morally corrupt, his devilish ingenuity, his supernatural pitilessness, are all indications by which we may know him as typical, whether in literature or in the slums, in art or among the lanes of Whitechapel. Most characteristic of all is his irreverence for the human form divine, and his cynical contempt for the weaker sex. As the unknown murderer of the East End, he desecrates and mutilates his poor street-walking victims. As Zola or De Goncourt, he seizes a living woman, and vivisects her nerve by nerve, for our instruction or our amusement. To him and to his class there are no sanctities, physical or moral or social; no mysteries, human or superhuman. He believes that life is cankered through and through. And as he is, let it be clearly understood, so is the typical, the average, pessimist of the present moment. Everywhere in society we are confronted with the instructed person for whom there are no gods, no holy of holies, no purity, and above all, no feminine ideals. Contemporaneous with modern pessimism has arisen the cruel disdain of Woman, the disbelief in that divine *Ewigweibliche*, or Eternal Feminine, which of old created heroes, lovers, and believers; and this disdain and unbelief, this cruel and brutal scorn, descends with the violence of horror on the unfortunate and the feeble, on the class called 'fallen,' which in nobler times supplied to humanity, to literature, and to art, the piteous type of the Magdalen. To understand the revolution in human sentiment which has taken place even within the generation, contrast poor Mimi once more with even Madame Bovary! With the decay of masculine

faith and chivalry, with the belief that women are essentially corrupt and fit subjects for mere vivisection, has come a corresponding decline in the feminine character itself; for just as pure and beautiful women made men chivalrous and noble, so did the chivalry and nobility of men keep women safe, in the prerogative of their beauty and their purity.

For myself, who write as a pure optimist and sentimentalist, and still preserve the illusions of my foolish youth, I see in the change around me only a lurid and hideous nightmare. It cannot be real, it cannot be the living waking truth, for if so, life is a lazar-house and a slaughter-house, and there is nothing left but despair and death. I know (am I not told so on every hand?) that this is mere 'sentiment.' I know that to believe in the Magdalen is almost as retrograde as to believe in the Christ. I am referred, for my guidance, to a whole literature dealing with the morbid pathology of the female character, and am left free to consult my Thackeray of the drawing-rooms or my Zola of the sewers. Neither Becky Sharp nor Blanche Amory, however, any more than Madame Bovary or the wife of the painter Claude, has any power to interest me, any skill to convert me. My own experience, though poor and uneventful, has shown me that womankind is *not* entirely composed of silken monsters and ferocious tigress-cats. I have with my own ears heard the cry of the Magdalen, just as certainly as I have listened to the bird-like laugh of Mimi and have stood by the bedside of Camille. I am aware, in a word, that what is known as the 'sentimental' view of evil is corroborated by my own knowledge of the world and of human nature. Pessimism is a lie; that basest of lies, which is half a truth, it attracts by its special pleadings, its triumphant reference to hideous facts, the half-instructed among human beings. It is a creed for the semi-cultivated, for the men of some knowledge and little understanding, and from the bulk of these issue our 'Jack the Rippers'—in life, in literature, in art, and in criticism.

I have now arrived at the bottom rung of the ladder, where Mr. George Moore, the last young man on my list, is waiting for me, ready, nay determined, to throw off the mask and let us see the modern young man as critic exactly as he *is*. It is doubtless a far cry from Mr. Henry James to Mr. Moore; but though the one is a barbarous and the other a superfine young man, they have certain typical qualities in common, as we shall discover. In a recently published masterpiece,¹ Mr. Moore paints his own portrait for a faithless generation. His book goes

¹ *A Young Man's Confessions.* By George Moore.

straight to the mark. Its vanity, its ignorance, its courage, is colossal. Its self-exposure amounts to the sublime.

I for one am very glad that, after all the lamentable want of candour characteristic of our Harries with the 'H,' the world is treated at last to a complete revelation of the type which has discarded its 'H' for ever. The typical young man of this generation, the 'Arry of literature and the music-halls, has broken out in criticism. A problem well worth studying is this young man of boisterous indecency, with his incidental acquaintance with the *argot* of Paris and the studios, and his general incapacity for consecutive thought of any kind—this young man who, like those others, has never been young, and will never, we know, be old or wise. I have read his book with no little pleasure, for it is, at any rate, thoroughly candid and representative. The high jinks of the excursion train developed into criticism in which everybody is 'bonneted,' even poor Shakespeare, the wild revel of the penny steamboat, the Bacchantic romps of Hampstead Heath, are expressed at last in a malodorous but honest book. The Belshazzar's feast of small beer and skittles, the Bohemianism of bad tobacco, the exuberant Cockney horseplay, all is here; and to crown all we have the portrait of the young man, not the 'Arry of the revels, but the penitent 'Arry of *next day*, after the trying excursion to Gravesend or Hampton Court, exclaiming to himself, 'Oh, I do feel so bad!' The doleful 'Arry countenance, the 'Arry coat, the 'Arry tie, are all typical of the young man who has never had a clean mind, who glories in his uninstruction, yet who is so far from happy! A noticeable experience in his life has been a holiday trip beyond the Thames, to Paris. He has seen the photographs in the Rue de Rivoli, and visited the Eden Theatre. He talks complacently of his experiences and his predilections—of the great Balzac, of 'his friend' Zola (whom he bonnets, too, quite merrily), of girls, of artists, of pictures, of books, of a general ramble and scramble through cafés and bagnios, always ending in the same Elysium of unsavoury jokes and pipes and beer.

This young man was never a child, never had any eyes to see what ordinary people see. His earliest remembrance is of a miracle—'plover rising from the water'—so that even as a child he was incapable of observing correctly the simplest natural phenomena. In later life, his reading has embraced, among other works, a book called 'The Rise and Fall of Rationalism'—doubtless some *prophetic* history, which in his Wegg-like way he mingles up with a certain 'Decline and Fall of the

Roman Empire.' If he has studied any books, he is completely fogged as to what books. He knows literature as he knows Nature, out of his own confused, ill-balanced head. He hates everything—Shakespeare, Art, Poetry, Religion, Decency—everything but pipes and beer. When he goes to the theatre and sees Mr. Wilson Barrètt as Claudian, he beholds 'an elderly man in a low-necked dress, posturing for the applause of some poor trull in the gallery.' He brands Mr. Irving scornfully as a 'mummer,' and describes all actors and actresses as idiotic marionettes. His dream is that the tongue of the music-hall shall be loosened, and that we shall then have a new drama, free, unfettered, primitive; meanwhile he is careful to tell us that 'Whoa, Emma!' 'Charley Dilke,' and other ballads of the music-hall, are of far deeper artistic value than any more sober productions of the modern stage. For novelists and poets he has as profound a contempt as for 'mummers;' the only English writer he professes to admire being Mr. Walter Pater, whose jejune essays he assumes to have read with rapture. For himself, he frankly informs us that he is immoral and indecent, and asserts that those who pretend to be otherwise are simply 'hypocritical.'

Now, all this, horrible as it may sound, is better than 'trimming'—better, to my mind, than the superfinities of Mr. James or the literary pretences of Mr. Archer. The young man really respects nothing under the sun, and is honest enough to say so. His more ornate brethren respect and love quite as little, but, unlike him, have not the courage of their emotions. They accept themselves dismally, as omniscient spectators of the human comedy; he accepts himself savagely, as a Cockney Bohemian of the Latin Quarter. But Mr. Moore is frank and fearless, while they are merely polite or saturnine. He goes on his trip to Paris, and thinks he is 'seeing life.' Truth, Reality, Naturalism, is his cry, as it is theirs; but while they keep to the pavement, he dances in the mud, reels along mud-bespattered, talks and yells, and thinks, *C'est magnifique, et c'est la vie!* There is no nonsense about *him*—he does not pretend to be virtuous or literary—virtue particularly is all 'gammon;' everything is gammon, except indecency, except horseplay, except the jolly Bank holiday and all its concomitant delights. The superfine and the saturnine young men secretly detest the proprieties of life and literature. *He* utters his detestation, and boldly pictures to us the literary future: 'Arry triumphant, the tongue loosened, the morals and manners free and easy, the old gods of letters set up for cockshies, the music-hall turned into a temple of all the arts, and 'Arriett, *alma*

Venus of Seven Dials, hominum divumque voluptas, at her apothecosis. Well, all this is infinitely refreshing, after so much disingenuous respectability. The age of Sham is over, and the new prophet of straightforward animalism is Mr. George Moore. We are at last returning to Nature, *viâ* Rosherville Gardens and the Alexandra Palace. The young man as critic triumphs after all. He is found everywhere, in varied forms ; with Mr. James, writing little novels, studying the little masters ; with Messrs. Bourget and de Maupassant, studiously detrimental and avowedly olfactory ; with Mr. Archer, grimly intolerant of imagination ; at the Universities, lecturing on Art for Art ; on the newspapers, giving up religion and morality as a bad job ; to be known everywhere by his leading characteristics, a temperament which forbids enthusiasm, and a character which is heterodox, not merely by constitution, but out of predetermination to be ' knowing ; ' but this honest young man of ' A Young Man's Confessions ' is the spokesman of all the rest. He, at all events, is not disingenuous. He, at all events, has shown his class as it is, in all the nudity of its cynicism, in all the plenary audacity of its unbelief. We ought not, therefore, to be very angry with him after all.

So far as the Young Man as Critic is concerned, there is little more to be said. It is with him, under the various forms which I have described, and under others with which my readers are doubtless familiar, that the men of thought, the men of another and I think a nobler temperament, have to reckon. It is he who will criticise us or ignore us, praise us or abuse us ; from him the rising generation will learn, at least for a little while, how to estimate us. He it is who is talking imbecilities about *Art pour Art* in a thousand magazines and newspapers. He it is who is filling the free air of literature with the chatter of the *salon* and the *argot* of the studio. He is fundamentally and constitutionally cynical and destructive, as opposed to those individuals who, be they small or great, are fundamentally and constitutionally sympathetic and creative. Fortunately for Art, for letters, he is fast becoming a public bore, a crying scandal. But for this fact, which may ensure his summary extinction and self-effacement, this woeful young man might succeed in destroying creative literature altogether.

ROBERT BUCHANAN.

My Campaign in Pall Mall

FOR better or for worse, the war correspondent, as regards a British army in the field, has been stamped out. The journalist who now accompanies an army is a war reporter. He dances in the fetters of the censorship, whose power over him is absolute : it may not only detain or withhold his work, but at discretion may alter it so that he be made to say the direct reverse of what he wrote. If the position has its humiliations, it also has its compensations. The censorship which makes a slave of the war reporter, *ipso facto* relieves him of all the responsibility for the words he writes. His waking hours are unclouded by forebodings of aspersions on his veracity, emanating from officials chafing under inconvenient interpellations. His slumbers are disturbed by no dream-vision of a bad quarter of an hour with the chief of staff, when the paper containing that outspoken telegram of his arrives in camp. The authorities in Pall Mall, by the institution of the rules and the censorship, have indeed scotched the war journalist, but have not succeeded in killing him. Lord Wolseley in the early editions of the 'Soldier's Pocket-book' described the war correspondent of the unreformed era as 'the curse of modern armies ;' that somewhat strenuous expression he retains in the latest edition as still applicable to the reporter who works under the yoke of the regulations set forth in its pages. I may humbly venture to remark, having given the matter considerable attention, that from the military point of view I entirely concur in Lord Wolseley's objections to the presence of journalistic persons with an army in the field against a civilised enemy. Were I a general, and had I an inde-

pendent command in war offered me, I should accept it only on condition that I should have the charter to shoot every war correspondent found within fifty miles of my headquarters. The most careful correspondent cannot write a sentence—a sentence which the strictest censor, if he is to pass anything at all, cannot refrain from sanctioning—that may not give a hint to the astute intelligence-officials of the other side. This fact I realised at the beginning of my career, and my conviction of its truth grew till the end of it. What then? It is not a question for the newspapers, which dread a war because of the huge expense it entails without adequate compensation. It is a question solely for the public, whose servants the general and the war journalist alike are. If the public deliberately prefers news to victories—for that is the issue in a nutshell as regards a European war—then on the head of the public be it.

The war correspondent of the era that ended with the introduction of the handcuffs had a chequered lot. His fetterless condition gave him many advantages and some opportunities. He could stir the nation by his revelations of maladministration. Uncompelled to specified and conventional methods of communication, he might win some fleeting fame by bringing to the nation the earliest tidings of a victory achieved by its army, at the cost of some toil and danger incurred by the courier-correspondent. On the other side of the account was this unpleasantness, that if he were not a toady and a sycophant, but an independent man, he could hardly escape being regarded as an Ishmaelite, against whom in the very nature of things was the great heavy hand of officialdom. He had constantly to confront that kind of contemptuous contradiction which is equivalent to impugment of the veracity of the person contradicted. Of late years it is true, for weighty reasons, there has been discernible in the tone of official contradictions a droll infusion of funk in the insolence. The insolence was, of course, in the very essence of the official nature; the funk came from a nervous foreboding of refutation begotten of experience. That experience did not deter, because the average official shudders, as if it were sheer revolution, at a departure from the old arrogant use and wont; but it had a tendency to engender disquietude in the bureaucratic breast.

A man must either be well endowed with philosophy, or, to quote Mr. Houston, must be 'on very good terms with himself,' who is not galled by a contumelious aspersion of untruthfulness thrown on him in high places and circulated throughout the length and breadth of the land. He may have his vindication to his hand, but it rarely has the vogue of

the calumny. In some memorable instances, however, this has been the case. Before the Crimean war was over, England had come to recognise that it was the pen of William Howard Russell which had saved her army from extinction. Lord Beaconsfield, when he tried the *de haut en bas* method of whistling truth down the wind, and sneered at MacGahan's revelation of Turkish barbarities in Bulgaria as 'coffee-house babble,' found himself conclusively confuted by Mr. Walter Baring's intensification of the unofficial disclosures. But in the game between him and the correspondent the official plays with clogged dice. Let me give an instance. That portion of the public who believed Lord Wolseley were led astray by his denial of the truth of the assertions made by Dr. Russell, regarding the excesses of our troops in the Transvaal between the close of the Zulu war and the beginning of the Boer war. Everybody conversant with the circumstances was perfectly well aware that the statements made by Russell were substantially accurate, but Lord Wolseley roundly pronounced them utterly destitute of foundation. Now it happened that Russell—strange omission on the part of a journalist of his experience—had neglected to fortify himself with evidence which he should be able to adduce if challenged. A man of high spirit and implicit veracity, the imputation cast on him roused him to just indignation, and he was bent on making good his words. But the effort was futile; the local officials were in the hollow of Lord Wolseley's hand, and Landrost after Landrost testified with complaisant or obedient unanimity to the immaculateness of the British soldier. Russell had to grin and bear the situation; but he spoke his mind on the subject in the direct manner which is his characteristic. Lord Wolseley had won, and he might have laughed; perhaps he did so—but he also encouraged an underling of Russell's to start an opposition service-paper to that gentleman's *Army and Navy Gazette*.

I recall a little experience of my own, which ended for me, perhaps because I am a Scot whereas he is an Irishman, more successfully than did Russell's Transvaal controversy. When the brigade of British troops landed in Cyprus, with which he took possession of that island in 1878, Lord Wolseley sent it to encamp on the ridge of Chiflik Pasha, a few miles inland from Larnaca. There sickness soon set in among the soldiers with great severity. The disorder was that insidious complaint known as 'Cyprus fever,' which has long since disappeared from Cyprus itself, but which still harbours in the constitution of most of those who were of the expedition of original occupation. Accompanying that expedition in a journalistic capacity, for a fortnight or so previous to

August 15 I had been telegraphing to the *Daily News* increasingly serious details regarding the ill-health of the troops. On that day I wired: 'In all about 25 per cent. of the whole force are fever-stricken; about two-thirds of the medical staff are also down.' On the following afternoon a question was put in the House of Commons on the subject to the Secretary for War. Lord Stanley replied by quoting a telegram from Lord Wolseley stating that 'only about six per cent. of the troops were in hospital;' which was literally true, since the hospitals could hold no more, and, being literally true, was quite smart, although utterly misleading. Of course the minister inculcated belief in the official version; and equally of course, he had his airy little gibe at the non-official person. It was not until August 26, being then at Malta on my way home, that I saw a newspaper containing the question and answer in Parliament. Then I straightway telegraphed to my journal repeating my previous statements in detail, giving as my authorities for them the respective medical officers of the brigade, and adding: 'Assertion and counter-assertion are childish in a matter wherein the documents furnish exact and detailed information. The Secretary for War will find that the official returns sent in to the Principal Medical Office on the evening of the day in question amply bear out my statements.' Yet officialism had the best of it after all. Parliament had risen before the telegram I have quoted reached England, and so no Parliamentary friend had the opportunity of enforcing the minister's admission of the accuracy of my statement by moving for the production of the returns.

In one curious instance a set was made at a war correspondent not by officialism, but by the many-headed itself. He was with the force that was confronting Arabi in the Kafre Dowl position outside Alexandria during the interval between the bombardment of that city and the arrival in Egypt of Lord Wolseley's reinforcements. One afternoon his paper brought out a 'special edition' on the strength of a telegram from him to the effect that one of the picquets of our force had run in on its supports. Whether or not the telegram was 'written up' in Fleet Street, is a question which need not be dwelt on, in the face of the fact that the correspondent did not deny that he had sent intelligence of the misbehaviour of the picquet. It was passing strange, the gust of popular indignation against this penman—in this particular matter at least a quite inoffensive although in a professional sense silly person. The angry nation would not have it at any price that a picquet of British soldiers could act as described. The correspondent was denounced far and wide as

the vilest of calumniators. *Punch* pandered to the undignified and perverse clamour in some doggerel jingle ; the correspondent's journal temporised in the face of the storm, and cashiered its representative. Yet his act was in no way blameworthy ; it was simply officious and superfluous. Such a trifle as the casual bolt of a picquet was an incident which a correspondent who had ever seen war—and this man had made a campaign—should have ignored as not worth chronicling. In war such petty fallings away from the ideal are happening all the time. They occur in every army I have ever known, and I have watched on campaign the conduct of the armies of eight European nations. There is infinitely less steady valour in the soldiery of any nationality than the civilian who idealises it imagines. I never was in a battle, with the single exception of Ulundi, in the course of which I did not witness a stampede. The Germans are grand fighting men, and at Gravelotte they had the glow in them of three victories in a fortnight ; yet in the afternoon of that day there was a sudden panic in Steinmetz's army—one half of it at least was on the run ; and I saw old Wilhelm borne back in the *débâcle*, resisting vehemently, belabouring the runaways with the flat of his sword, and abusing them with fine racy German oaths shouted at the top of his voice. Nevertheless the Germans won the battle of Gravelotte. Our own fellows have never been in the habit of evincing inability to hold their own against no matter what foe. But for all that they are not uniformly heroes, and it is folly to believe that they are. I am not the man, an old soldier myself, to run down the British soldier ; but the cheap froth of the cockalorum civilian disgusts me. I who write say that I have known British picquets, like the picquets of other nations, run in discreditably once and again. For instance, on the evening before Gingilhovo, when a picquet of one of our crack regiments bolted back into the position headed by its sergeant, leaving its officer the sole defender of the abandoned ground. For instance, on the night but one before Ulundi, when a picquet of Wood's most seasoned regiment, a regiment that had distinguished itself grandly at Kambula, scuttled into the laager in uncontrollable scare. It was in each case a momentary panic. No doubt the first-named picquet behaved quite well in the fight next day. As for Wood's fellows, he gave them five-and-twenty apiece ; they got their tunics on their sore backs in time for Ulundi, were as good as the best there, and, in virtue of the flogging and the victory together, regained their good name. I knew personally of this little accident in Wood's force ; but it never occurred to me to report it. It was not that I shunned doing so, but simply because the thing was not worth while. My comrade, with his experience, should have taken the same view of

the petty mischance he happened to witness in Egypt ; but it was sheer truculence to hound him down because he looked at events microscopically.

I am anxious to quote a correspondence which seems to me to illustrate, not a little vividly, the tergiversations and tortuosities of officialdom in its relations with the war correspondent ; but it is impossible to make the letters intelligible without an amount of egotism which is eminently distasteful to me. The desire, however, to promulgate the correspondence outweighs the repugnance to being egotistic, and accordingly I proceed.

After the decisive victory of Ulundi, gained over the Zulus on July 4, 1879, I quitted the same evening the laager in which Lord Chelmsford's army was encamped, and, after a continuous ride of about seventeen hours, reached the telegraph-wire at Landmann's Drift with the earliest news. Thence I despatched to Sir Bartle Frere at Cape Town, and to Sir Garnet Wolseley, who was then at Port Durnford on the Zululand coast, a brief summary of the action and the result. Both those officials telegraphed me thanks in reply. Sir Garnet's expression of his 'sincere thanks for the most welcome news' was naturally most grateful to me, as he was the commander-in-chief of all the forces then in the field. No further intelligence than that which I had wired him reached Sir Bartle Frere before the departure of the mail, and it was my message to him which was read in both Houses of Parliament as the only intelligence which up to date had reached the home authorities. The question of a member, whether some recognition was not due to the bringer, under somewhat arduous circumstances, of tidings so welcome was negatived by Sir Stafford Northcote with the remark that the bearer was a newspaper correspondent who had toiled and adventured in the interest of his journal. As it happened, this was a mistake. When on the evening of the fight, in accordance with previous arrangement, I took to Lord Chelmsford's headquarters the packet containing my short description of the day's work, I had not the remotest idea that half an hour later I should be galloping through the lonely bush on my way to the telegraph-office on the far-distant Natal frontier. There was no hurry to catch the mail, and there was then no telegraphic communication between South Africa and England. My colleagues who remained in camp and sent away their matter at their leisure next day, were in easy time for the outgoing mail from Cape Town. I rode out of the Umvaloosi laager that night because I have a quick temper and a disgust for military ineptitude. When Lord Chelmsford told me that

he did not intend to despatch his courier until next morning, the assigned reason being the absence of some petty details, it was in the angry impulse of the moment that I passionately exclaimed, 'Then, sir, I will start myself at once!' I knew with what anxiety Wolseley was waiting for news, and what immediate influence on his plans the tidings of the day's work would have; and I realised, too, the spirit that actuated the delay in their despatch. I was sorry for myself the moment I had spoken, for I needed no one to tell me the risks in front of me. I got through safely; the same night, not five hundred yards off the faint track along which I groped, Lieutenant Scott Douglas and Corporal Cotter were slaughtered with unmentionable barbarity. It should be said that when Sir Stafford Northcote was shown that it was not 'in the interest of my paper' that I had ridden from Ulundi to Landmann's Drift, he acknowledged the error with the manly frankness which was but one of the fine features of a noble character.

I had sworn to my hurt, but unless I ate dirt there could be no withdrawal. When, before starting, I went to Sir Evelyn Wood to ask for his home messages, he would have detained me, but that in a word I told him how I must go; he understood, bade me Godspeed, and let me go. There was no sentiment about his limb of an aide-de-camp—'the boy,' as we called him. As I turned from Wood's tent 'the boy' shouted an offer to bet me five pounds I would not get through. 'Done!' I cried. 'Ah!' quoth 'the boy,' with a regard for his pound of flesh beyond his years, 'you must put the money down, for I don't in the least expect to see you back again.' So I posted my fiver and rode away into the dense all but trackless bush, just as the great red sun touched the westward-ridge overhanging the Umvaloosi gorge.

I had 'got through' and been back in England some time, when it occurred to me to claim the Zulu medal. A war medal is not a decoration in the sense that the Albert medal, or the 'C.I.E.,' or the 'D.S.O.,' or that proud symbol the 'C.M.G.,' is a decoration. The medal for a campaign once granted, a military person of whatever rank is entitled to it as a right who has been inside hostile territory in the course of the campaign; he need not have been under fire, or indeed within miles of a battle. In the Zulu business many got the medal who had never crossed the Natal frontier, and the whole wing of a regiment received the Ashantee medal that never disembarked at all. I found copious precedents in favour of civilians being the recipients of war medals. William Howard Russell has the Crimean and Indian medals. A British Museum

employé who accompanied the expedition to pick up specimens for that institution received the Abyssinian medal. The Victoria Cross was given to four civilians for gallant acts in the Indian Mutiny, and the Mutiny medal to all civilians who were under fire. It was worn by a lady lately dead, who was born in the Lucknow Residency during the siege, and earned it by that achievement. I did not presume to claim the Zulu medal in virtue of having made the campaign as a correspondent, but because of a specific service for which I had received the thanks of the local commander-in-chief. It is true, a claim I had put in for the Afghan medal had been rejected on the specified ground that 'the Secretary of State is of opinion that the service on the performance of which that claim is based was not of a character which would entitle you to the medal.' But then that 'service' was merely the having been mentioned in his despatch by the commanding General for saving life in action—a ground surely not to be mentioned in the same day with the acknowledgment of a superior general's gratitude. So my claim went in to the War Office based on the ride from Ulundi to the telegraph-office, and the results thereof set forth above. The not unexpected reply came back, that, 'As it would appear that no application was made for your services on the occasion referred to in your letter, Mr. Childers regrets his inability to comply with your request.'

I felt for Mr. Childers: it is always unpleasant to the humane man that for any reason he should cause regret to a fellow mortal; and I believed by a further representation I could dispel his regret and enable him to rejoice in the ability of compliance. That representation was as follows. The letter (April 2, 1881) was sent from America:

I respectfully beg to repeat the claim, on the ground of another service to which your previous objection does not apply. On reaching Landmann's Drift, and having handed to General Marshall (in command there) the despatches which had been entrusted to me by Lord Chelmsford, he, expressing his belief that no direct communication between Lord Chelmsford and Sir Garnet Wolseley at Port Durnford could be opened up for some time, and his conviction that details as to the disposition of the troops in Zululand and of the recent action could not fail to be of consequence to the latter, requested me, as a matter of public service, to continue with all speed my journey to Port Durnford and place my knowledge of affairs within the enemy's country at Sir Garnet's disposal. In furtherance of this project General Marshall handed me a special authorisation to claim means of speedy transit along the route I should have to take. In fulfilment of this request I rode about 150 miles to Pieter Maritzburg without rest, and suffering from a contusion sustained in the Ulundi action; and thence journeyed on with all speed to Port Durnford, reaching that place in advance of any other messenger from the column in the interior. Sir Garnet Wolseley availed himself of the

information I brought, and did me the honour to thank me for the service done as being materially in the public interest.

Sir Garnet Wolseley and General Marshall confirmed the above statements in so far as they concerned each.

The reply to the above representation bore date June 2, 1881, and was as follows :

I am to inform you that Lord Chelmsford reports that he did not make any use of your services on the occasion specified by you, and on reference to General Marshall, it appears that he did not receive any despatches by you from Lord Chelmsford. Under these circumstances, and as the fact of your having ridden from Landmann's Drift to Fort Durnford would not justify the grant of the decoration under existing regulations, Mr. Childers is unable to alter the decision already conveyed to you.

When Mr. Edmund Yates was resuming his seat, after having listened to the diatribe with which Lord Coleridge accompanied the sentence awarded him in a well-remembered action, I heard him murmur, I believe unconsciously, 'That's a snorter!' A similar view of this communication suggested itself to me. It was a lesson never to write an important letter at a distance from one's diaries. While feeling sure of the ability to justify in effect the averment that I had carried despatches from Lord Chelmsford, there was a clear mistake in the statement that I had handed these to General Marshall. I had met him on my way to the telegraph-office, and had shown him the packet I carried; it was addressed to the telegraph-master, and to him I delivered it. My reply to the 'snorter' was as follows :

I would have accepted without troubling you further your disinclination to alter your previous adverse decision, but for one circumstance. Your letter conveys a grave charge against my personal veracity, a matter of infinitely greater importance to me than the receipt or non-receipt of a medal. Writing as I did from America without access to memoranda, I erred in naming General Marshall as the recipient of the official enclosure carried by me from Ulundi. I have the honour to enclose a detailed statement of the actual events which occurred in Lord Chelmsford's headquarters, with the request that you submit the same to Lord Chelmsford and Colonel North Crealock, his lordship's military secretary; satisfied as I am that the result of such submission will be to alter the terms of Lord Chelmsford's report as conveyed in your letter.

Statement enclosed.

In the course of the day of the fight at Ulundi, it had been intimated to the newspaper correspondents that if they desired to forward communications to

Landmann's Drift, their packets should be sent into headquarters to catch the outgoing courier the same evening. About 6 P.M. I carried my parcel to Lord Chelmsford's headquarters in the laager. I found his lordship with Colonel North Crealock, his military secretary, seated at a table under an awning. I tendered my packet, when his lordship stated that he had altered his intention as to the despatch of Mr. Dawnay that evening, because of the absence of some details from Colonel Buller's command. On hearing this I said, 'Then, my lord, I shall start at once myself!' A few remarks having passed, I asked, addressing Lord Chelmsford, 'Can I take anything down for you, sir?' Colonel Crealock, who had been writing hard during the brief interview, then struck in—

If you will wait five minutes, Forbes, till I have finished, I will give you this packet for Landmann's Drift.' While I waited, Colonel Crealock, having finished writing, enclosed sundry papers in a large yellow 'O.H.M.S.' envelope, addressed it to the 'Telegraph-clerk in charge, Landmann's Drift,' adding the endorsement 'J. North Crealock, Military Secretary,' and handed the packet to me. This packet, entrusted to me by Lord Chelmsford's military secretary in his lordship's actual presence and sight, I duly conveyed to Landmann's Drift, and handed it to the official in the telegraph-office there.

The reply from the War Office to this communication was as follows :

Colonel Crealock corroborates that portion of your statement to the effect that you conveyed an envelope for him on the occasion alluded to from Ulundi to the telegraph-office at Landmann's Drift, but at the same time he emphatically denies that the envelope contained any document of a public nature, and moreover states that he explained to you that the Hon. Guy Dawnay had already been directed to take charge of the despatches when concluded. He also reports that the few words contained in the telegram to Mrs. Crealock which was enclosed in the envelope, were of such a nature as to preclude the possibility of the Director of Telegraphs supposing the message was despatched in the public service, and that he was subsequently charged with the cost of it.

Assuming that the contents of Colonel Crealock's letter were of a private character, I was none the less for that journey an official courier. What was inside the envelope was immaterial; the outside was rigorously official. The F.O. bag, carried by a Queen's messenger, is every whit as official when its contents are old lace and ball slippers as when they consist of despatches on whose terms hang peace or war. Again, I knew that Colonel Crealock's statement must be untrue that his enclosure consisted of a 'few words,' and no 'document of a public character.' I had carried down nothing save his packet and my own written description of the battle. The telegraph official permitted me, as soon as I arrived, to despatch the few lines which reached Sir Garnet Wolseley and Sir Bartle Frere. He then was occupied for several hours in telegraphing the contents of Colonel Crealock's envelope, which,

as he explained, had precedence as being official matter ; and it was not until after the 'many hundred words' (these were his words) to which they extended had been sent off, that my descriptive message was put on the wires.

It is not easy to imagine that a man can honestly confuse between a short domestic telegram and a public message many hundred words long. Be this as it may, there was no difficulty in finding unchallengeable evidence of the untruthfulness of the statements attributed to Colonel Crealock in the above letter. At Aldershot I found the R.E. officer who had been in charge of the field telegraph-office at Landmann's Drift when I arrived there on July 5, and the operator who had despatched the contents of the official envelope of which I was the bearer from Ulundi. The records had been mutilated, so that documentary evidence was lacking ; but the parole evidence of the officer, and of the operator, given in his hearing and mine, was conclusive. I begged the former to put into writing his recollection of the circumstances, and the following is his letter :

I perfectly well remember seeing you arrive at Landmann's Drift on the afternoon of July 5, 1879. You brought with you, to my certain recollection, a mass of written matter, of what description I cannot quite remember, but I am sure that, whatever it was, it took precedence of your own telegram to your paper, which proves that it was what we call 'service messages'—that is, on military service. This the telegrapher at Landmann's Drift also remembers well, as also the telegrapher at the transmitting station at Quagga's Kraal. The entire bulk of the messages you brought amounted to nearly 4,000 words, of which not more than 1,200 were your own press message, which did not go till late in the night. I regret to say the abstract books are lost or destroyed, so that I cannot quote from that evidence. My memory, however, is so clear that I am quite certain to the extent I have mentioned.

(Signed) FRANCIS G. BOND,
Lieut. R.E.

A copy of Mr. Bond's communication I promptly forwarded to the War Office, making the following observations in the covering letter :

1. I handed Mr. Bond no other matter than the official envelope I received from Colonel Crealock in Lord Chelmsford's presence, and my own press message.

2. I knew nothing of the contents of the said official envelope, save that they were bulky. The envelope was endorsed 'J. North Crealock, Military Secretary,' which, with the 'O.H.M.S.,' gave it, I submit, an official character, and constituted the missive a despatch, and not a private communication, as Colonel Crealock alleges it to have been.

3. Colonel Crealock's assertion that the envelope entrusted to me contained merely a telegram to his wife, is utterly incompatible with the facts detailed in Mr. Bond's letter, and confirmed by the personal testimony of the operators. Mr. Bond and they agree that the 'service messages' handed in by me amounted to 2,800 words, and that they had the official precedence which would not have been granted to a private telegram addressed by an officer to his wife.

4. I have never claimed to have carried the despatch describing the engagement, perfectly aware that it could not have been entrusted to an unofficial person. My standpoint is simply, as already set forth, that I carried a service despatch entrusted to me by Lord Chelmsford's military secretary, in the presence, with the cognisance, and so with the tacit sanction of Lord Chelmsford himself. Apart from the word 'Immediate,' which was written on the envelope, the inference is that this despatch, whatever it was, was of urgent importance, seeing that it was given to me setting out immediately, and not reserved for Mr. Dawnay's later departure.

To this letter, which, along with its enclosure, may perhaps be regarded as of an inconvenient tenor, I have never received any reply whatsoever.

While waiting for what never came, it occurred to me to strengthen the case by asking the sapper of the R.E. telegraph train, who had been the operator at Landmann's Drift, to put into writing the verbal testimony he had given to his officer and myself. In reply to the letter in which this request was made, there came to me this interesting and pregnant communication :

MR. FORBES,—Your letter received. Don't you think you'd better write to me again and state something more definite as to what you are prepared to 'part' for the negotiation?

I'm willing to give you my recollections to as great an extent as you desire (between you and I), but you must cross the palm.

Yours, HARRY HOWARD.

The man was utterly brazen. I wrote to him that if he chose to send me the statement I had asked for, I should accept his doing so as an evidence that he was ashamed of the letter just quoted, and would regard it as never written. 'Should I not hear from you,' I continued, 'I shall be forced to assume that you experience no shame for having written so base a letter, and it will be my duty to forward that letter to your commanding officer.' Howard's reply came by return :

MR. FORBES,—You can button up your coat and take my letter round to the nearest *General's* quarters.

The letter you desire you can have if you like.

Yours, HARRY HOWARD.

He must have either been quite reckless, or what is known as a 'barrack-room lawyer.' I let him be ; and I am not sure that there is any military law under which he could have been punished. A comfortable man, Mr. Harry Howard, to be entrusted with the despatch of an all-important message at the critical moment of a campaign, while a spy who had 'crossed the palm' was waiting round the corner !

It was presently disclosed that this correspondence, on the official side, was from the first simply what the Germans expressively call 'a blow on the water.' It began with a foregone conclusion. An influential friend conversant with the circumstances wrote to the authorities representing with a certain vigour that he considered the treatment I had met with to have been ungracious and unfair. He was told in reply that, 'As the Secretary of State for War considers that civilians who attach themselves to an army ought not be deemed eligible for war medals, the adverse decision with regard to Mr. Forbes must remain untouched.'

This is explicit, and therefore it would not have been in accordance with official tradition to have simply intimated the *à priori* resolution to me when I sent in my claim. I understand that the Secretary of State for War was excessively angry that the soldiers of the desert column should have buried the bodies of Cameron and St. Leger Herbert—'civilians who had attached themselves to an army ;' and that since Abu Klea an order has been issued for the guidance of troops on active service, directing that for the future representatives of newspapers who may die on campaign or be killed in action shall be left uninterred.

ARCHIBALD FORBES.

Beside the Sea

BESIDE the sea in childhood's hour
I played, as happy as could be,
Beneath the old grey storm-beat tower,
Beside the sea.

.
But years brought change of joy to me
And thralls in Cupid's giant power ;
Together linked were I and she,
And by-and-by when all turns sour
They'll bring me where I shall be free,
Beneath the old grey storm-beat tower,
Beside the sea.

C. W. B.



Evening.



Fanny Bertie.

At Sunset

THE roses in the western sky
To sable's sombre tones shall yield,
As, when the evening shades draw nigh,
The sunbeams vanish from the field
Where noontide knew them joy to lie.

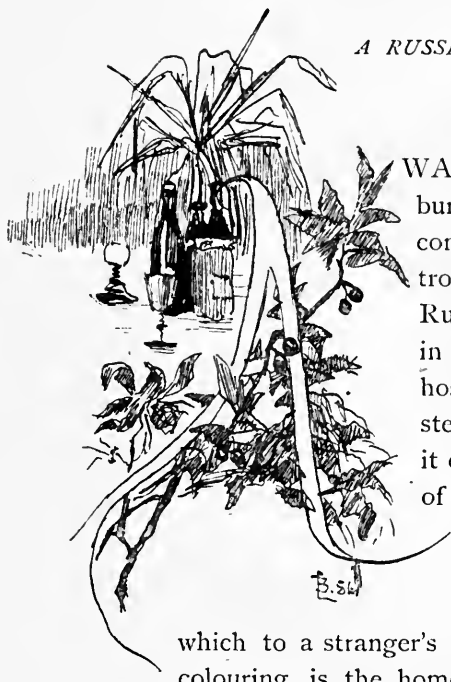
But my heart's glory shall not fade,
From bloom of May to bloom of May,
Till my last human debt be paid;
My lovelight shall not wane away
Or ever in some precinct laid,

Or haply on some barren wold,
My good and ill forgot, I sleep,
Where the chill arms of Death enfold,
And clay my fallen limbs doth keep;
E'en there my heart will not be cold.

C. W. B.

The Song of Ivan Vasilyevich

A RUSSIAN METRICAL ROMANCE



WAY to the east and north-east of St. Petersburg stretches a dreary tract of country, chiefly composed of forest, lake, or fen. It is seldom trodden by any feet except those of its natives, Russian peasants who dwell therein, engaged in a constant struggle for life against the hostile forces of Nature. The soil is thin and sterile, and the period of the year during which it can be turned to account is short, the whole of the land being fast bound in icy bands while the long winter prevails. A more unlikely home for poetry to nestle in could scarcely be imagined. And yet this district,

which to a stranger's eye not undeservedly takes a very sombre colouring, is the home of an immense amount of popular song. Everywhere in Russia folk-songs maintain a vigorous existence; everywhere, that is to say, except in crowded thoroughfares, or along beaten paths, where the chilling influence of an imperfect civilisation has arrested the flow of the common people's untaught and untrammelled fancy. The time-honoured lyrics which are handed down by oral tradition from one generation to another, and which are chanted with a kind of religious care at Christmas and New Year gatherings, at marriage feasts and at funeral ceremonies, are common to all parts of the Empire which are inhabited by members of the Great Russian race. But the apparently barren region extending from Lake

Ladoga to the White Sea, is rich in a peculiar form of national song, which is now to be found only in the northern and eastern provinces of Russia. There the peasantry, utterly illiterate, have retained in their memories a vast mass of semi-epical poems, differing in their shape and substance from almost all the forms of popular poetry with which we are acquainted in other lands. These poems, which are known as 'bylinas,' or records of something that has been (*bylo*), appear to have been transmitted from the sunny and fertile regions of south-west Russia to the ungenial wastes in which they are now domiciled. For their favourite themes are the glories of the gleaming city of Kief, rising in its pride above the fast-flowing Dnieper, and the doughty deeds of the gallant band of champions who clustered around the Great Prince Vladimir, fought for him and Holy Russia against infidel foes, and feasted with him sumptuously in the halls of his royal palace. In the neighbourhood of Kief such songs, singing the praises of the cradle of Russian Christianity, and of the mighty heroes who so splendidly adorned it, have long been almost entirely mute. The great waves of Mongol and Polish supremacy have all but obliterated these poetic records of a glorious past. But still, in a far-away and dreary region, the heart of the untutored peasant remains true to the minstrelsy which was dear to his ancestors under better auspices and beneath a more genial sky.

Besides the partly mythical poems which deal with what is called 'The Cycle of Vladimir,' or with the traditional glories of Novgorod, there are very many bylinas which are more or less historical, referring to events which have really taken place, and relating the actions of monarchs or nobles who have actually existed. Down to about the end of the reign of Peter the Great, the poetic faculty of the common people in this branch of popular literature appears to have remained to some degree creative. Since that time the flow of peasant fancy seems to have become almost entirely arrested. But the reciter remains, the 'Rhapsodist' who touches the hearts and rouses the enthusiasm of his rustic audiences, as he, during the long winter evenings, while mending the clothes or patching the boots of a village community, sings to them, in tones now loud now low, at one time wailing and at another triumphant, about the splendour of the Court of Vladimir, or the invincible might of Ivan the Terrible.

In spite of the ferocity of his character, that 'Terrible Tsar' has left a favourable impression on the minds of the common people of Russia. The Russians have always admired firmness, and even sternness, in a

ruler, and in those qualities he seldom showed himself deficient. From the point of view of the peasant, much was to be seen in his conduct which was, if not entirely commendable, at all events excusable. Doubtless he was wrathful and vindictive, but still he was, according to popular tradition, actuated by a respect for a rude form of justice, and by no means incapable of a sort of generous magnanimity. As such he is described in the following poem, which was written by one of Russia's greatest poets, Lermontoff, in the style of an ancient 'bylina.' The metre of the original is that adopted by the rustic minstrels of olden time; the epithets and metaphors are borrowed from their treasury, and the language is such as they would have been likely to use, had they chosen as the subject of their verse the story which the modern poet has told so well.

In the translation, the Russian unrhymed original has been rendered line for line, and as literally as possible; at the same time an attempt has been made to give some slight idea of the movement, the metrical flow of that original. Of all Lermontoff's poems, the 'Song about the Tsar Ivan Vasilyevich, the young guardsman, and the brave merchant Kalashnikoff,' is likely to prove to an English reader the most striking. For his brief lyrics, when deprived of their melody of language, cannot expect a fair hearing from foreign ears; and his longer and more ambitious poems have in them much which bears witness to the justice of Mr. Turner's statement¹ that 'the poetry of Lermontoff is essentially Byronic in its tone and thought.' Therefore, even such masterpieces as his *Demon*—which has recently been rendered familiar in many Western lands by Rubinstein's opera, for which that poem has supplied the libretto—or his *Mtsyri*—the story of a young Circassian novice in a monastery, whom a longing for a free life drives from his too quiet refuge to his wild native mountains—are liable to appear wanting in originality to readers who are familiar with those of Byron's writings which Lermontoff began his literary career by translating. It may be worth mentioning that according to a household tradition the founder of the Lermontoff family came from Scotland. His name is supposed to have been originally Learmont, to which he added another syllable when he migrated, some three centuries ago, from Poland, in which country he first settled, to Russia. The Russian poet was never able definitely to

¹ *Studies in Russian Literature* (Sampson Low, 1882), in which a good account of Lermontoff's life and writings will be found. Mr. Turner says (p. 319) that the poet's father was 'a poor Armenian officer.' This is very interesting if correct. But Polevoi in his *History of Russian Literature* (Russ.) states that the elder Lermontoff was 'a mere *armeisky* officer,' i.e. an officer of the line. Armenian in Russian would be *Armyansky*.

trace back his ancestral line to Scotland, but he seems to have believed the story of his Scotch descent; for in one of his poems he addresses 'Caledonia stern and wild' as the misty sea-beaten home of his forefathers. Had time been allowed him, he would probably have shaken off the foreign influences which prevented his original genius from fully asserting itself. But unfortunately a premature death cut short what gave promise of becoming a brilliant career. Combative and reckless, he was frequently engaged in quarrels, and at length a duel proved fatal to him at Piatigorsk in the Caucasus. He was only in his twenty-seventh year.¹

The song is supposed to be sung by a band of wandering minstrels who have been hospitably received in the mansion of a Russian Boyàr, or noble of the olden time, and who in return seek by their performance to divert their generous host, and his wife, the fair Boyàrina.

For further information on the subject of the bylinas the reader may be referred to the 'Songs of the Russian People,' 1872, and to two excellent works, M. Alfred Rambaud's 'La Russie Épique,' 1876, and Miss Isabel Florence Hapgood's 'Epic Songs of Russia,' 1886.

THE SONG OF IVÀN VASÌLYEVICH.

I

It is not the red sun shining in the sky,
 'Mid purple cloudlets basking in his rays.
 But at table sits, in his crown of gold,
 Sits the terrible Tsar, Ivàn Vasilyevich.
 Behind him stand the Dapifers;
 Before him sit the Princes and Boyàrs,
 On either side his thick-set body-guard.
 And the Tsar feasts to the glory of God,
 To his own content and satisfaction.

With a smile the terrible Tsar gave orders
 Into his beaker of gold to pour
 Luscious wines from beyond the seas.
 All the guests drank, and extolled the Tsar.
 Only one of them, one of the guard,
 A warrior brave, a springald gay,

¹ Born 1814, died 1841. Mr. Turner says (*Studies*, p. 329) 'thirty-seventh,' but that is probably a misprint.

Set not his lips to the golden bowl.
 Down on the ground were his dark eyes cast,
 Drooped his head on his breadth of breast,
 Within his breast was a thought firm-fixed.

Knitted the terrible Tsar his brows.
 On the guardsman his piercing eyes he bent,
 As an eagle looks down from the heaven's height
 On a youthful, blue-winged dove.
 But the champion young raised not his eyes.
 Smote on the ground with his staff the Tsar,
 And the oaken floor for a full palm's-breadth
 With its iron point he pierced.
 Motionless still the youth remained.
 Then the Tsar growled forth a boding word.
 From his dream the youth awoke.

'Ho there! our trusty servant Kiribèyevich!
 Hast thou harboured an evil thought?
 Art thou jealous, forsooth, of our fame?
 Art thou weary with honour to serve?
 When the moon rises, the stars rejoice.
 Brighter for each is its course through the sky.
 But the star which veils itself in a cloud—
 Headlong it falls to the ground.
 Shame on thee, Kiribèyevich!
 A Skuràtof by birth, by Malyùtins reared,
 Aloof to stand from our royal joy.'

Bowing low before the terrible Tsar,
 Kiribèyevich thus replied:
 'O thou our Lord, Ivàn Vasilyevich!
 Do not reproach thy unworthy slave.
 The heart's fire no wine can quench.
 A gloomy thought will not fall asleep.
 Have I angered thee—let thy will be done!
 Order my death! Be my head struck off!
 Heavily weighs it on the shoulders borne;
 Already earthwards bending of its own accord.'

Then answer made the Tsar Ivàn Vasilyevich:
 'What reason, brave youth, hast thou to grieve?

Thy brocaded caftan—is its splendour worn ?
Thy sable cap—has it lost its gloss ?
Thy store of gold—has it dwindled away ?
Is the edge of thy tempered sabre notched ?
Halts thy good steed for a faulty shoe ?
Or in fighting with fists by the river Moskvà,
Has a merchant-lad struck thee off thy feet ?'

Thus answered Kiribèyevich,
Shaking his curly head :
'Not yet has been born that wondrous hand,
Neither 'mid merchants nor Boyàrs.
Blithely gallops my steed of the Steppe.
My trenchant sabre gleams like glass.
And thanks to thy bounty, upon high days,
We are not worse than others arrayed.

'Seated upon my fiery steed,
When I start to gallop beyond the Moskvà,
Girdled with a silken sash,
Sable fringed velvet-cap cocked on one side,
At all the doorways stand
The maidens and young wives ;
They look, they whisper, they rejoice.
All but one who looks not, rejoices not,
Hiding herself behind her veil.

'Our holy mother Russia throughout,
No beauty like hers can be found.
Swimmingly moves she, like a swan ;
Tenderly gazes, like a dove.
When she utters a word, a nightingale sings.
Burns the rose of her cheeks
Like the dawn in the heavens of God.
Snooded with ribbons bright,
Her tresses of ruddy gold
Stray o'er her shoulders and twine,
And kiss her bosom white.
In a merchant's home was she born :
Alèna Dmitrèvna her name.

'When I see her—no longer my own—
 Down fall the mighty arms,
 Dark grow the gleaming eyes.
 Wearisome sad is it, Orthodox Tsar,
 To languish alone in the world.
 Distasteful to me are swift steeds,
 Distasteful brocadéd array ;
 I care for no treasure of gold.
 With whom can my treasure be shared ?
 To whom can I mettlesome deeds
 Or splendour of raiment display ?
 Let me go to the Volga's wide Steppe,
 To the free, the Cossàck way of life.
 There my turbulent head will I lay,
 Low laid on the infidel lance.
 Grim Tartars among them shall share
 My good steed, my keen blade, all my gear.
 My sad eyes shall the vulture pluck out,
 The rain wash my desolate bones,
 And the four winds of heaven my dust,
 Uncared for, unburied, disperse.'

Then laughed the Tsar Ivàn Vasilyevich :
 'Ho, my trusty servant ! This thy woe,
 Thy misery, will I try to cure.
 Here, take my sapphire ring,
 And take my necklace of pearl.
 A skilful marriage-broker salute,
 And the precious gifts by her
 To Alèna Dmitrèvna present.
 Dost thou please her, the wedding-feast hold.
 Dost thou not, do not yield thee to wrath.'

'O thou Tsar, Ivàn Vasilyevich !
 Deceived thee has thy servant false,
 Not showing thee the whole of the truth,
 Not telling thee that the maiden fair
 Has been married in the church of God—
 Married to a merchant youth,
 According to our Christian law.'

Ho, lads, sing ! only tune the guslas !
Ho, lads, drink ! only mind your business !
Interest the good Boyàr
And his fair Boyàrina.

II

SITS at his counter the merchant young,
The shapely youth, Stepàn Paramònovich,
Stepàn Paramònovich Kalàshnikoff.
Silken wares he thereon unfolds ;
Customers calls with caressing speech ;
Counting over silver and gold.
But to him the day yields no success.
Regardless of his stall,
The wealthy seigneurs pass.

In the holy churches sound vesper bells ;
Beyond the Kremlin burns a dusky glow ;
Chased by the singing snow-fraught wind,
Clouds flit across the sky ;
Deserted grows the wide bazaar.
Stepàn Paramònovich closes his stall
With a spring-locked door of oak ;
Attaches to an iron chain
A mastiff-growler, sharp-toothed, fierce ;
Then pensively he homeward goes,
To his youthful wife, across the Moskvà.

Marvels Stepàn Paramònovich,
Reaching his lofty home.
To greet him comes not his youthful wife ;
On the oaken table no cloth is spread ;
The icon's taper burns dim and low.
To his serving-maid old he calls :
' Tell me, tell me, Yeremèyevna,
Where at so late an hour has gone,
Has hidden herself, my Alèna Dmitrèvna ?
Where are my little children dear ?
Have they wearied their limbs with running, with play ?
Early retired to rest ? '

‘O my lord, Stepàn Paramònovich,
 I will tell thee a wonder strange :
 Alèna Dmitrèvna to vespers went.
 The priest has come home with his youthful spouse,
 They have lit their light, sat down to sup.
 But from church thy wife has not yet returned.
 As for thy little children dear,
 They play not, they have not gone to sleep ;
 They weep and wail, refusing to be still.’

Troubled with stubborn care is the mind
 Of the merchant young, Kalàshnikoff ;
 To the window he hies, on the street looks forth—
 In the street is utter darkness of night.
 Only the white snow creeps and rolls,
 Sweeping away the footsteps of man.
 Slams the door to in the vestibule.
 Hurried steps he hears.
 Strength of the Cross ! as he turns he sees
 Before him his youthful wife !
 All pale her visage, uncovered her head ;
 Dishevelled her ruddy locks,
 Powdered with rime and snow.
 Death-like the gaze of her troubled eyes,
 Senseless the lisp of her lips.

‘Where, O wife ! hast thou been wandering ?
 Through what house-court, what public place,
 That thy tresses are all unloosed,
 That thy garments are all torn ?
 With sons of nobles, maybe,
 Thou hast banqueted and strolled ?
 Not for that, wife, were we betrothed,
 Exchanging rings of gold
 The holy icons before.
 I will set thee fast with an iron lock,
 Behind an iron-bound oaken door,
 The daylight of God no more to behold,
 No more to disgrace my honest name.’

Alèna Dmitrèvna, hearing these words,
 Shuddered all over, poor dear !

Quaked like an aspen leaf,
Burst into bitter tears,
Flung herself down at her husband's feet.
'O my lord! O my darling red sun!
Slay me, or list to my words!
Keen as a knife is thy speech,
Rending in pieces the heart.
Fear have I none of grim death,
None of the tongue of the world,
But I dread unkindness from thee.

'Coming from vespers home,
The lonely street along,
A sound as of crackling snow I heard
I looked—there ran up a man!
Gave way beneath me my limbs;
I muffled my face with my silken veil.
Tightly he grasped my hand,
Spake in a whisper low:
"Wherefore fearest thou, maiden fair?
No thief am I, no highwayman.
Kiribèyevich am I named,
Of Malyùtins' famous house,
And I serve the Tsar, the terrible Tsar."

'Greater and greater grew my fear;
Giddily reeled my head.
Then he began to kiss me, caress me;
Kissing, kept saying the while:
"Let me know what thou lackest,
Precious one, sweetheart mine!
Lackest thou gold or jewels?
Gleaming pearl or bright brocade?
Like a tsaritsa will I array thee;
Every eye shall envy thee.
Abandon me not to a sinful death!
Grant me thy love! let thy arms embrace me!
If only for once—then a last farewell!"

'Still he caressed me, still he kissed me.
Pouring a flood of living flame,

On my cheeks are glowing yet
Those cursèd kisses of his.
From their gates peered forth the neighbours' wives,
Pointed their fingers and laughed.

'Tearing myself from his grasp,
Homewards I frenziedly fled.
My kerchief, thy gift, and my veil
In the hands of the brigand remained.
He has disgraced me! has dishonoured me!
Me the guiltless, the honoured aright!
What will the cruel neighbours whisper?
Whom shall I dare in the face to look?

'Do not abandon thy faithful wife
To malignant slanderers' tongues!
On whom but thee can I place my trust?
Whom else can I ask for aid?
An orphan sad in the world am I.
Beneath the mould my father is laid,
My mother beside him lies.
My elder brother in foreign parts,
Thou knowest, has disappeared.
And my younger brother is still a child—
A little unthinking child.'

Thus Alèna Dmitrèvna spoke,
Pouring forth bitter tears.

For his younger brothers twain
Stepàn Paramònovich sent.
They came, and saluted, and said:
'Tell us, our elder brother,
What has happened that thus
Thou hast summoned us in the darkness of night,
In the dark and frosty night?'

'I will tell you, my brothers dear.
I am struck by a terrible blow.
Our family honour has suffered a stain
At the evil hands of a miscreant,

Kiribèyevich—he of the guard.
 Such an insult the soul will not endure ;
 Not to be borne by the youthful heart !
 By the river Moskvà to-morrow is held
 A boxing-match before the Tsar.
 Then and there this guardsman will I fight,
 Fight to the death, to my strength's last strain.
 If I fall—then ye, my brothers, must fight
 For the sacred cause of mother truth.
 Be not afraid, my brothers dear ;
 Ye are younger than I, more fresh your strength.
 A lesser weight of sin ye bear :
 God may perchance have mercy on you.'

Thus spake his brothers in reply :
 ' Whither blows the wind across the sky,
 Thither hasten the obedient clouds.
 Raises his voice the eagle blue,
 His call to the banquet, the feast on the dead,
 Round him the little eaglets flock.
 Elder brother ! our second father !
 Act as thou knowest and thinkest best,
 We will not fail thee, our brother own.'

Ho, lads, sing ! only tune the guslas !
 Ho, lads, drink ! only mind your business !
 Interest the good Boyàr,
 And his fair Boyàrina.

III

OVER Moscow the great, the golden-crowned,
 Over the white-stoned Kremlin wall,
 From beyond the blue hills, the distant woods,
 Chasing afar the cloudlets grey,
 Playing upon the pine-tree roofs,
 Rises the rosy dawn :
 Rises and shakes her golden curls,
 Bathes her face in the driven snow :

Then—as a girl her mirror regards—
 She looks on the open sky and smiles.
 Why hast thou wakened, O rosy dawn ?
 On what delight dost thou arise to shine ?

There have met together, together have thronged,
 For the boxing-match by the river Moskvà,
 For the joys and delights of their holiday,
 The Muscovite champions bold.
 With his body-guard has the Tsar arrived,
 With his guardsmen and Boyàrs.
 He has ordered the silver chain to be stretched,
 Soldered in rings with pure gold ;
 Twenty-five fathoms wide is the ground
 For the combatants reserved.
 He has bid the herald cry aloud,
 With resonant voice proclaim :
 ‘ Ho there ! brave hearts of youth !
 Divert our father the Tsar.
 Enter the circle wide.
 Who fells his foe—him will the Tsar reward.
 If any falls—his sins will God forgive.’

Kiribèyevich steps to the front ;
 Silently bends before the Tsar ;
 From his shoulders strong the velvet flings,
 With his left hand cocks his scarlet cap,
 Plants on his hip his right ;
 A challenger awaits.
 Thrice is the summons cried aloud,
 Not one of the boxers stirs ;
 Nudging each other, their place they keep.

About the field the guardsman strolls,
 At the craven boxers scoffs.
 ‘ They are cowed, it seems ! they have changed their minds.
 Well, I give my word this holiday,
 Should I divert our father the Tsar,
 I will spare a penitent foeman’s life.’

All of a sudden the crowd divides,
 And forth there steps the merchant young,

The boxer brave, Stepàn Paramònovich,
Stepàn Paramònovich Kalàshnikoff.
First he bows low to the terrible Tsar,
Next to the Kremlin white, the holy fanes,
Last to the gathered Russian folk.
Brightly burn his falcon eyes,
On the guardsman fixedly they gaze.
Donning the fighting gloves,
In front of his foe he takes his stand,
Squaring his shoulders strong,
Stroking his curly beard.

‘Tell me, my gallant youth,
Thy name, thy family, thy race,
That I may know of what to boast,
For whose repose to order requiems.’
Thus Kiribèyevich : to whom
Replied Stepàn, the son of Paramón :
‘My name is Stepàn Kalàshnikoff.
An honest father’s son,
I have lived in the law of God.
I have never insulted my neighbour’s wife,
Never have shrunk from the heaven’s eye,
In the darkness of night to seek for prey.
In one thing hast thou spoken the truth—
For one of us two must a dirge be sung
Before to-morrow has neared its noon ;
And but one of us two shall live to boast,
As at table he sits with his comrades blithe.
Not to sport, to amuse the minds of men,
Come I forth against thee, thou infidel dog,
But for deadly fight to the very end.’

Kiribèyevich listened, and pale
Grew his face as autumnal snows ;
Dim grew his eager eyes ; a frost
Shivered his shoulders strong between :
Died the words on his opened lips.
Silently part the foes,
The terrible fight begins.

Kiribèyevich first hit out
 And smote the merchant Stepàn,
 Striking him full on the breast.
 Tottered the merchant Stepàn.
 There hung on his breast a copper cross,
 With holy relics fraught ;
 Bent the cross, cut deeply into his breast ;
 Like a heavy dew, down dripped his blood.
 Stepàn Kalàshnikoff thought :
 'What is fated, that will be done—
 I will stand by the truth to the last.'
 Skilfully then he steadied himself,
 Gathered his strength for a blow,
 Then his hated foe with all his might
 Right on the temple he smote.
 The guardsman uttered a smothered groan,
 Balanced awhile—and fell dead.
 Prostrate he fell on the frozen snow,
 On the frozen snow as falls a pine,
 As falls a pine in the forest dark,
 Hewn at the resinous root.

Raging with wrath at the sight, the Tsar
 Knitted his swarthy brows,
 Smote on the ground with his foot,
 Ordered the merchant bold to be seized,
 To be brought before his face.
 Thus cried the Orthodox Tsar :
 'Answer me righteously, tell me the truth !
 Was it by chance, or from malice prepen-
 se, That my trusty servant by thee was slain,
 Kiribèyevich, foremost in fight ?'

'Orthodox Tsar, I will speak the truth :
 I killed him purposely.
 But why I killed him I tell thee not :
 That will I tell to God alone.
 Send me to death, my guilty head
 Let the scaffold boards receive.
 But turn not thou thy grace away

From my widow young, my children dear,
My younger brothers twain.'

'It is well for thee, O youth,
O merchant youth, O fighter bold,
That thou hast answered righteously:
Thy youthful widow, thy orphans young,
Shall a pension receive from my treasury.
From this day henceforth, thy brothers twain
Throughout the Russian realm may trade,
From every tax or duty exempt.
But thou thyself, O youth, ascend
The lofty Place of the Skull, and there
Thy daring head lay low.
To the headsman orders will I give
To prepare himself, to sharpen his axe.
I will order the mighty bell to sound,
That all the dwellers in Moscow may know
That thou too art not debarred from my grace.'

Crowds to the Kremlin Place are thronging ;
Sadly the bell prolongs its wailing sound.
On the lofty Place of the Skull,
In a scarlet shirt with a gleaming clasp,
Armed with a great keen axe,
The headsman blithely strolls,
Rubbing his ungloved hands,
As he waits for the fighter bold.
But the fighter bold, the merchant young,
Is bidding farewell to his brothers twain.

'O ye brothers mine, dear friends !
Let us kisses exchange and embrace
At this parting, the last of all.
Greet Alèna Dmitrèvna from me,
Tell her not to grieve overmuch,
Not to speak about me to my children dear ;

Salute in my name the parental home,
 Salute our comrades all ;
 And do ye yourselves in the church of God
 Pray for my soul, my sinful soul.'

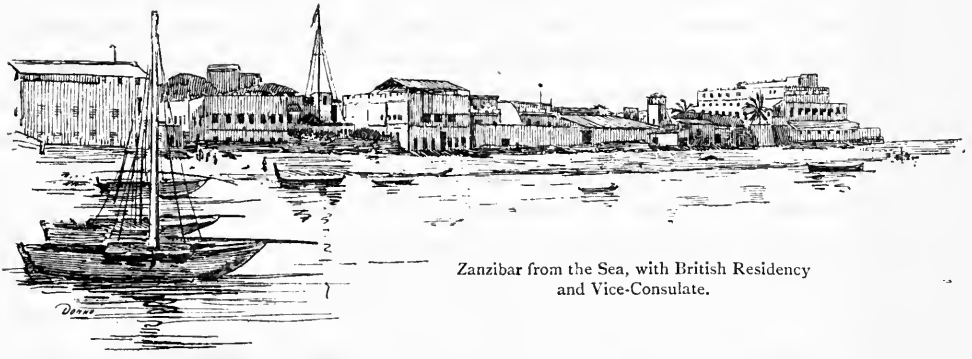
Stepàn Kalàshnikoff fell :
 Cruel, ignoble his death !
 Rolled on the blood-stained boards
 Off the scaffold his ill-starred head.

His body was buried beyond the Moskvà,
 Between three roads, in the open field ;
 A mound of earth was erected there,
 And on it was set a maple cross.
 Above his nameless tomb
 The wild winds wander and wail.
 At times good folks go by ;
 A grey-beard comes—makes the sign of the cross ;
 A youth—he draws himself proudly up ;
 A maiden—her heart grows sad.

Then the minstrels come, and they sing a song :
 Ho ! bold lads !
 Guslars young,
 Voices mellow !
 Well have ye begun ; finish well your song,
 Rendering to everyone honour meet and due.
 To the great Boyàr be glory !
 To his lady fair be glory !
 Glory be to all our Christian folk !

W. R. S. RALSTON.

(From the Russian of MICHAEL LERMONTOFF.)



Zanzibar from the Sea, with British Residency
and Vice-Consulate.

Zanzibar

A WEEK is more than enough for seeing all the sights of Moçambique. The Portuguese capital of East Africa is undoubtedly picturesque. Its gay-coloured buildings clustered upon a coral reef form the only clean-looking city I have ever beheld in the kingdom of Portugal and Algarves, and the island front from the ancient fort to the Palace forms an imposing background to a score of Arab dhows lying in the water, which is as blue as the Mediterranean ought to be, beneath a sky of the same transparent azure—a rare phenomenon in tropical Africa. But last spring the limited society of the capital was reduced for social purposes by the malarial scourge of the equatorial littoral, and Moçambique is not precisely a spot for solitary sauntering. On my arrival a smart little aide-de-camp (full of regrets for his beloved 'Lisboa') came on board to tell me that the Governor-General was lying sick of fever. The next day the British consul, who had been my travelling companion from Quillimane, whither he had come from fighting the slave-hunters on Lake Nyassa, could not appear at a dinner to which he had bidden me: the fever had taken in its grip the brave African explorer. Believing myself to be fever-proof, I wanted to cross to the mainland for a hunting expedition, but the officials and residents, though willing to further my wishes, discouraged the project, on the ground that though the natives would treat with great urbanity an Englishman if he could establish his nationality, there was considerable risk of being mistaken for a Portuguese, whom the tribes would certainly kill and possibly eat.

Being disinclined to lay down my life before seeing Zanzibar, there was nothing for me to do but to endure the monotony of Moçambique, and precious little there was to relieve it. About four o'clock each afternoon a cool breeze blew up from the Indian Ocean, breathing fresh life into the stagnant tropical day. After this it was possible to be paddled in a frail and leaky boat across the bay till the crimson sun had set beneath the African wilderness and the moon was flooding the town and harbour with light. Or it was pleasant to stroll beneath the avenue of mighty growth which leads from the fort to the cool house of the hospitable chief of the Eastern Telegraph station, or to lazily watch the humours of the sandy streets. A battle royal here is waged between two women. A gigantic amazon, insulted by a short thick-set negress as black as she, hands to a bystander with a graceful gesture the burden she is carrying majestically on her head, and then they go for one another. There is no scratching or kicking or other European methods of feminine warfare, but swinging swipes with open palm are delivered, wherein the long stretch of the big one gives her the advantage, and after three decisive rounds the combatants separate in decency and good order. On another afternoon a visit must be paid to an Indian money-changer, as the *Mecca* sails for the north the next morning, and there is a great advantage in paying the fare in rupees, the currency of East Africa. The nominal fare to Aden is 35*l.*, but by an old tradition it may be paid with 350 rupees, which can be purchased for less than 25*l.*; and as the black bearer trudges along with the load of silver the transaction makes one realise the significance of the depreciation of the rupee to those who are paid in that coin.

A tourist is a rarity on the coasts of Zanzibar. My only travelling companions of European complexion are our Consul to the Kings and Chiefs of Nyassa, homeward bound, and a lady who devotes her life to nursing the sick evangelists of the Universities' Mission, to the headquarters of which she is returning. As far as Ibo there are also two half-caste women who bear some relation (probably not blessed by the Patriarch of Lisbon or the Bishop of Moçambique) to Portuguese officials. They loll on the deck in Oriental fashion surrounded by their retinue of five black slave-girls, who recline at their feet, neatly clad in gay linen cloths. Our whole life on shipboard is passed on the quarter-deck. Here we take our meals, using as a table the skylight of the saloon, on which by night our beds are placed, and the cabins only serve as receptacles for baggage, and as the homes of cockroaches as big as crabs, and of rats resembling terrier puppies. We coast lazily

along over the smoothest bluest seas. When we drop anchor, all day long from the shore are wafted the voices of the natives singing, and as they paddle their boats to the ship their weird choruses are chanted in wonderful time and harmony. At the entrance to a magnificent harbour a boat is lowered by Lascar sailors, and we put off to shore, and as the windings of the gulf open up, with the soft outlines of mountains receding from it, the scene reminds me of Vigo Bay. What Stanley says about the sombreness of the African sun is not true to-day. The hills here are clad in the brightest green, which gleams in the sunlight of the warm morning. Here and there on the sandy beach which runs down beneath the wood-crowned rocks, stands a native village with houses square-built and thatched, unlike the beehive huts of the Kaffirs familiar to me over many thousand miles of travel. The town of Lindi, a few months later to be laid low by German guns, looks very peaceful across the bay as we skirt the natural tropical garden lining the opposite shore, and the blood-red flag of the Sultan of Zanzibar is seen flying among the palm trees.

No sooner have the Lascars carried us to shore than hundreds of natives who have espied us from afar flock down to meet us, and the procession increasing every moment forms an escort to the town. Lindi is within the territory arranged by convention to be the 'sphere of German influence,' but there is not a European in the place. The few mean shops are kept, some by Arabs, distinguished by their finely-carved Arabic doorways, but most of them by Indians, subjects of the British Empire, who have in their hands all the trade of the East African coast. Several girls join the band following us. One of them, of lithe figure, slightly draped in bright kerchiefs, with her shapely head neatly arranged in rows of little plaits, says in soft Swaheli that her name is Bereida, and Bereida for the rest of the day is the centre of interest. The black crowd is highly entertained that we should have caught her name. She flies like a young antelope at my approach, and with sinuous grace evades the boys who would hold her, and disappears with a bound among the palm trees. We stop to see some Banyans weaving native cloth, and at the back of the crowd which never leaves us Bereida steals up, to fly again as soon as discovered, and so again as we sit in the shade on the matting stretched over the verandah of an Arab's house. At the post office, where the Indian postmaster has prepared the mail—three letters for Zanzibar inscribed in Arabic and stamped with the Queen's effigy in this 'sphere of German influence'—Bereida is waiting to say farewell, and now holds in her arms a black

babe, but whether her own offspring or not does not appear. And so to our boat attended by half a hundred tiny nigger boys, who swim around it fearless of sharks till we are half across the bay. Even to one who spent only a summer's day among these kindly courteous villagers it seems a hard fate that they should have been introduced to the blessings of civilisation by German cannon, and it is easy to sympathise with those who have lived and worked for years among the Swaheli people in their indignation when the news travelled up the coast of the devastation of the homes of these joyous youths and maidens, to say nothing of the destruction of the trade and property of Indian British subjects.

Kilwakavinje, familiarly known as Kilwa, is the next stopping place, and is likewise a port within the sphere of German influence. A fleet of dhows and one or two sharp-beaked proas were lying in the roadstead as our boat was rowed to shore, one of them flying the British flag and another the French tricolour. Kilwa is a great centre of the slave trade, and that is not improbably the commerce of these craft. The town is of much the same character as Lindi, containing no European inhabitants whatever, a few shops in the narrow roughly-thatched streets being kept by Arabs and Indian Banyans. In the verandah of one an Arab woman was sitting with three slave-girls, and one of them, a plump beauty, by name Goolee, had her ears adorned with shirt buttons, five being stitched to each ear with red silk thread. At another doorway a black woman was dressing the hair of a little girl in the fashion of Bereida's coiffure, and with marvellous rapidity forming two rows of flat plaits, pressed close to the head, with one *coup de main*—a wonderful feat considering the shortness and woolliness of the material. Further on sat an Arab lady crouching forward in her verandah, while a sort of massage was performed by her Swaheli handmaiden who kneaded her mistress's back with her knee.

At daybreak the morning after leaving Kilwa the island of Zanzibar came in sight, and on its wooded shores the Sultan's summer palace was visible afar off. The city is built on the western side of the island facing the mainland of Africa, and the appearance of the foreshore lined with massive buildings is Oriental but not strikingly Oriental. The British Residency is a fine square-built Eastern house at the harbour corner. The flags of various European Powers fly on a dozen roofs between it and the Palace, the high roof of which is conspicuous for miles. Moored in the roadstead opposite the town lie a couple of Her Majesty's

ships on slave-trade duty, a hundred dhows and a score of steamers flying the Sultan's crimson flag. The whole scene undergoes a striking transformation at six o'clock, which is the sunset hour all the year round in Zanzibar. As the clock strikes twelve, sunset marking the close of the day, a gun is fired in front of the Palace, the band plays the 'Sultan's March,' and from a lofty tower the electric light illuminates the surrounding buildings and a streak of the sea, making Zanzibar, from the harbour at night, with all its squalor hidden in the darkness behind look like a bit of Venice.

It was a sad disappointment to me, after having toiled up the fever-stricken Moçambique coast, to find that the chief object of my visit to Zanzibar was not there. The Sultan, Seyid Barghash, had twelve days before gone to Muscat, sick—gone to die there, as it turned out. But though the greatest curiosity of East Africa was away, my days at Zanzibar are a pleasant memory of ever-changing Oriental pictures: the narrow, cool streets, clean and orderly among the consulates, but squalid and boisterous in the bazaar and perfumed with a mingling of garbage and of spices; the crowd in the market-place beneath the prison walls, the white caps and robes of the Swahelis, the hooded burnous and chased daggers of the Arabs, the red turbans of the Indians, the black fezes of the Parsees, and the closely-fitting silk helmets of the Batias. A couple of fat and swarthy Bombay merchants drive past in a landau, a drove of camels shambles along, half-naked Africans carrying on poles sacks of cloves push through the crowd, and a long file of black women stripped to the waist and chained together by the neck march in single file, each bearing on her head a block of coal or a jar of water. The last are domestic slaves who have misbehaved, and the British gunboats riding at anchor out there can take no cognisance of domestic slavery. In the market-place, a confused mass of colouring, the sellers of embroidered robes shout and gesticulate as they offer their wares by auction. The women, squatting on the ground with betel leaf for sale, are quieter; and in the shops the oval-faced Indian wives sit silent on the front counter, their legs covered with bright-hued jeleeks, not deigning to move when a customer enters. As we sit in one of these stores bargaining with the Oriental trader, a tiny Swaheli boy takes up his position at the entrance and, seemingly unconscious, whistles 'God Save the Queen' and 'Rule Britannia,' a skilful method of levying *backsheesh* from English travellers in a strange land.

In front of the blue-shuttered windows of the hareem, which is con-

nected with the Palace by a covered bridge, lounges a group of Persian artillerymen by the battery of old smooth-bore guns. In two cages close by crouch a dejected lion and a mangy lioness, which are supposed to guard the Palace gate, their dens flanked by others containing lynxes and leopards. From the garden the ladies of the hareem are often seen at the windows, but no one connected with the court dare pass by when the Sultan is away, for fear of scandal. General Mathews, who commands the Sultan's army and is Viceroy in his absence, tells me that at such times not even he is permitted to enter the Palace, nor any high officials who are in full possession of their manhood. When Seyid Barghash was at home and in good health he would receive with great courtesy European visitors, and sometimes an English lady was admitted to the hareem. One who was specially privileged had at last to discontinue her visits by reason of the extremely embarrassing questions with which she was plied as to the domestic customs of Europe. On one occasion, when being conducted to see the Sultan's dusky wives, she missed her way in the corridors, and found herself in the midst of lovely Georgians and Circassians with fair hair and blue eyes. None of them had ever been seen in Zanzibar, as even on their arrival they were landed after dark from the ships which brought them.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Sultan's forces was once in the British navy, but he has no European officers in his army, which is partly Swaheli and partly Arab.

The soldiers, in their white uniforms and red and yellow caps, are the smartest military force on the East Coast of

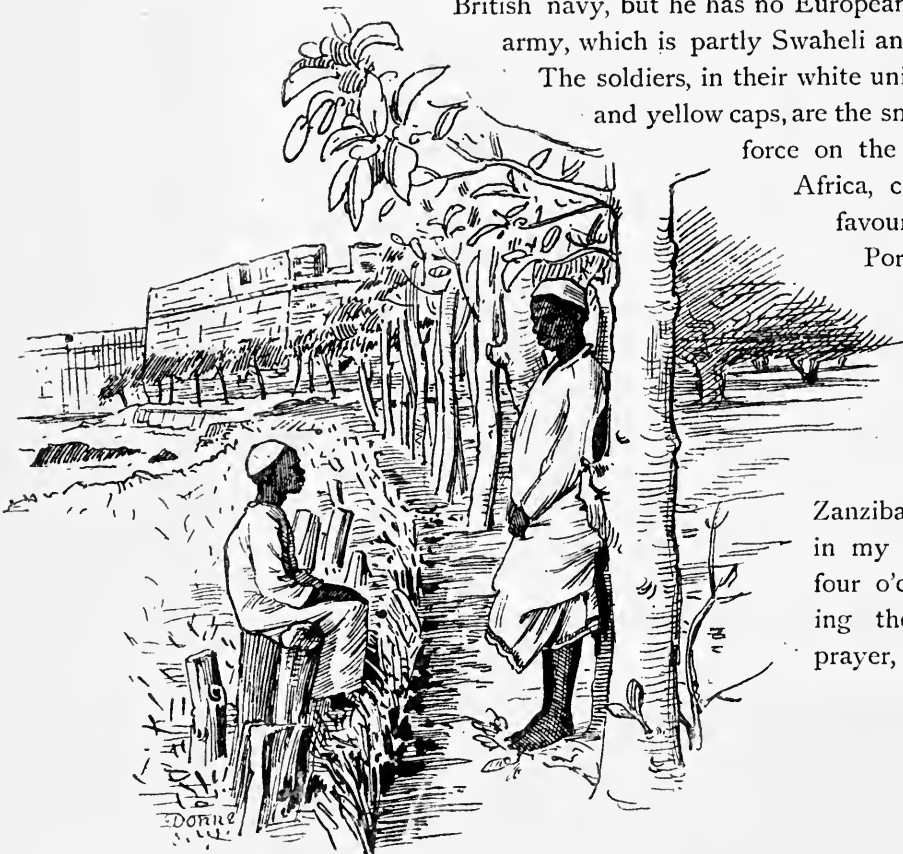
Africa, comparing very favourably with the

Portuguese troops

in the province

of Moçambique.

There was a Sunday at Zanzibar which dwells in my memory. The four o'clock gun, calling the faithful to prayer, had roused me



long before sunrise, so as soon as it was light I remembered an invitation to breakfast with the ladies of the Universities' Mission, whose goodness and devotion makes the profoundest sceptic believe in the existence of self-denying missionaries. The slender spire of the handsome Byzantine church, built on the site of the old slave market, is a landmark as one makes for it through a labyrinth of slums, the fetid sliminess of which is overpowering in the mists of morning. The church is sumptuous within with marble and mosaic. At the early service the officiating clergyman wears purple vestments, and the choir of tiny black boys is the prettiest sight in the world as they parade up the aisle hand in hand, with their black bare feet peeping out from their scarlet cassocks. But the Swahelis cannot sing like the Kaffirs, whose voices, in the 'cathedral' at Umtata on the Pondoland frontier, seemed to me as soft as those of Italian women singing the litanies of the Month of Mary. The Zanzibar hymns are, however, a joy to those who delight in the sound of words. 'Wakamwiga, wakampiga,' the coloured choristers shouted in procession, and another verse commencing with 'Dam u maji' sounded like a comminatory canticle. In the mission-house afterwards a number of little boys breakfasted with us, who were rescued from the dhow which was taken, after severe and valiant fighting, by brave sailors of H.M.S. *Turquoise*, and they told the sisters how the Arabs urged the slaves to fight with warnings that the English were cannibals who would eat them if the dhow were taken.

Few travellers have ever returned from Africa without a firm disbelief in the efficacy and disinterestedness of missions as the general result of their observation, but of the disinterestedness and self-abnegation of the missionaries of the Universities' Society there can be no doubt. They do not trade (a most significant fact) and the majority of their workers are unpaid—a few of them taking 20% a year as an allowance for clothes. Their annual death-roll shows that theirs is not a work without peril, and the question arises, Do the results justify the yearly sacrifice of valuable earnest lives of single purpose? They told me that at Zanzibar they do not teach their boys English, as when they possess that accomplishment they become 'hotel-touts'—a euphemism which all who are acquainted with Oriental ports will recognise. As a set-off, however, the girls are full of information about the Arians and the Gnostics, and have the General Councils at their dark finger-tips.

Our British Resident was still on his way from Aden, but hospitality truly Eastern was dispensed by the acting Agent, a gallant Highland

officer who fought at Tel-el-Kebir, and a Vice-Consul who dwelt with a colleague in a neighbouring palace, and whose angelic face, if only visible from Europe, would make the fortune of Zanzibar as a health resort. On this particular Sunday morning all the British official staff assembled in the Residency courtyard, planted with palm trees and guarded by scarlet-coated Africans; outside stood a line of victorias—borrowed from wealthy Indian merchants, who are always ready to lend their equipages to the representative of England—and we set out to Umgweni, the summer villa of the British Agent. After leaving the narrow streets, passing here and there at street corners a well

around which a group of women gossip

and show their white teeth while

they draw the water in metal

vessels, our way lay through

a beautiful road shaded with palms and mango trees. It follows the

windings of a bay, half seen

among the tropical foliage,

till the villa is reached, which

Sir John Kirk set up in a

garden of giant trees bearing

flowers of which the prevail-

ing hue is red—tiny blossoms,

great bell-shaped cups, and

delicate creepers like convol-

vuli. The party is characteristic

of society in these latitudes; every-

body but one is connected with the

consular service or with missionary

propaganda. After luncheon a vesper

bell summons away the venerable arch-

deacon in his white helmet and coat,

but his wife takes a rare holiday, and the

summer's afternoon is spent in choosing

subjects for the art of the envoy to the Kings and Chiefs of Nyassa.

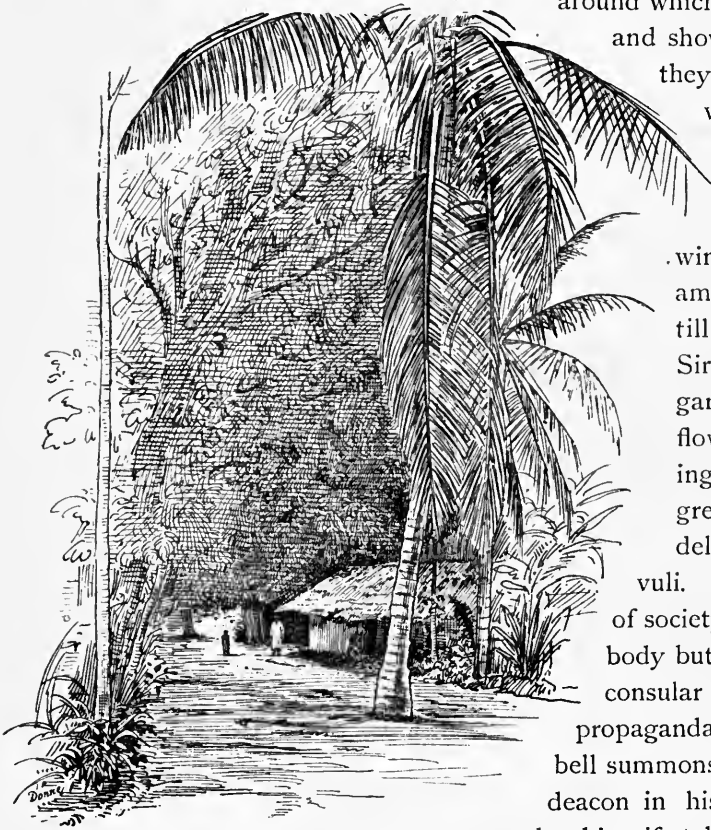
There is no lack of scenes and groups for his photographic craft.

There is a hideous Swaheli, the guardian of the place, who brings

his three little black girls to exhibit, but declines to show his wife, of

whom he is jealous enough to doubt the paternity of his mites. On our

way to the mission-house, in a tropical glade, we come upon a troop of



Home of the jealous Swaheli among Giant Trees.



An English Traveller welcomed by Swaheli Maidens in a Tropical Glade.

native maidens, all very comely in their bright cottons. One of them is carrying a Swaheli babe, which one of the party borrows, and a group is formed round him, which makes an effective subject for the Consul's camera. And so the hours pass till sunset, when we return to Zanzibar, and on our way meet in the dusk Arab ladies mounted on white asses, going for their airing when night is falling and they cannot be recognised.

This slight sketch of the people and the scenes of their daily life in Zanzibar is not a political article, so a few words must suffice as to my impressions on the two great subjects affecting the region: German influence, and the suppression of the slave trade. On the former of these now artificially-connected questions a significant little incident occurred during my visit. The German Emperor died, and the news of it reached the British Residency hours before the German Agent received the intelligence from Berlin, so the British flag was the first to be lowered to half-peak, and gave the signal for the flags on the Consulates and on the shipping to fly at half-mast. This proceeding, in which England took the lead and gave the orders in a matter peculiarly German, was looked upon as a typical instance of England's position in Zanzibar. The much-talked-of Germanising influence has few outward and visible signs. The British Resident is all-powerful; and well he may be, seeing that the Indian British subjects in Zanzibar, who possess all its wealth and conduct all its commerce, number fifteen thousand. The English court, in which all matters relating to them are settled, is the chief

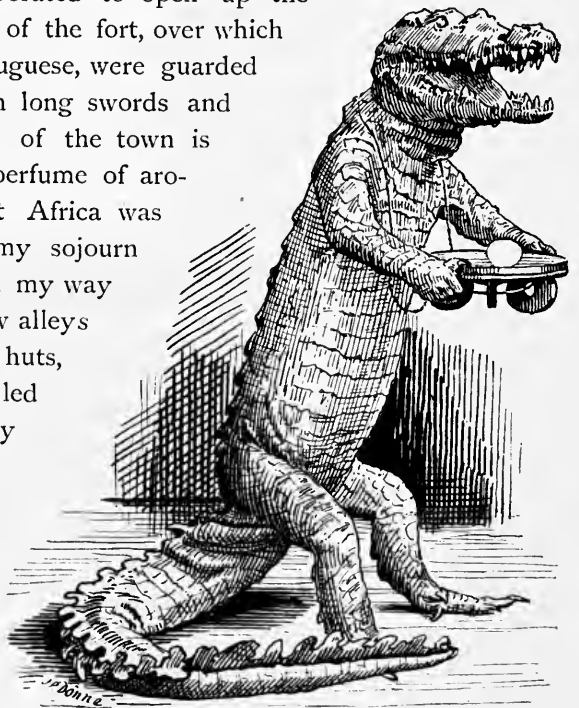
tribunal in the island ; and the British post-office, in which the stamps of the Indian Empire alone are used, is practically the sole agency for communication with the civilised world. Germany should rest content with the achievement of one of its sons, who eloped with, and carried off to Europe, a sister of the Sultan. It will never form another link as intimate or as durable with East Africa. The Germans, who are the best settlers in the world, are utterly incapable of colonising, and I venture to predict that, even if Germany clings to its portion of the Sultanate for ten years, by that time there will be more Germans in the territory of the British East African Company than within their own sphere of influence. Their position on the South West coast affords an instructive analogy. We ceded to them Damaraland and Namaqualand, and the increasing swarms of Germans in South Africa display their patriotism by adhering to British soil. During my travels in Cape Colony I met with Germans of all classes, from Moravian missionaries to Hebrew brokers, and frequently asked them if they contemplated 'trekking' up towards Angra Pequena, and the invariable answer was that no German who had the chance of living in an English dependency would renounce his liberty under the flag of the Fatherland.

As to the suppression of the slave trade, the scene already described of the files of half-naked women marching in chains within sight of Her Majesty's ships must make a spectator wonder if all the hardship undergone by British seamen on the Zanzibar coast is justified by results. Domestic slavery cannot be interfered with, and an English officer too zealous in dhow-catching is bound to get into trouble on this score, as if a dhow be captured and it be proved that the slaves on board are in domestic servitude, and are not on their way to market, the British Agent has to veto the breaking up of the dhow—the penalty of slave trading—or otherwise the mail steamers would come under the same category, numbers of domestic slaves being carried on each voyage. Our officers and blue-jackets suffer intense hardships on this malarious coast, and perform prodigies of valour, often at uneven odds, as the attacks on dhows usually are made from small open boats. The wisest opponents of the slave trade believe that the death-blow to the traffic cannot be struck on the sea, and that the sources of supply should be cut off, without the diversion of any of our inadequate navy on fruitless service, maintained as a tribute to traditional British sentiment, which is now utilised by our German would-be rivals on the East African littoral.

After a day's coasting voyage past the wooded shores of Zanzibar,

and past spice-growing Pemba, the old Portuguese fort of Mombassa was sighted. The ship threaded its way through the shoals, and anchored in the narrow channel in front of the town, which resembles many East African ports—a line of low buildings, a few of them of stone and the rest of wattle, with a background of palm trees. Here we found the *Baghdad*, which had on board the new British Resident and his wife on their way to Zanzibar. They were full of enthusiasm about their post, and interested to hear all about their new home. After months spent far from civilisation, it was pleasant indeed to meet with agreeable people fresh from Europe, and they loaded me with their latest newspapers and their newest books. Our Agent had with him the Grand Cordon of the Star of India for the Sultan, who was fated never to return from Muscat to be invested.

Mombassa, which lies within the British sphere of influence, has lately become a well-known name from the enterprise of the wealthy company which has been incorporated to open up the Kilimanjaro country. The gates of the fort, over which is an inscription in ancient Portuguese, were guarded by a band of Arabs armed with long swords and muzzle-loading rifles. The rest of the town is squalid in the extreme, and the perfume of aromatic filth which pervades East Africa was potent on the warm days of my sojourn there. One morning as I picked my way over the refuse, through narrow alleys running between wretched wattled huts, the sound of children's voices led me in its direction, to where fifty infants of all colours, from the palest Arab to the blackest Swaheli, were reciting Moslem prayers, each with both hands stretched beneath the chin, a fat man superintending with a stick. There were natives here wilder looking than any I encountered in my travels from Zululand to Zanzibar. Some of them go nearly naked and carry bows and poisoned arrows in rude leather quivers. Others wear buskins of long-haired skins, and carry knives. From a band of



Mozambique Crocodile holding Masai Camping-stool.

Masai warriors I procured some curious wooden stools, one of which each bore slung across his back. One of these, used as a tray, is now held in the forepaws of a crocodile of some local renown, which I brought from Delagoa Bay in a coffin, and which, after being set up on its tail like the dragon in 'Siegfried,' was graciously accepted by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

As we approached the equator the air continued wonderfully soft and balmy, though we were crossing the line at the season when the sun was right over our heads. Lammo was our last landing-place in regions out of the track of ordinary travellers. It was from this point that Allan Quatermain set out on his famous journey, and his accomplished progenitor ought certainly to visit the old Portuguese port, as he would find there one or two features which might well be utilised for local colouring. On the sea shore during the present century two battles have been fought between opposing tribes, and as one walks along the beach at each step one kicks up a skull or other fragment of a warrior's skeleton. Then between the battle-field and Lammo once stood the village of Shella, and stands now, but buried by the sand, which rises higher than the spire of its highest mosque. The natives here have stored in their houses quantities of old Oriental china, chiefly saucers of various sizes, some specimens of which I procured, but have not been able to trace their history or origin, excepting the fact that they were brought to the coast in the days of the Portuguese occupation.

Lammo is in the British sphere of the former dominion of Zanzibar, yet the same week as my visit there a handsome girl was sold for a handsome price, and the day before fifty slaves were offered for auction in the market place. The crowd of varied nationalities which our ship already carried was here increased by a large party of pilgrims for Mecca, several of them being women of high degree, who walked up the gangway, their faces swathed in coloured napkins, and as they stood on deck their handmaidens, slaves with jewelled noses, held handkerchiefs over them to protect them from gaze till canvas tents had been set up for them. One of them, a real princess, and sister to the 'governor of Lammo,' stayed in her box all day long, and only came forth once at the persuasion of a sister of the Zanzibar Mission, whose good works are well known, who was going invalided home as the penalty of her devotion. Another lady of the Church Mission station near Mombassa, almost a young girl, was going home too, stricken down with fever. They, with the Consul from Central Africa, made up the

list of European wayfarers whose comfort on the tropical voyage was greatly added to by the care of two young officers of the *Mecca*. Nothing disturbed the peaceful monotony of the rest of the sunny voyage over smooth seas more important than a miraculous flight of flying-fish, which came to provide Lenten fare for one of us; and the day we crossed the line, when the longitude was taken at noon, the sextant recorded exactly $0^{\circ} 0' 0''$, a phenomenon, not occurring once in a thousand voyages, which was almost as miraculous.

J. E. C. BODLEY.



The World in March

POPULAR interest during the past month has chiefly concerned itself with the affairs of the Parnell Commission. The examination and revelations of Le Caron, the Government spy, the repartees of smart and credulous Mr. Houston, the badgering of Mr. Soames, and the annihilation in the witness-box, and subsequent suicide in Madrid, of Richard Pigott, so from day to day events came in this case hurrying upon one another up to the final point of the *Times'* apology, and its admission of the spurious character of those letters on whose authenticity had been staked its own reputation, and by whose publication it had brought a most terrible and degrading charge against the chief of a great national party. It is certainly not our intention to express any opinion upon this conduct, for which the motive is so obscure and the punishment will be so great; but if ever 'quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat' might be quoted fitly, it is in this connection, and even the warmest partisans of our greatest newspaper stand here astounded at the inconceivable lack of ordinary precaution which marked the purchase of the so-called Parnell letters. But the question which, avowed or unavowed, is at the present time in everyone's mind is a far wider and more vitally important one than any for which lack of prudence would be an excuse, and the question is this—Did the most influential newspaper in England deliberately set itself to destroy the reputation of the Irish party, and through them of their English allies, and did an English Government lend itself directly or indirectly to the furtherance of such a project? It is not too much to say in calm unpartisan speech, that if either the paper or the party have sought to compass such an end by such means, then the paper or the party must go. We

put up with a good deal nowadays from the 'fourth estate,' but not with action springing from such inspiration. The old English dislike to 'hitting below the belt' is still strong within our countrymen, and at the poll no party, Conservative or Liberal, Parnellite or Unionist, would have the ghost of a chance if it were even suspected it could have recourse to the spy and the forger to discredit its opponents.

We do not for a moment believe in this so-called conspiracy. Newspapers, no less than families, have their traditions of honour and do not 'become suddenly most base,' and though much is possible to parties insecurely seated in power, and brought face to face with such an apparently insoluble problem as that of the government of Ireland, it is hardly possible that they could form a deliberate alliance with any organ of the press, no matter how powerful, in order to promulgate or substantiate such charges. Unfortunately, some colour was lent to the accusation of complicity by such indiscretions as the frequently challenged interview between Mr. Walter and the Right Hon. W. H. Smith, by the employment of the Attorney-General as leading counsel for the *Times* and, it is alleged, by allowing him to have access to many official sources of information, by the sale of 'Parnellism and Crime' upon Messrs. Smith & Son's bookstalls, and by other minor actions, which have been, to say the least, of an indiscreet nature. But all of these are explicable on a much simpler and less injurious hypothesis than that of conspiracy; they are but the natural outcome of a strong wish that the charges brought should turn out to be true, and the self-conviction which arose from that desire. No doubt the Government, as a Government, are genuinely certain that the Irish are a detestable lot, and that, if they have not happened to do the actual things attributed to them, they have done others quite as bad; and so think that Mr. Walter's publication was right in essence and should be supported accordingly. And it is not surprising that the Irish members, wroth at such charges, should on their side refuse to believe that they are sincerely made or believed in, and should accuse those who promulgate and those who credit them, with deceit and insincerity—this is but to say in other words that there is a great deal of humanity in the human nature even of political parties: that Balfour and Parnell are made of the same stuff. But what is, if not surprising, at least disappointing to a quiet observer, is the whole tone and manner with which the London journals have dealt with the incident of the letters. Whether the flimsy excuses and apologies of the *Spectator* and the *Saturday Review*, and their vain attempts to shield the Conservative party from the consequences of the Pigott fiasco, are more or less damnable than the indecent blatant shriek of triumph

which rose from the Radical journals, it were hard to say ; both were alike prejudiced in statement and execrable in taste, and the manner in which Richard Pigott's death was chronicled and commented upon, could scarcely have been exceeded in brutality by the fighting editor of the *Arkansas Sentinel* or the *Roaring Camp Gazette*. The wildest accusations and suspicions were flung broadcast : on the one hand, traitor and murderer ; on the other, forger, conspirator, and spy—such were the epithets which filled the air. No credit was given to either party, for the merest shred of honesty or good intention, and the wildest invective of the tavern and the silliest condemnation of the club, were outdone by what was written by those who profess to guide the public mind, and protect the public interest. No doubt much of this violent rhetoric was due to the fact that this Irish question has during the past three years aroused a bitterness of feeling unparalleled in our time—not only because its solution is apparently so hopeless, but because it has divided perhaps for ever politicians who in all else are unanimous. It is poor hearing when at the close of a busy life of friendship and mutual service Gladstone says bitter things of Bright, or Bright of Gladstone. Chamberlain's traditions must, we should think, sometimes trouble him as he sees himself opposed by all his old friends and allies, and it can scarcely be more pleasant to the Conservatives to owe their political life to men from whose every principle they disagree, and of whose course of action they would disapprove on every possible question save that one fatal Sphinx problem of the Emerald Isle. The rancour of party feeling, however, is not the sole—nor, we think, the chief—cause of the style of writing in which the press have of late treated the Parnell Commission. The subtle influences which are changing our social standards of taste, behaviour, and morality find a voice here perhaps for the first time. As the world shrinks day by day in its girdle of iron and steam, persons take the place of nations, and personalities the place of principles. We say Bismarck, where we said Germany : we call Parnell a murderer, because we think Home Rule a mistaken policy. The desire grows up quickly not only to defeat but to discredit our adversary. We no longer shake hands with him, as the old fashion was, both before and after the battle. And since we have ourselves invited the reporter home, and asked him to acquaint the world with all our little secrets of bed and board, he is scarcely to blame if he uses the revelations occasionally for his own ends. We have told him that nothing amuses us so much as gossip ; is it any wonder that when he comes to write of serious matters which involve great political interests, he cannot in a moment give up his wonted habit of thought, and that as passions rise round him the gossip becomes invective of the most

abominable, because of the most really insincere, kind? The 'pity of it' is that this manner of action and speech is so out of accord with our national character that it bids fair to destroy or rather efface the old English sobriety of temper, which, though subject to volcanic disturbance at times, was habitual and persistent, and which gained us a unique place amongst European nations. 'Il faut payer pour tout,' says a wise French proverb, and the price that we are paying for the Parisianising of our manners and the Americanising of our press is a heavier one even than would discharge all the costs of the Parnell Commission.



There has been little to record in the art world of late, unless we consider the erection of Mr. Boehm's statue of the Duke of Wellington (at Hyde Park Corner) as worthy of notice. From one point of view this is indeed the case, for the monument is certainly one which could have been erected in no other country than England. One might almost think that a curse had been laid upon all statues to or of the Iron Duke, for from the celebrated one which once frowned upon Hyde Park from the height of its marble archway to the present stolid, inartistic effigy—a mere *carte de visite* in bronze—there has not been one which deserved 'honourable mention.' Mr. Boehm is a Royal Academician, a German, and a Court favourite, so it is a treble heresy to dare to question his ability, and, indeed, ability he has of a narrow, limited, unamusing kind, but sufficient to entitle his *portrait sculpture* to considerable respect. But for the past dozen years this gentleman has been overwhelmed with a number of commissions which he could not possibly execute, not only for portrait busts and figures, but for ornamental work, for work, that is, which essentially requires more than mere recording quality—which calls for the highest capacities of the imagination. And in this work Mr. Boehm has failed—not once, but always. His statues have invariably been respectable, but unfortunately they have lacked that first requisite of monumental work, impressiveness. Witness, for instance, those dreadful effigies of the Queen and the Prince of Wales, which stand in the brown alcoves of the Temple Bar memorial, that first misplaced effort of modern City æstheticism. Squat, stiff, and wooden, without the slightest trace of fancy in their rendering, or ease in their posture, there are our Queen and our future King, a laughing-stock to the foreigner, a libel on sculpture, an eternal instance of our stupid English habit of putting the right man in the wrong place. And now after ten years or so interval, there comes another monument in some ways even more glaringly

hideous and unidea'd, which we shall have to suffer and pay for without hope of escape. Here is perhaps the finest site in all London disfigured for the nation for ever, and no one raises a word of remonstrance, or even seems to recognise the fact of the monument's ugliness and its vacuity. For it is worth pointing out that the deficiencies of the thing lie even more in its lack of dignity and poetical conception than in its lack of beauty. The old statue, with its short cloak and outstretched arm was ugly enough in all conscience, but it had at least the rudiments of an idea; it crossed the little boundary between the sublime and the ridiculous, but at least it had *aimed* at the sublime, and it *was* big and, from its position, imposing. But this miserable, abortive, gentlemanly *likeness*, suitable to be modelled in sugar for a giant's Twelfth-cake, what quality has it in common either with its subject or with monumental sculpture? As a statue the monstrosity inside the Park known as the Achilles is worth a dozen of it, for its straddling ugliness does nevertheless comprise an attempt at action, and a tottering, real though feeble, after the ideal. But—and this is the unpardonable sin—the artist who has wrought the new statue has had no such desire, has felt no insufficiency. His work is perfectly complacent, well-fed, accurate, irreproachable: are not the costumes of the four soldiers which stand at the corners of the pedestal supporting the statue, complete to a button? Is not the charger carefully studied from pictures? Is not the 'splendidly regular, icily null,' mild Duke himself, as like his portraits as one pea is like another? What more could we want? Alas! that neither he nor the English public could see it—we wanted a work of Art! Not so many tons of granite pedestal, not so many pounds' worth of the best bronze, not so much accuracy of uninteresting, unnoticeable, uninstructional detail; but some little touch of the magician's wand of poetical imagination. Some hint that the man who wrought the statue felt the glory and difficulty of his subject, and had some sympathy with the great General whose name still makes English cheeks to glow. And I have dwelt upon this theme because it is occurrences such as these which test the real feeling of a nation towards art—not the putting up of statues, but the pulling of them down were the healthier sign, if we are so indifferent to the question of their beauty and significance. I suppose this monument has, one way and another, cost the nation ten thousand pounds, perhaps more. And the *cheapest and wisest* thing we could do would be to borrow one of the exploded type of guns with which we arm our war-ships, and set to work to blow this new statue down the hill into Belgrave Square.

THE EDITOR.

Recent Literature

THE DEAD LEMAN. *By Andrew Lang and Paul Sylvester.*
(Published by Sonnenschein & Co.)

WHEN an English author has accumulated a budget of brief tales his publisher often puts them forth in three volumes under the title of one or the other of the narratives. Thus an unwary public may get short stories from Mr. Mudie's without intending it, under the impression that a regular novel has arrived.' The above words, which occur, somewhat curiously, in a preface to a work described on its cover as 'The Dead Leman,' by Paul Sylvester and Andrew Lang, describe accurately enough, with the exception of the words 'three volumes,' an objectionable practice which has been followed in the present instance; for 'The Dead Leman' is not one but a collection of stories, and, as a matter of detail, it has not for authors Mr. Paul Sylvester and Mr. Andrew Lang, but is simply a translation by one of those gentlemen of Théophile Gautier's well-known story 'La Morte Amoureuse.' 'La Morte Amoureuse' is the story of a monk and a vampire, and even in Théophile Gautier's perfect language a singularly unpleasant piece of imaginative work; and, since the translators pride themselves upon shunning all those improper 'comic or tragic ideas which we can only read about in the comparative obscurity of a foreign language,' there does appear to be a slight inconsistency in the selection of one of Gautier's most essentially sensual and immoral nouvelles to head the collection. A hypercritical reader might possibly imagine that this story was chosen to give a name to the book, and put in this prominent place at the commencement not so much to prove the literary excellence of French story-telling as to tickle the jaded palate of the habitual English novel-reader by presenting him with a subtle mixture of religion, bloodshed, and lust in this story of the man who is a priest of God by day, and the lover of a dead courtesan by night.



REUBEN SACHS. *By Amy Levy.* (Published by Macmillan & Co.)

EVERY now and again there comes into the dull world of the circulating library a book which, whether good or bad, is at least not a

hackneyed production, but strikes a fresh, clear note ; and has a definite and individual character ; which has, in fact, some quality of life, of recorded experience, thought, or imagination, and is in short a work of literature. Miss Levy's book, entitled 'Reuben Sachs,' has this quality : it is the result of a great deal of thought and a little experience ; it is full of the unconscious and high-falutin egotism of the young ; it is as pessimistic in phrase as it is ideal in motive ; and from a morbid fear of ridicule it sneers at those very things for which its authoress probably cares the most, as, for instance, in the bitter light which is thrown upon the domestic life of Jewish families and the cynical reflections concerning Jewish peculiarities which are dragged in at every opportunity. The book is nevertheless worth reading ; and its inspiration is probably drawn chiefly from the authoress's life, though there is a slight similarity in the style of the writing to Miss Olive Schreiner's 'Story of an African Farm.' The story should be read, if only because it deals with life on a wider platform than that to which the circulating library public is accustomed ; and there is no reason why Miss Levy should not do good literary work in the future, especially if she will remember that there is a difference between sketches of life and character and completed pictures, and also that fine literary work requires both completion of detail and concentration of effect. 'Reuben Sachs' is, in fact, good student work, and interesting more for what is promised in the future than for what is actually achieved.



NEIGHBOURS ON THE GREEN. *By Mrs. Oliphant.*

(Published by Macmillan & Co.)

WHAT is one to say of a new novel by Mrs. Oliphant, except that it is Mrs. Oliphant's new novel? And there is little more than that to be said of the present work, save that, following a bad custom which has already been touched upon in the review of Mr. Andrew Lang's 'Dead Leman,' the present publication is not a novel at all, but simply a collection of stories, republished, we suppose, from the various magazines in which they originally appeared. Nine of these are included in 'Neighbours on the Green,' and, to speak plainly, as far as we have examined them they are all of about equal merit, and, though marked by Mrs. Oliphant's usual literary capacity, have no sufficient permanent attractiveness to excuse their republication. The great danger which besets a popular authoress, and especially one who possesses the extra-

ordinary combination of diligence and facility which is owned by the lady of whom we are writing, is the temptation to over-production ; and, since Mrs. Oliphant first made her mark in 'Salem Chapel,' there has hardly been a single story amongst the dozens she has published which has not shown to some considerable extent that the writer felt the necessity of beating out her literary materials as thin as possible. These stories are so beaten out ; there is a millet seed of incident in each of them, and a bushel of descriptive padding. There is no single tale in the whole collection which deserves to be rescued from oblivion, or on which the authoress has expended more work than was necessary to make it decently fit for publication.



CRESSY. *By Bret Harte. (Published by Macmillan & Co.)*

MR. BRET HARTE is always at his best when dealing either with children or with grown men and women who have preserved, amidst all the rough experiences of their lives, a certain childlike habit of mind ; and this story of 'Cressy,' so called from the name of its heroine, is a story in which boys and girls are chiefly concerned, the love story of a western school, in which the hero is the schoolmaster and the heroine one of his pupils. It is easy to imagine how Mr. Bret Harte would treat such a theme as this ; have we not all read the story of 'Miliss' ? But it is more to the purpose to state that the present work is considerably better than any of Mr. Bret Harte's former novels. 'Gabriel Conroy' was only a succession of scenes, extravagant, pathetic, humorous, powerful : there was no more unity of narration therein than in the various cars which make up a luggage train, and the story went, so to speak, jolting and clattering along, as one loosely-coupled scene succeeded to another. The story of 'Cressy' has not this defect ; the canvas is smaller and it is better covered, the incidents develop one from another, the study of character is more consistent and consequently more interesting. The following little description will show, moreover, that Mr. Bret Harte's humour still retains its peculiar freshness and originality :—

Picking up a slate from under a bench, his (the schoolmaster's) attention was attracted by a forgotten cartoon on the reverse side. Mr. Ford at once recognised it as the work of that youthful but eminent caricaturist, Johnny Filgee. Broad in treatment, comprehensive in subject, liberal in detail and slate-pencil—it represented Uncle Ben lying on the floor with a book in his hand, tyrannised over by Rupert Filgee and regarded in a striking profile of two features by Cressy McKinstry. The daring realism of introducing the names of each character in

their legs—perhaps ideally enlarged for that purpose—left no doubt of their identity. Equally daring but no less effective was the rendering of a limited but dramatic conversation between two parties by the aid of emotional balloons attached to their mouths like a visible gulp bearing the respective legends: ‘I luv you,’ ‘O my!’ and ‘You git!’

No English novelist could quite have written the above passage: its dramatic quality, its breadth of treatment, and the writer’s evident unfeigned enjoyment in imagining the scene which he describes so vividly, are peculiarly opposed to the character of modern English humour.



COGITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS. *By O. F. Routh.*
(*Published by Elliot Stock.*)

THERE are writings which should never pass beyond the more or less charmed circle of the author’s relations and intimate personal friends; and yet not infrequently these are books which are by no means unworthy of admiration, and they have often an attraction for the professional critic which the more competent performance of what may be called professional authors is apt to lack. The good faith shown even in their platitudes, the ambiguities of their speech, the self-revelation of their meditations, the small result of their deepest cogitations, and the impotence of their most profound conclusions, all of these have some charm of novelty, some personal equation, which makes us long to judge the author from a less severe point of view than that of abstract justice. Mr. O. F. Routh’s ‘Cogitations and Conclusions’ is a book provocative of this temper, one of which the merest baby-critic could easily make sport, one which certainly would have been better printed FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY. The fun of the book is consciously or unconsciously that of Colton’s ‘Lacon,’ that famous collection of epigrams almost forgotten by the present generation; but the matter is by no mean Colton’s; the reflections are epigrammatical only in their form, and though their matter is blameless to a degree, it is neither rich in literary quality, nor in the substance of thought. What, for instance, could be more estimable, more trite, or less original than conclusion 238?

‘As a lighted torch shines best in darkness, so sometimes in calamity and distress the goodness of God appears brighter than it did in days of prosperity.’ On the whole Mr. Routh’s reflections are at least entitled to this praise: that they are unassuming, well-intentioned, and harmless.



PRACTICABLE SOCIALISM. *By S. A. and H. O. Barnett.*
(Published by Longmans & Co.)

MR. AND MRS. BARNETT'S lectures on Social Reform are articles which have appeared in various publications during the last three years. Their title—'Practicable Socialism'—is simply the name of one of the number, extending to but a dozen small pages, and, as far as we can see, attempting no stronger solution of the problem with which it deals than is comprised in the suggestion that the workhouses should be made schools of industry, and that pensions of eight or ten shillings a week should be given to every citizen who had managed to keep out of the workhouse until the age of sixty. This may be Practicable Socialism, but it appears to us to rather deserve the name of Unpracticable Poor Law Administration. The truth is that the Rev. Samuel Barnett, excellent, no doubt, as are his intentions, is one of those rose-water reformers who approach and hope to solve the social problem from the point of view of benevolent almsgiving æsthetic influences; he would reform a dock labourer with a picture by Giorgione, and preach the love of the beautiful in Literature, Art, and Nature to an audience of factory girls or Cradley chain-makers. In truth, we have little sympathy with or belief in the efficacies of the combination of Christianity, æstheticism, and philanthropy which Mr. and Mrs. Barnett would use as a lever to regenerate our poor. No doubt they do good to those around them, as all single-minded workers, no matter how mistaken, must do; but there is no social salvation to be found along these lines. You cannot patronise poor people into righteousness: you must get rid of bad sanitation before you can get appreciation for your gold mosaics; and no amount of almsgiving, no matter how judicious, how admirably intentioned, or how carefully disguised, will do anything but pauperise the class who habitually receive it.



THE ASPERN PAPERS. *By Henry James.*

MR. HENRY JAMES' collection of studies, entitled the 'Aspern Papers,' should have been reviewed before, as the book appeared in the early autumn of last year. We are glad, however, to take the opportunity of noticing it and saying what scant justice is, in our opinion, dealt out to this author in the unduly scornful estimate of his writing which appears in another portion of our present number. The book in question shows Mr. James at his best: the tales do not pretend

to be of any serious importance, but the workmanship of the writing is throughout exquisite. The story which gives the title to these two volumes is absolutely without incident of any kind or shape, and is simply the record of how a man spent some weeks in a Venetian palace with an old and an elderly lady in the endeavour to obtain from them some papers relating to the history of Jeffery Aspern, who was, we are told, a famous littérateur, and of whom at the time at which the study opens the narrator was writing the biography. Of course this is mosaic work of Mr. James'; it is over-refined, not to use Mr. Buchanan's more unpleasant adjective; but it has also qualities which are alike rare and admirable. The author creates an atmosphere, relative to both feeling and objective fact, as subtle as it is powerful; he enters into the lives of his characters not only through the easy portals of superficial speech, appearance, and plain label description, but by carefully thought out dialogue and analysis of motive, which do, in the course of the story, build up before us a character whom we can understand and believe in, though we feel, in contradistinction to the work of our greater English novelists, that we might pass the *dramatis personæ* of any of Mr. James' books a hundred times in the street and never say to ourselves, 'There goes So and So.' We fancy rather that after a long dinner, when the conversation had been general and discursive, and after some hours of subsequent talk by the fire, we might possibly say about midnight, 'Ah! I know you now; you are Jeffery Aspern,' or any other character of whom Mr. James has written.



WE have also received the following books, which we hope to be able to notice in our next number:—'Faithful and Unfaithful,' by Margaret Lee (Macmillan & Co.); 'When a Man's Single,' by J. M. Barrie (Hodder & Stoughton); 'The Pilgrims and the Anglican Church,' by William Deverell (Remington); 'Eighteenth Century Literature,' by Edmund Gosse (Macmillan & Co.); 'Heine,' by William Sharp (Walter Scott); 'Letters of Thomas Carlyle,' edited by C. E. Norton (Macmillan & Co.); 'Wordsworthiana,' edited by William Knight (Macmillan & Co.); 'Charles Lamb,' by Alfred Ainger (Macmillan & Co.); 'Foreign Visitors in England,' by Edward Smith (Elliot Stock); 'A Dreamer of Dreams' (Blackwood & Sons); 'Gordon,' by Sir W. Butler, and 'Henry the Fifth,' by A. J. Church (Macmillan & Co.); 'Tropical Africa,' by Henry Drummond (Hodder & Stoughton); 'Love Letters of a Violinist,' by Eric Mackay (Walter Scott).



THE SISTERS.

After the original Watercolour Drawing by Paul Falconer Poole, R.A.

In Memoriam John Bright

'It may be that my name will sometimes be remembered with gratitude in the homes of those whose lot it is to labour and to earn their daily bread with the sweat of their brow, when they shall recruit their exhausted strength with abundant and untaxed food, the sweeter because it is no longer leavened by the sense of injustice.'—
Speech of Sir Robert Peel on the Repeal of the Corn Laws.

ANY reminiscence of mine illustrative of Mr. Bright's career is, I am happy to say, rendered needless now; for though I was acquainted with him for fifty years, during which he had to contend with much adverse feeling, yet I have now the satisfaction of observing the unanimous homage paid to his memory, leaving to me only to express my entire accord in all that has been said and written in his praise, to his honour, and in gratitude for the services he has rendered.

It is upwards of half a century since I made Mr. Bright's acquaintance, and during that time nothing ever disturbed the friendly relations subsisting between us.

The advantages Mr. Bright possessed for engaging in public life were at once discernible, and especially in the cause that had been launched just as he was ready to enter upon a public career. He had not occupied himself much with the economical mischiefs connected with this question, but he saw in it one of injustice, of disturbance of trade, and of periodical suffering on the part of those who earned their bread by

labour, and, as he thought, one redounding to the exclusive advantage of the class he viewed with no favour. It was, therefore, precisely the question in which his energy, his fearlessness, and his most telling style of speech were sure to be available, and one in which his thorough belief in his own convictions induced him to give full play to his grand oratorical and combative powers.

The propriety of his position in the House of Commons at that time was fully admitted ; and while the simplicity of his diction secured him respect and attention, it was felt that his efforts were never tainted with the suspicion that he was labouring so zealously in a party cause, or even had the thought of sharing in the spoils of a party triumph. That he may not always have spoken wisely is possible, but if so it was chiefly, as I think, because he spoke *too well*.

Mr. Bright never seemed to forget the high moral sentiments with which the Society to which he belonged is associated ; and if he was open to any charge of considering them as principles, at all times applicable, he was perhaps only exposing himself to the reproach levelled against Burke—that he was ‘too fond of the *right* to pursue the expedient.’

CHARLES PELHAM VILLIERS.

John Bright

EXCEPT for one brief interval, Mr. Bright sat in the House of Commons for forty-six years. Other members have had a longer career within its walls. Mr. Talbot has sat there for sixty years, and for the same constituency, without interruption. Mr. Gladstone has been a member for near fifty-seven years, Mr. Charles Villiers for fifty-two. But no member has had so consistent, so characteristic, so historical a career as Mr. Bright has had. He came into the House with the purpose of battling for victory on a definite question, and the victory was achieved within three years of his first appearance there. He then devoted his energies to certain special objects, from the advocacy of which he never swerved. They were large, but not numerous, for in many of those subjects which have stirred Parliament during those fifty years he has not taken an active part. As soon as he was assured of his unequalled oratorical power—a power which he developed with great assiduity—he confined his efforts to those topics on which he could speak well, on which he was, or was convinced that he was, well informed. This self-restraint secured him an attentive and admiring audience, even when he urged that which was in the last degree distasteful to those whom he addressed. The House of Commons is not ready to listen to a member who speaks, however well, on too many subjects. It got weary of Burke. I do not disparage my late friend when I say that he was not universally informed. It was wisdom in him to speak on a few subjects only. He told me many times that he always was reluctant to speak, even when he was moved to do so by

conviction, and felt that he could speak from knowledge. And yet no one seemed to speak with greater ease and with more perfect method. The secret of his art—of which hereafter—was acquired only after long practice. Bright was not a born orator. He learnt his craft as laboriously as any other skill is learned—as a great painter or a great musician achieves excellence.

The first efforts which he made were against the levy of Church-rates in his native town. Imposts for ecclesiastical purposes have always been distasteful to the Society of Friends. A century ago, and less, the Quakers were mainly country folk and engaged in agriculture. Bright's forefathers, as he told me, were thus occupied in Wiltshire. They made the best of farmers, and some of the most exhaustive accounts of county agriculture supplied to Arthur Young came from these sectaries. At last the refusal to pay tithes, long a pious opinion, became a religious principle with them, and they betook themselves to other callings in which this detested impost, as they deemed it, was less irritating. The writer has met old people in Rochdale who remembered Bright's earliest efforts after public speaking, and the rough earnestness with which he resented the obligation to pay the charges of those religious offices in which he declined to participate.

Very speedily, however, a far wider interest enlisted him. People who criticised the utterances of Bright's earlier years were accustomed to say that he lived too much in the past. But in point of fact the man's political experiences became part of his nature. He never could rid himself, and he never cared to rid himself, of the facts which gave the first bias to his political energies. Some men are ready to accept conclusions, when they come within the range of what is called practical politics, which a few years before they contemptuously or angrily repudiated. Some men are said to develop their political convictions, and to conscientiously advocate in their middle or mature age that which they as conscientiously resisted in the earlier part of their career. To charge such people with insincerity or caprice is foolish and unjust. But on the other hand, there are others who are convinced of certain positions from their youth upwards. The danger which they run is that of measuring political change, and the demand made for it, by some standard of finality which they have consciously, or unconsciously, assumed. It was in reference to this latter habit that my late friend Cobden often told me, that he had noticed men who in their old age were marked by qualities the very opposite of those which had gained

them an earlier reputation. He used to add his hope that his own career as a politician would be closed before he reached that unfortunate contingency which he had often witnessed in others.

Now in the year 1838, when the organisation which was destined within eight years to work the repeal of the Corn Laws was first framed, the situation was peculiar. Every economist of eminence had condemned restraints upon the importation of food. Lord Liverpool admitted that the arguments in favour of free trade were irresistible, and that the only hindrance to their practical acceptance was the vested interest. His administration cautiously began to remit duties on imports and excises. The Whigs, who succeeded to office after 1832, followed the policy of Robinson and Huskisson, as some people thought, without due discrimination. But no one fancied that the Corn Laws could be touched. Lord Melbourne, the leader of the Whigs, asserted that no one but a madman could advocate a material change in them. But deficit followed on deficit, and the hopes of financial reformers were disappointed. No one had the courage to grapple with the real difficulty, or to see that a revival of manufacture and trade, and with it of a revenue, was conditioned by free-trade in food. The politicians and the landowners were all on one side.

On the other were the manufacturers, the merchants, and gradually all, or nearly all, the factory hands and artisans. These people saw distinctly enough that the prospect of their industry lay in the exchange of its products for food. But there was a good deal of conversion to be effected. The natural allies of the free-traders were the Whigs. But the Whigs had alienated the working classes, and not a few of the electors of 1832, by the new poor law, the excessive severity of which was in strong contrast to the easy-going system which it superseded. It was believed to be a gross violation of the compact under which the enclosure of commons had been effected. The new poor law gave occasion and strength to the Chartist movement, and the leaders of this party were under the impression, an opinion by no means eradicated from the minds of working men, that low prices meant low wages; the reverse being the fact, as every student, in the most elementary degree, of the laws of trade, clearly understands. I have often heard from the leaders of the Anti-Corn Law agitation that the Chartists gave more trouble to them than the landowners and the farmers did.

The distress of the manufacturing districts was appalling. Mills

were closed, hands were thrown out of work, and there seemed to be no light in the darkness. Lancashire and Yorkshire were as though plagued with famine, and that artificial famine; for plenty was at the door, kept out by envious and injurious laws. In the dearth of food there was no market for the products of labour, and, by implication, no employment of labour. They who remember those evil times, and recall to their memory the crowds of gaunt men and famished children, and who assigned definite causes to these sad facts, were not only earnest, active, and vigorous in the crusade against the evil, but when freedom brought plenty were not likely to forget what they had learnt and knew, or to fail in insisting on how great the deliverance had been. To those who took part in the struggle it always appeared as an escape from bondage. I never felt surprise that Bright, who had taken so notable a part in the great contest, should, to the close of his career, dwell complacently on his early efforts, on his memories of the past misery, and on the better days which followed on the change.

The free-traders in the House of Commons were a very small party. Long before the Anti-Corn Law League was an organisation, there was an annual motion made on the Corn Laws. Sir William Clay told me that he resigned it to Mr. Charles Villiers, and that he undertook the annual motion on Church-rates in its place. Among those who went heartily in with the free-traders was O'Connell, who never lost in his partisanship of Repeal his interest in those parliamentary questions which peculiarly affected Great Britain. But the fewness of their numbers did not discourage these energetic advocates of free-trade, and Bright had an early training in that minority speaking and voting which is so important a help to parliamentary success. During the struggle in Parliament Villiers and Cobden were the principal speakers, while out of doors Cobden and Bright were the chief platform orators. But though Bright gave promise of those remarkable oratorical powers which afterwards distinguished him, they were immature. When, more than twenty years ago, the writer undertook the selection and the publication of some among the many speeches which Bright delivered, it was found that his earlier efforts were not worthy of his later reputation. Only one of these speeches was selected, and this rather as a specimen of his first style than of his maturer power. Bright admitted that the omission of the others was judicious, for, as he himself said, 'I had not yet learned my lesson.'

These powers were developed during the eight years which inter-

vened between the repeal of the Corn Laws, and the Crimean War. When I was engaged in selecting and editing these speeches, the publication of which was so great a success, I was struck with the marked difference in merit between Mr. Bright's earlier and later utterances. I asked my friend if he could explain the cause of so singular a discrepancy. Mr. Bright told me that he took infinite pains with his earlier speeches, wrote them out, and learned them. 'But,' he said, 'the difference which you discover must be due to the fact that, for years past, every public question on which I believe myself to be informed assumes in my mind the shape of a speech. I have thought out,' he continued, 'and shaped, sentence by sentence, ten times as many speeches as I have ever uttered.' I have no doubt that he told me the secret of his art. It does not indeed follow that equal labour would produce equal results. There must be with that labour the material to work with, by which is not meant knowledge, but perfect taste, exercised by a mind which was stored with the necessary facts, and drilled by habit and experience, but which was accompanied by a vigorous imagination and the fullest resources of humour and pathos. On subjects which he understood, and on convictions in which he heartily believed, Bright was always ready; his mind was full of points which he had thoroughly polished. But he never used a hundredth part of what was at his command. But even when his reputation was assured, he always, so he told me, spoke with reluctance, and though the news in the House, that Bright was up, supplied him with a large, an attentive, and an admiring audience, he always found his greatest difficulty in his opening sentences. It seemed as though he could not be assured, till some time had elapsed, that he could safely use his strange powers of pathos and humour for the purpose of destructive criticism.

In a speech delivered on May 12, 1851 (in which much of that which became characteristic in his later utterances may be found, though not in such perfect form as in its ultimate manner), when he was resisting Lord John Russell's Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, Bright said, 'It is not the duty of the members of Parliament to be the victims, subjects, and tools of a cry, but manfully and boldly to withstand it, if they believe it to be a hollow one. We ought to resist the cry, to stem the torrent, and it will be infinitely more honourable to go home to our avocations, if we have any, and abandon public life for ever, in defence of principles we have always held to be true, rather than be instruments of a cry to create discord between the Irish and English nations. We are here to legislate calmly and deliberately, without reference to the

passions and contending factions that may rage out of doors.' This was the principle of political action which Bright and, for the matter of that, what the party which acted with him, always avowed and always acted on. They were distinctly resolved, cost what it might, to dis sever themselves from what they believed was unsound, indefensible and, to those who knew its nature, therefore immoral.

It has recently been made matter of eulogy on Mr. Bright's career and political reputation, that he was content to risk and wreck his personal popularity—due to the success with which he and his associates had swept away evil laws and revived British industry—when he was convinced that the country was misled by false and foolish cries. The Ecclesiastical Titles Act was the most futile piece of legislation which the British Parliament ever passed. It became obsolete from the moment that it received the Royal Assent. Its provisions were never obeyed for an hour. It was the outcome of theological rancour, a mere protest which offended many and satisfied none. In Parliament it was very much the work of one man, the late Lord Russell, who had indeed many merits, but who remained to his last days, as I know from my personal intimacy with him, a singularly aggressive Protestant. Outside Parliament every effort was made to inflame religious bigotry, and many members, who knew better, yielded to the turmoil. Now all Bright's early associations would have led him to contemptuously disregard the squabble. To a member of the Society of Friends, the rivalry of aggressive and angry bishops was a battle of the kites and the crows. But he saw clearly that the situation meant something else, and that it involved the old assertion of ascendancy which had inflicted such wrongs on the English Catholics and had been fruitful of such evil in Ireland. He might have been excused for stepping out of the brawl, but a principle was at stake which he was constrained to defend, even though he provoked the hostility of the wrong-headed people among his constituency and the clerical drummers.

There are politicians whose minds are resolved to maintain as far as possible the existing order of things, who even hold that any change in the working constitution of the United Kingdom since 1829 is an error and a mischief. They are what Macaulay called the stern and unbending Tories. On the other hand, there is a party which is just as convinced that every public question must be tested as to its accordance with those principles of religious equality, parliamentary representation, and political morality which are involved in those very changes

which their opponents deprecated, and many of them still deplore. To be true to themselves such persons cannot allow any popularity which they may have won to weigh for an instant against the conviction that an act of legislation or an act of policy is retrograde or immoral. Bright and his associates had from the beginning framed their political creed. They could not indeed anticipate what might be the heresies which would affront that creed. But if those heresies did appear, it was certain that they would provoke what was combative in them, and that without consideration of the consequences. Really great politicians never count the odds which are arrayed against them, or care, if they see that what is vital is at stake, to reckon up the number of their adversaries or the defection of their supporters. Such men, I am convinced, are the true leaders of political action, provided always that their energy and keensightedness remain unimpaired.

Again, there are politicians who make progress, to whom the impossibility of yesterday becomes the policy of to-day. There are others who endure progress, accept it, and then adopt an inner line of defence. Both such classes of men have to incur the imputation of inconsistency, and are seldom much concerned if the charge is made out. It is sufficient to them if the question, once indefinitely remote, comes within the range of practical politics, or if concession is to be made, not because it is just or right, but that the king's or queen's government may be carried on, which really means that one of the historic parties may not be utterly extinguished. And this, it must be admitted with regret, is the general temper of the House of Commons, perhaps of nearly all representative assemblies. It leads men to refuse concession and to acquiesce in surrender, to try punishment before remedy, and to lose both punishment and remedy in a total sacrifice. English history, especially within the last century, is full of examples in which irrational bluster has been followed by irrational deference. Now to men who are convinced, it needs great trust in public men, a trust we may believe which is never wisely accorded, to allow that a policy is unwise to-day and wise to-morrow.

The line of action which Bright took in relation to the Crimean War was supposed to have strained the popularity which he had won by his efforts on behalf of economic reform. But he had a peculiar advantage in the attitude which he took. He belonged to a sect whose abhorrence of war was almost, if not entirely, an article of faith. It is true that, in the first House of Commons speech which he made on this subject, he

entirely dissociates himself from this aspect of the case, but it is certain that his audience believed him to be influenced by it, even while he was discussing the interests of England, the wisdom of an alliance with France, and the possibility of rehabilitating the Government and the finances of Turkey. Even on this occasion he said, 'I do not trouble myself whether my conduct in Parliament is popular or not. I care only that it shall be wise and just as regards the permanent interests of my country.' It does not appear, however, that the speaker became unpopular through his attitude. If he had become so, the unpopularity was latent.

The English people was no doubt at this time strongly excited against the Russian Government, or rather against the Russian Emperor. He was believed, and with some reason, to have been the principal instrument by which the movement of 1848 was put down, and the panic-stricken Governments of Central Europe were relieved from the necessity of keeping their promises. The appearance of Kossuth in London had excited an interest which was stronger than that which a generation before had been entertained for the Polish patriots and exiles. Nicholas was believed to be the enemy of all European liberty, a despot who was ready to lend his armies in order to enslave free nations. The suppression of the Hungarian revolt was an earnest, it was said, of what he was willing to do elsewhere. The designs of Russia on the Turkish Empire were notorious, and had been successful. There were people still living who remembered too, that the ports of Turkey had been free at a time when the Berlin and Milan decrees were intended to shut out British produce from the Continent, and that not a little of that produce found its way into the Continent through the Turkish ports.

On the other hand, amity had generally prevailed between the statesmen of Russia and England from the days in which Russia made its first attempt to enter into the European system. It is true that the armed neutrality was the work of Catherine II. But it was justified to the conscience of Europe by the maritime pretensions of Great Britain, under which this country claimed to regulate the commerce of the world. There had been a short war between this country and Paul, and the Emperor had been punished by assassination. Even when war was declared, so supreme was the importance of the Russian corn trade to Great Britain, that the blockade of Odessa was postponed till after the corn fleet had cleared out, and there was nothing left to blockade. If one takes away from the situation the peculiar and temporary feeling of the British public, few people would now doubt that we imperilled much,

and could gain absolutely nothing, by hostilities with Russia. The Crimean War has for its natural consequence the perpetual scare about the Indian frontier, and the habit of crediting Russia with sinister designs against the integrity of the British empire. To the close of his public career Bright was never weary of quoting this war as the most wanton, purposeless, and futile struggle into which the English nation was ever drawn. He believed that it was mainly due to the ambition of Palmerston, and in common with Cobden he believed that statesman to be the most dangerous and mischievous personage that ever contrived to guide the policy of the empire. It does not appear that he ever realised the secret of Palmerston's popularity, for after the lapse of many years he could hardly speak of him with patience or willingly discuss his public career. No better illustration can be given of his feeling towards Palmerston, than the cogency with which he demanded an inquiry into the mutilation of Sir Alexander Burnes's despatches in March 1861, and the plainness with which he insinuated that the Prime Minister was the culprit.

Bright had always a strong interest in the Indian question. Could he, when he was invited to take a place in the Government, have made up his mind to do so much violence to his principles as to assume the management of the Indian army, he would have preferred India to any other office. He told me so himself, and when I tried to argue with him that for the most part the Indian soldier was to all intents and purposes a policeman, he replied that it was precisely that section of the army which was not and never would be a police that constituted his difficulty. Now it is very rarely that any member of Parliament informs himself about India. It does not follow that the Secretary of State knows much about India. It is certain that Indian affairs excite a very languid interest in the House of Commons. It is not easy to keep a House together for the Indian budget. But Bright, though he certainly never contemplated, in 1853, being a Minister at all, and least of all Minister for India, spoke on Sir Charles Wood's Bill, and showed a knowledge of the country which is scarcely ever acquired by those who have not taken part in the administration of India, and quite exceptionally by those who have. After the Indian Mutiny, true to his maxim that political discontent, even if it goes to the length of insurrection, is a symptom of political misgovernment, he proposed his own remedy for the evils which he detected and exposed. I do not imagine that he was prompted to his inquiries and disposed to his remedies by any local considerations. Thirty years ago they were far less obvious than they

are at present. His motives were, I cannot doubt, the solution of a chronic difficulty, which arose, as he believed, from the traditional mismanagement of Indian affairs, and was nearly as old as the Company's rule in the peninsula. His proposals were so remarkable that they should be stated in full. When his speeches were published, and read extensively by the educated natives, they won him an enduring popularity. No English statesman has ever been so much revered by the inhabitants of Hindostan as Bright was; there is certainly no one whose memory will be more persistently cherished.

Bright traced the terrible poverty, the undeveloped state of the country, the constant deficits in the revenue, and the incessant wars which have been waged in and out of India, to centralisation, as exhibited in the person and the office of the Governor-General. His proposal, then, was that this office should be abolished, that the five Presidencies should be financially, and to a great extent politically, independent, of course subject to the British Parliament and a responsible member of the Government. In other words, he recommended federalism as an absolute necessity for the good government of India, that 'we should have Presidencies, and not an Empire.' He proposed, also, that each Governor of each Presidency should have his own army, due care being taken for concerted action when any emergency might arise. He urged that each Governor should have an assistant Council, which he described as an open Council, that is, as he explained, one which represented the people of India as well as the Civil Service and the non-official Europeans, quoting the precedent of the government of Ceylon as conclusive of the benefits of such a reform. Under such a scheme, of what we must needs call Home Rule for India, he alleged that 'you would have in every Presidency a constant rivalry for good; you would have placed a check on that malignant spirit of ambition which has worked so much evil; you would have no Governor so great that you could not control him, none who might make war when he pleased—and I do in my conscience believe that you would have laid the foundation for a better and more permanent form of government than has ever obtained since it came under the rule of England' (*Speeches, India, II. vol. i. pp. 50-54*). This proposal, from which, as far as I know, he never swerved, gave Bright his popularity in India. There was no part of his public career which he dwelt on with greater satisfaction than his proposals for the better government of India.

But a sharper test of what people believed were Bright's most

cherished convictions was in store for him. He had been called a peace-at-any-price man, who had inherited the tenet of non-resistance, and had maintained the tenet against English opinion during the crisis of the Crimean War, and during the contest which Sir John Bowring had precipitated in China. And now the Southern States of the American Union, relying to some extent on their reading of the Federal Constitution, had resolved on secession, and had determined to maintain it by force of arms. But Bright had no doubts as to his own attitude. He knew that the occasion of the secession and the justification of a military movement in defence of it, were due to the determination to extend and perpetuate slavery, and if as a Quaker he detested war, in the same capacity he detested slavery more. Besides, he branded the secession as a rebellion. He saw, too, that if the South were to successfully vindicate its independence, war on a geometrical frontier would be perpetual. He was more combative than Cobden, whose abhorrence of war was such that for a time he would have counselled to let the South go. But Cobden speedily saw that there would be never-ending war between the two sections, and at last he reluctantly but decidedly accepted the defence of Lincoln's Government and the North. The struggle of public opinion in Great Britain was characteristic. Most of what are called the leading men in politics were on the side of the South. So were the majority of the men of letters, for it is a curious phenomenon in English life that literature makes most men sycophants. But the question was settled by the working people, especially those of Lancashire. They suffered grievously, but they were staunch. The persistent friends of the Northern cause whose names might be known were few, but they had millions behind them, and the country was kept straight. It was not indeed possible to prevent dangerous and malignant acts of hostility, or at least of hostile negligence on the part of our statesmen, Lord Russell having been one of the most notable offenders. The English working-man was a better politician than the Downing Street clique. His action prevented the diplomatic recognition of the South, for which, with motives of his own, the late Emperor of the French was particularly eager.

Bright's decided action won him the attachment of the American people. He was urged to accept their homage in person, and he sometimes talked—seriously or not, I cannot say—of crossing the Atlantic. When I was in the States eight years ago, I happened to mention to a leading American statesman that Bright sometimes talked of visiting the Union. 'Then,' said he in reply, 'he must take account of shaking

hands with forty millions of people.' On my return, I told my friend this, and he said, 'That settles the question in the negative.' It is the misfortune of great statesmen, that they can never see the world. When they travel, they are at once in an artificial society, hearty, sincere it may be, but one which excludes them from genuine observation. On social questions, an eminent statesman has to see with other men's eyes if he would know, and it is not easy to find deputies with disinterested and judicial eyesight. I do not remember in my many conversations with Bright that he ever realised the change which had come over the public and social life of the American people since the epoch of the great Civil War. No nation, I imagine, and all history bears me out, ever came out of such a struggle unscathed.

The attitude of the working-men in Great Britain during that conflict impressed Bright so much, that beyond doubt it lent energy to the attitude which he took with regard to Parliamentary Reform. Great as were the effects of the Act of 1832, he looked on it as an imperfect and vicious compromise. It cannot be said that he had distinctly forecast what would be the issue of a large extension of the franchise and genuine redistribution of seats. He had a scheme of his own, which he put into type, a copy of which he gave me, observing at the time that he believed it was the only copy which he had left. He had, indeed, before the American War broke out, addressed himself to the question of parliamentary representation, for he spoke frequently and at length, on the subject, both in and out of Parliament, on the principles of Parliamentary Reform and on its details, and always from the point of view which would confer on the largest number of persons, on the most equal terms, and with the most complete trust and confidence in their judgment, the parliamentary franchise. He was averse to minority voting, to fancy franchises, to voting papers and, it must be added, to the female franchise. Beyond guarantees for the protection of the voter, i.e. the ballot, he was entirely indifferent to any guarantees whatever for the protection of particular classes and particular interests. He thought and with good reason, that parliamentary guarantees invite parliamentary assaults, and that a political protection, especially if it be of an indirect and compensative kind, was as futile, as disastrous, and as irritating as commercial protection is. It is impossible to doubt that Bright was willing, perhaps as a truly conservative force, to repose unlimited confidence in the people at the ballot-boxes.

Of course he may have been clearly aware that elections are a safety

valve which corrects dangerous tendencies. Parliament seated the present family on the British throne, and displaced many persons who had a better hereditary title. Some of the kings of the House of Hanover have not had a very reputable career, and it may be doubted whether they would have remained in possession had we been living under the political machinery of the Plantagenets, the Tudors, and the Stuarts. The House of Hanover, alien though it was and for a long time remained, has had a longer career, and a safer career, than any of the Houses which preceded it. The parliamentary title of that House, and the association of Parliament with it, has given it a security which is far more unassailable than any claim of hereditary right could be. The English, Scottish, Irish race, Bright held, should be given the fullest power to speak through its representatives, and should be encouraged to send the worthiest citizens to the great council of the nation. By a full and free representation he was of opinion that the best refutation would be given to crude and dangerous theories. I think it not too much to say that Bright had a very scanty sympathy with projects which should attempt great social reforms outside what Parliament might debate on and decide. He was probably a little influenced by his position as an employer of labour, and as an employer, as could be shown did space allow, who acted with great generosity and kindness to those whom he employed.

Bright was exceedingly proud of the British House of Commons. Till a comparatively late period of his career he was habitually in a minority. But he believed, though the machinery of its electoral system was partial and unfair, that it had taught the art of civilised government to the world. His speeches are full of lofty eulogies of that assembly in which he was a conspicuous member. He was jealous of its dignity, its authority, its initiative, and its control. Perhaps the best illustration of that view of his is the speech which he made in the House of Commons on the rejection of the Bill for abolishing the Paper Duty by the Lords. It is eminently a debating speech, one practically in reply, clause by clause, to a speech of Mr. Horsman's, and is at once a sufficient illustration of the respect he entertained for the House and its privileges, and a refutation of the common statement, that Bright was not a debater. Of course there were, and always will be, members of the House whom he thought far from equal to the standard which he recognised, perhaps idealised. It may be that the severity with which he occasionally spoke of individuals was due to the belief that they were inferior in dignity, character, and intelligence to what he thought

requisite in a member of Parliament—to the successors, as he said, of Coke and Selden, Glanville and Pym, the men who affirmed and guarded its privileges. He was emphatically a parliamentary man. His speeches are full of allusions to the dignity, the responsibility, the services of Parliament. He constantly referred to his relations with his constituents, as of an authority to act and speak for them. He would not only be affronted at unwarrantable pretensions on the part of the other House, but at any action, within the Commons or without it, which derogated from its dignity, its responsibility, and its conduct of public business.

Mr. Bright visited Ireland more than once. He went, however, not as a student of the social condition of the country, but as a guest to a private friend, or on invitation to some great town and great meeting. He saw, therefore, only some of the facts. He recognised early in his parliamentary career that the poor law system of England must be, in some shape or the other, planted in Ireland. He advocated the sale of encumbered estates, and the Bill which was brought in for that purpose. With all the warmth of his nature he denounced the Irish Establishment, and vigorously supported its extinction. Later on, he was the originator of the scheme under which occupiers are encouraged to purchase their holdings. He felt ashamed of the Coercion Acts, which were perpetually passed, which he described in his speech of February 17, 1866, as ‘an ever-failing and ever-poisonous medicine,’ when he also alleged an earlier version of his famous adage that ‘force is no remedy;’ that ‘there is no statesmanship merely in acts of force and acts of suppression.’ He even proposed, repeating a suggestion which he made long before, that there should be an Irish session of the Imperial Parliament in which nothing but the Irish question should be discussed, and he predicted that ‘such a session, devoted to such a blessed and holy work, would be a session, if it were successful, that would stand forth in all our future history as one of the noblest which had ever passed in the annals of the Imperial Parliament.’ At the same time he dwelt, in a few brief and pungent sentences, on the intrigues by which the Union of 1800 had been carried, and of the shameful manner in which England’s duty to Ireland had been neglected since.

On the other hand, he was under the impression that the Irishman in his own country was indolent and shiftless, though he admitted that Irishmen in America and Lancashire were industrious. My observation of the Irish peasantry has proved to me that if they have anything to

work on, and any prospect of keeping a fair share of what they have laboured to produce, Irishmen in their own country are amazingly industrious. The Encumbered Estates Act, which Bright thought was one of the three boons which the British Parliament had conferred on the Irish people, was anything but a blessing in disguise, for it transferred, from sheer ignorance, that tenant right which the Irish landowner had always professed to respect, to the speculative purchaser. The Encumbered Estates Act, as I saw at the time, was more provocative of agrarian outrages than any other piece of Irish legislation. It is not only from the negative, but from the positive side also, that the social legislation of the British Parliament has been a total, a disastrous, an ignominious, an irritating failure, as Bright says in 1866, and strongly avowed in the speech to which I have referred.

The question of Home Rule—that is, the substitution, on entirely local questions, of federalism for centralisation—is a very modern topic to the English politician, and a very arguable one. Suppose it for a moment admitted to be, like the abolition of the Irish Church (and I can well remember the heats which that proposal engendered), a matter of practical politics, everyone is agreed that the powers of such a local Parliament should be strictly limited, subordinated, and defined in such a way that they could not be construed as the State-right doctrine in America was before the secession and the great war. Then arises the question: Are the political conveniences which ensue from regulated federalism greater than those which follow from the reference of all action in detail as well as principle to the British House of Commons? My experience of what goes on in the House of Commons, even when it is influenced, as it constantly is, by the best intentions, and is free from any conscious unfairness, as it invariably is, leads me to answer this question affirmatively. I have seen, over and over again, a pile of departmental orders, which become in due course veritable Acts of Parliament, laid on the table, and transformed into laws, without the possibility of debate on them. In the stress of its business, the House has no inclination, no time, to debate matters which become constantly the machinery by which the private life and the private interests of individuals are regulated and controlled. And if this be the case in England, it is more markedly the case in Ireland, the administration of which is in the hands of one man, on the affairs of which most Englishmen are very ignorant. I can only say that I have studied the greater part of Ireland on the spot, and on each successive visit I learn something new and strange.

Now when this question came to be debated, as it is in the lobbies long before it assumes any practical form in the House, I frequently spoke to Bright on the subject, for my long intimacy and close friendship with him allowed me, if indeed he had not encouraged it, to speak freely to him. I knew how clearly, how passionately he had exposed Irish misgovernment; how, in his Irish speeches, he had expressed the profoundest sympathy for the Irish people; and how, more than twenty years before his lamented death, he had gained from them expressions of goodwill and gratitude which it has fallen to the lot of few Englishmen indeed to secure. I do not, indeed, know that any good end would be served by dwelling on what he said to me on these occasions. It is sufficient to say that we disagreed, though without heat, and without any modification of our old and to me most valued friendship.

A cause may be very good, very sound, very defensible, may be capable of absolute demonstration, and may be marred by unwisdom. I have neither the inclination nor the right to condemn the tactics by which a parliamentary party strives to give effect to its purposes. I am ready to believe that the Irish party of 1880 wished and strove by every means in their power to keep on the lines of constitutional agitation, and to discourage secret societies and the machinery which was adopted after O'Connell's death. I will readily admit that many of us misunderstood the aims of that party, and credited it with practices which were disavowed then, and have been disproved since. But the tactics of the Irish party in the House of Commons were very irritating and, as I still think, very indiscreet. No doubt a minority has rights, rights of speech and protest, which a majority is bound to respect. But unless there is to be an end to parliamentary procedure and parliamentary life, a majority has its rights. It is straining the patience of any assembly that it should be kept together day and night in which was merely the pretence of a debate. I do not speak of alliances, of pledges said to have been given by men who say they never gave them, and of expedients which have never been adopted in parliamentary history by parties who have been as dissatisfied and eager as the Irish party has been. Many of us have advocated the cause of the Irish peasant before any of the present Irish party had appeared on the political stage, and might be excused if we resented indiscriminate hostility.

Thus much is clear from his public utterances. Bright believed that the Irish party in the House of Commons were deliberately attempting to discredit parliamentary institutions and that House whose history

and whose dignity he held so dear. He was attacked, as is well known, with coarse and unbecoming vituperation by some of the Irish speakers. It cannot be doubted that he felt this very deeply. It is possible that he confounded the nation with their representatives, as some of the latter appeared to him. It is not given, even to the greatest of men, to always bear obloquy with patience and serenity, and not be turned aside from doing good because those who demand it of you seem disposed to snap at those who have given assurances in the past of sympathy with a neglected and discredited cause.

I saw my friend for the last time in the late spring or early summer of 1888, and was pained to notice how age, or as I now know disease, had impaired his vigorous frame, and had drawn deep lines on his noble face. He would have talked to me on the Irish question, but I begged him to change it for another subject, one in which we had agreed during our long intimacy ; and to the best of my memory we talked of the fatalities, the disappointments, the enduring mischiefs of the Crimean war, during the greater part of our conversation. On every one of those political topics in which he had taken part his memory was acute and his interests vivid. He had no better opinion of Palmerston in 1888 than he had in 1860. But on the other hand he was as warmly attached to the friends of his earlier days as he was when for once in his parliamentary career words failed him as he strove to say something about the transcendent worthiness of that public man, then recently lost, whom he justly thought to have been the purest patriot and the wisest statesman of modern times.

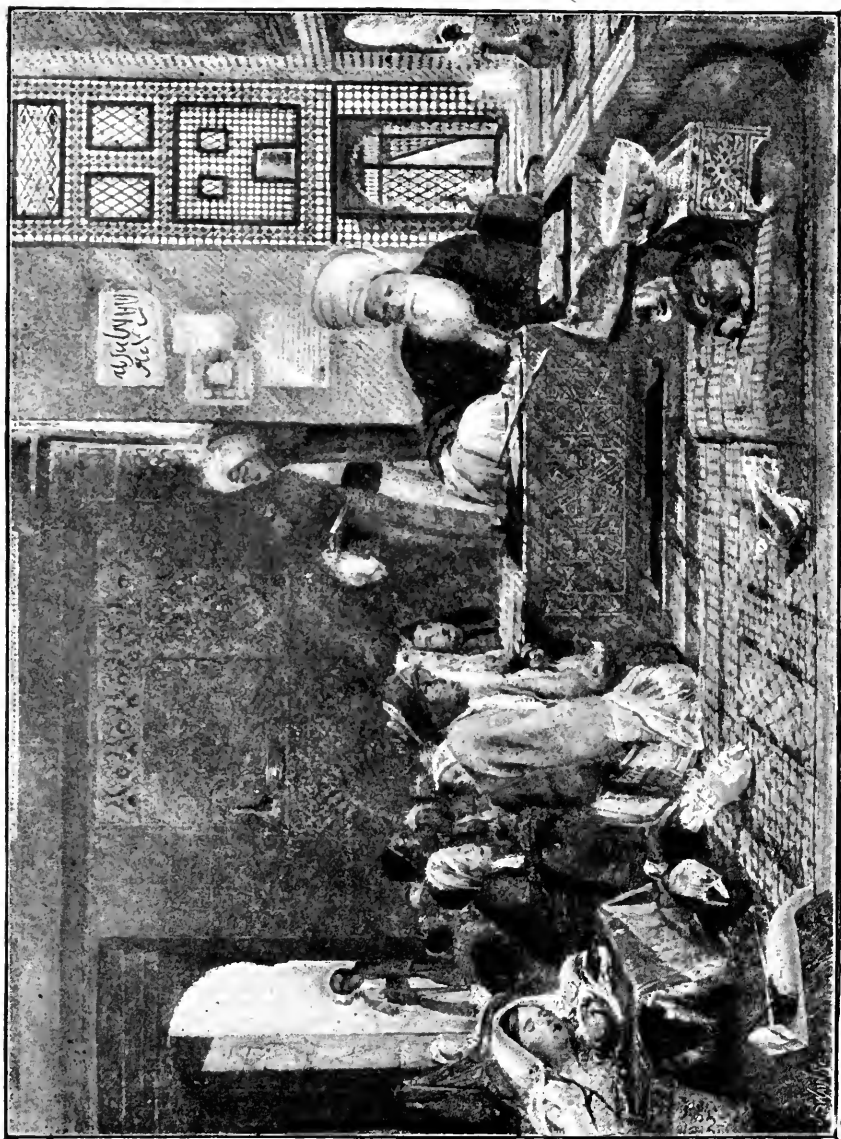
In common with most men of real eminence in the House of Commons, Bright had little inclination for that form of political activity which is known as private members' legislation. He thought meanly too of Committee reports, and for the sufficient reason, that if it be possible to import political feeling into any question, the construction of the Committee is certain to be manipulated. Early in his career he moved for and sat on such committees, but later in his life he discovered their general worthlessness, and announced his discovery in the plainest language. He thought that the responsibility of legislation, like the responsibility of finance, should rest with the Government, and that ample latitude should be given to criticism on Government projects. But he was constantly tender to the action of Government, for after a searching examination of their measures, he frequently declared that he would not undertake to vote against their proposals. In fact, he

believed it to be his duty in many cases to show that a policy might be seriously in error, but that the Government should be allowed to test their own action by the consequences which he believed would necessarily ensue from the line of policy which they had adopted. Destructive criticism, in his mind, was not necessarily accompanied or followed by a motion and a division. Now, it is not possible to determine what the effect of criticism is unless it is put to parliamentary test, and even then members do not always believe in what they vote for. Bright plainly concluded that one need not always take a vote on that which he examined in the light of its agreement with moral principle. The influence which he exercised in this direction was greater than could be measured by party divisions. Many of us thought him to be greatly in error in his attitude on the Irish question; not a few found it difficult to reconcile that attitude with his avowed principles. But the belief in his integrity was so strong that his name and reputation alone were the explanation of the reverses of 1886. Thousands upon thousands of electors suspended their judgment on a topic in which Bright took an unexpected but a decided position. This suspense was the highest homage which could be paid to his character and motives. It is a common practice nowadays to say that, after all, the great tribune was of strong conservative impulses. I have heard the charge twenty years ago. Some go further and say that he totally changed during the last few years of his life, and that, like Milton's timid souls, he

Dying, put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or as Franciscan hoped to pass disguised.

But those who knew him knew better. He was alienated from a cause by what he thought was the intemperance, the impolicy—he used stronger words about them—of its principal advocates. Whether he would have continued in that mood it is now impossible to judge. But of this I am quite sure, that though he might have erred, he was convinced that parliamentary honour and political morality were marshalled on his side of the question, and that to those two guides of his public life he was loyal. But to imagine that he had cast away the principles which were interwoven with his very nature, and were avowed by him during the whole of his public career, would be to charge him with that deterioration of character which was alleged indeed, but was, as I have abundant reason to know, angrily and effectively resented.

J. E. THOROLD ROGERS.



THE TURKISH SCHOOL. From the original Watercolour Drawing by John Lewis, R.A.

The Art of England

‘NOW when it was too late I saw the folly of sitting down to build before counting the cost,’ said Robinson Crusoe on a certain memorable occasion, and the words come home to me to-day most painfully. For to write truly, frankly, and usefully of the Art of England to-day, many unpleasant things must be said or hinted, many deficiencies and errors dwelt upon which are habitually glossed over with flattering phrase, or allowed to linger in that kindly obscurity where they may almost pass for merits. There is, indeed, at the present time much that is rotten in the state of our Art, and in the conduct of those who are most intimately connected therewith, though upon this latter point I do not in this article propose to enter ; and there is, to the best of my belief, no hope of reform whilst the present fashions of interested puffery, audacious advertisement, ignorant patronage, and ill-informed and partial criticism remain in force. For many years I have been to a considerable extent behind the scenes of the art world ; the dealer, the patron, the artist, the critic have all been known to me, and I have watched the influence which one has exerted upon the other, and the extent to which that influence has been to the public advantage, or to the benefit of the art itself. Above all I have noted, with an increasing conviction of the harm which is done thereby both to the man and his work, the method in which fashion has of recent years determined not only the reward but the direction of painting ; and the result, easily to be predicted from the first, of the gradual disappearance of the older aims and qualities of English Art in the endeavour of artists to satisfy this new, capricious, and exacting mistress, who, like a new Eve, lately brought to many a poor painter her golden forbidden fruit of luxury, notoriety, and self-indulgence.

The essence of Art is to be eternal, and the essence of Fashion is to change. How can there be true alliance between these two ? What

has Fashion to do with that secluded inner country of the heart and spirit?—what even with that harvest of the quiet eye from and in which the power and the beauty of art proceed? What is right to-day was wrong yesterday and will be wrong to-morrow: so says the *arbiter elegantiarum* in all ages. What is right to-day was right yesterday and will be right for ever: so speaks, and must always speak, the artist. What hope, then, can we have of obtaining a good art if it is to change from day to day in obedience to the dictates of the hour? And yet this is what English painting has been doing since the so-called art revival, and what it is doing more than ever to-day. And, blinded as we all are by the attractiveness of things which are new and progressive and exactly in accordance not only with the taste of the moment but with the spirit of change which modifies all the thoughts and actions of this restless day, it is scarcely to be wondered at that ordinary picture-seers and the public at large do not notice the gradual disappearance from our pictures of what may be called their distinctively English peculiarities. For the change, it must be well remembered, is gradual, and we live in the midst of the current with little opportunity for pause and quiet examination.

We shall have in the later articles of this series occasion to consider at some length the various developments, methods, and manners which the influence of society and the increase of attention given to artistic concerns by the nation at large have brought into being; but, in order to do this to the best advantage, it seems to me necessary in this preliminary article to speak a little about some phases of painting, and thought and life as expressed in painting, which were well known to our fathers, and which, in fact, gave to them all the pleasure which they derived from pictures. There is always some probability that the art which has gradually grown up in any given country, which has shaped itself as it were out of the needs and aspirations, prejudices, and beliefs of the people, will have some real affinity with the national characteristics, will supply, in however partial a manner, some want which is felt on that particular portion of the earth and at that particular time. For painting is a kind of merchandise which cannot be sent by Parcels Post, no matter how secure the package, which does not bear transportation, and to which, in a new sense, the old Latin proverb may be applied, 'cœlum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.' For not only the physical world, but its mental counterpart is different in France and England, Italy and Germany. The attempt to make an Englishman see after the same fashion as a Gaul is

hopeless, unless you can first make him feel in the Gallic spirit. The death of Art in all ages has been eclecticism ; the attempt to combine all excellencies has always resulted in such works as were produced by the Bolognese School, works essentially nugatory, and bearing the same relation to great art as the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' bears to great literature.

Whatever is true about fine art, there is no doubt but that it always results from the desire to express some *one* thing, not from the desire to express all things equally. The great artist is a man whose imagination is exceptionally aroused by this or that beauty of natural fact or spiritual consciousness. He is not a man who sets to work with the precision of a mathematical instrument to work out a problem in colour and form. This is not to say that the artist never acts in the above manner ; on the contrary, he does so habitually—it is a part of his business, of his artistic education. But all such work pertains only to the mechanics of his profession, and though perfection of technique will greatly increase his native artistic faculty, it is by no means the essential circumstance by which that faculty takes its rank. Extreme sensitiveness, whether of the mind or eye, may easily be injured by the attempt to force the eye to see or the mind to sympathise with sights, methods, or ideas which have for that special individual no attraction, nay, which are perhaps in themselves inconsistent with the exertion to the utmost of his individual power ; and instances are by no means rare of artists who have, so to speak, educated themselves into sterility, and whose work, delightful despite its imperfection in youth, has become, with fuller accomplishment, uninteresting, colourless, and weak. And if this be the case with individuals, the theory is even more true when it has to be applied to nations, for all national arts have a peculiar idiosyncratic flavour, are all partisan speech which can only be justified from one point of view.

The question may be asked why, even granting the above to be true, should it not be possible for the painters of one country to adopt without loss of power the discoveries, improvements, and even the habitual technical methods of another. The reason can only be briefly indicated here, for the inability depends not only on the education of the eye being different in every country of the world, but on the fact that while the actual physical details seen by the eye are in themselves different in, say, England and France, all the mental prepossessions which help to make up our conscious sight are also various according to

training and nationality. Thus the grass is not only of a different colour in France from that which it is in England, the whole effect of atmosphere greyer and cooler, but even if these things were the same they would not look so to a French and English eye. To which chief reason may be added that life is very short, and the acquirement of even one method of painting so supremely difficult, and the carrying out of that method in the special direction which any given painter may choose is a matter of such long duration, and needs such single and undivided effort, that if the artist's time is taken up by the search for alien forms of practice and methods of interpretation, he is likely to find his whole attention absorbed in this formula-swallowing, and never to get any time to do his real business in the world, which is simply to express himself.

The more one knows of the history of art, and the more one studies the works of great artists, the more clearly we see that the latter are great, not because, but for the most part despite, of their methods. Of their methods, yes—and even of their materials. It hardly matters whether they work on paper or canvas, with chalk or brush, or pencil or pen and ink, whether they model in clay or carve their marble, or hammer iron into lace-work, as in the old days of Nuremberg and Verona; whether they put their fancies on tile or glass, or build them into mountains of stone, as in the days of Egypt, or carve them on the living rock amidst the jungles of India or Assyrian caves. Everywhere we find methods and materials varied and imperfect; everywhere, too, we find, save in work which has no interest, faults and deficiencies which a child could nowadays point out. But everywhere, too, we discover the universal truth of this law, that the artistic spirit is greater than any imperfection of form can conceal, so that if your Michael Angelo knew so little about anatomy as to give his statues any imaginable disproportion, the work would still maintain its hold upon us so long as he communicated to it that strenuousness of spirit, that power and grandeur which are inseparably linked with his name. This is no mere theory, but actual indisputable fact; and can be proved as such by a thousand instances. We have all heard of Michael Angelo's 'David,' and how the lack of proportion therein, for the head and torso are far too large for the lower limbs, was caused by the sculptor's haste. He is said to have set to work without measurement on an enormous block of marble, and in his haste to have made the upper portion of the body on so grand a scale that the block was of insufficient size to complete the statue in due proportion. It is rather

a pleasant story this of the big sculptor chipping away in all the eagerness of an art student, but the point of it in regard to our argument is that, despite the manifest error, the statue remains to this day of undisputed magnificence as a work of art. In the same way a nation's art may be more perfect in imperfection than in excellence, if it possesses the essential qualities of the nation's life. And it is because our art is in some measure losing these qualities that I want to say a word in favour of a few of those older painters who, whatever may be thought of the range of their knowledge and the value of their achievements, were indisputably English in feeling, in the character of their subjects, and whose methods grew up slowly, tentatively, it may even be stupidly, bit by bit, in harmony with the life of their countrymen, and in harmony with the traditions of English workmanship. They did not talk much about their work, these men: I seem to fancy they did not even think very much about it; and as to knowledge of the history painting, a student at Girton nowadays might easily have puzzled the whole lot. But that they felt it there is now their work to witness; and that is, after all, as Paul Bedford used to put it, 'the apparatus which can't lie.'

We have at the present time a very beautiful National Gallery, where the works of these men may for the most part *not* be seen; and in the cellars thereof, lit by what little light Sir Frederick Burton and the London fog allow, there exist some two or three hundred landscapes by a gentleman called Turner, who in a moment of misguided liberality thought that the nation might like to look at them, which are without question the finest collection of water-colour drawings by a single artist in the whole world, and which will one day be perhaps given their right place in the building above them. Meantime just consider how ludicrous a thing it is for us to go strutting and fretting about our art progress, to spend thousands upon thousands in the purchase of old Italian pictures which not one in a million Englishmen cares to look at, while we cannot even see—not even those of us who are paid a thousand a year on the understanding that they have the capacity of seeing—that it is a national disgrace to let the masterpieces of the greatest English painter, living or dead, moulder away in a half-lighted cellar. Italian art, forsooth! Yes, it is a fine thing if you can understand the beauty thereof, and let those who can give their 70,000*l.* for a Raphael, or 10,000*l.* for a Rubens; but what are those works doing in a *National Gallery* which is not large enough to hold our own people if we had but the sense to hang them there?

Just think what this means ; just think what real consideration for Art it shows ; just think what likelihood there is of the painters of any country making real progress and receiving real encouragement to do their utmost in the highest forms of art, when they know that neither in life nor death will their country recognise their efforts, and that, however famous they may become, they will have but small, if any, place upon those walls which should be chiefly their own.

The one branch of painting which is exclusively English is that of water-colour. In this branch there have been executed works of such beauty and such breadth of achievement that they form, I do not hesitate to say, the greatest advance which has been made in pictorial art since the days of the Italian Renaissance. The landscapes of Cox, Turner, and De Wint, of Bonington and George Barret, Copley Fielding and Nasmyth, of Varley and James Holland and Samuel Palmer, the figure and architectural drawings of Prout, and old William Hunt, and John Lewis, and Sir John Gilbert, aye, and even works executed by Sir Frederick Burton himself in his earlier days, form a series of pictures which, in respect of quality, are to the best of my belief not to be paralleled in the history of painting.

And yet, incredible as it may seem, there is no place found for water-colours in our National Gallery ; they are not even admitted (above the basement) as elements in the collection ; for all that the visitor to this exhibition sees, the English nation might never have boasted of the above-mentioned artists. And if we turn from our great national exhibition of the work of deceased artists, to our great national exhibition of the works of living ones, we shall find the same policy pursued with but little modification. For while oil pictures are hung there in a dozen large galleries, there is but one small side-room set apart for the display of water-colours ; and of those which are there hung, the majority are not the works of our best artists in this medium, but of the second- and third-rate. The policy of the Royal Academy towards water-colour has been so notorious that nowadays the men who are masters in this branch of painting will not submit their works to be treated with the lack of consideration which is invariably shown to them. So in the National Gallery and Royal Academy alike there is no representation of the one branch of art which first arose and grew to final perfection on English soil ; and while this is so, and is known to be so, there is no one who cares to raise his voice in protest, or to suggest that we owe to the work of the great

water-colour painters and the honour of water-colour art a deep debt of gratitude and recognition.

Now such neglect and injustice as I have described above do not come to pass without producing injurious effects upon the taste of the nation, upon the quality of its art workmanship, and upon the bona fides of its artists; and from those effects we are suffering to-day. We have chosen to neglect that work which was distinctively English; we have allowed the old school of water-colour to sink day by day to the level of a forgotten art, and we have as a nation taken no pains to cherish the masterpieces which have been produced therein, and to hold them up to our younger painters for example and encouragement. We have deified oil-painting at the expense of more delicate medium colour, and, by that strange irony of fate which so often mars our calculations, the result of our action has been not only to depress the art which we neglected, but to drag down with it that which we exalted.

Landscape painting in England rose with the rise of water-colour, and with the fall of water-colour it is falling. Where forty years ago we had a dozen great landscape artists, for the most part painters in the last-mentioned medium, there is not now one *great* English landscape painter either in water-colour or oil. Unpalatable truth, but truth all the same. Let us recognise it, for till we do so there is no hope of remedy.

Most unfortunately I cannot put the actual works of which I am speaking into the pages of this Review, for could I do so my words would need little confirmation. But I would ask those readers who think that I have exaggerated the excellence of the last generation of English landscape painters, and unduly depreciated the merit of contemporary work, to go for themselves to the South Kensington Museum, and to (the cellars of) the National Gallery, and look at the Coxes, De Wints, Barrets, and Palmers which they will find at the former place, and at the Turners in the latter.

Now note that while water-colour landscape flourished, the oil-painting which ran side by side with it not only flourished also, but maintained in its own medium, though perhaps not to an equal extent, the very qualities which gave the peculiar charm to water-colour. These were chiefly the qualities of transparency, delicacy, freshness of impression, and one last crowning merit, extremely difficult to define briefly, but which I may be perhaps allowed to call the impromptu quality: the quality, that

is, which produces the impression of the painting having been done with ease and certainty. If there is one thing more than another peculiar to English landscapes of the great school, it is this, that their artists seem to have had no slightest doubt as to the attractiveness of whatever they chose to paint. Some of them chose to paint classical landscapes out of their head, like George Barret; and most extraordinary productions they were, viewed from any standpoint of reason; but Barrett painted away at them all his life, apparently with the calmest satisfaction; and he was so true an artist at heart, and had such a keen insight into beautiful things, and had so real a devotion towards one or two natural facts—as, for instance, the delicate gradations of atmosphere, and the all-pervading influence of sunlight—that he managed to make even his most impossible temples and imaginary landscapes, in one sense real, and in all senses beautiful. Some others, and these a great many, simply went out to the nearest field or common—and there were plenty of fields and commons in England fifty years ago—and took the first piece of scrubby gorse, or gravel pit, or ragged hedgerow which they chanced to find, and with that and a few sheep and wide expanse of tumbled clouds they made their pictures. It is true that they made *pictures*: they did not *think* of making them as much as we do nowadays, and their scientific and historic knowledge was of course infinitely less; nor do I altogether believe that, with two or three notable exceptions, they were greater artists than those we have amongst us to-day, but they were artists working more sincerely than the majority of modern painters. They were less influenced by the desire of making large incomes, they were less cramped by the necessity of meeting each vagary of the ever shifting taste of the moment. Above all, they were not men who had learnt to think very much of their own performances, and whose art had consequently suffered.

Some years ago I saw a water-colour sold at Christie's which belonged to my father: it was called 'Staffordshire Lanes,' was by David Cox, and fetched—I forget the exact figures—but about 1,200*l.* or 1,300*l.* And concerning this picture there was a little history which happened to have come into our hands. It seems that when it was first purchased from Cox he had asked and obtained for the drawing (it was a very large water-colour) the enormous sum of 80*l.*; and he had been so greatly distressed on thinking the matter over lest the purchaser should not have received good value for his money, that he wrote to him, and after thanking him greatly for his generosity, added at the end of his letter that he took

¹ A landscape by the same artist, of a hay-field, sold the same day for over 3,000 guineas!

the liberty of sending him another small sketch to make up the value of the money he had received. We happen to have this letter, and I must confess that it seems to me to be one of those simple, honourable, kindly acts of which it would not be a bad thing if we still kept up the tradition. It points too a tremendous moral, for the frame of mind in which Cox wrote and sent that letter and sketch has in the artistic world perished as utterly to-day as if it had never existed. The modern point of view is exactly the reverse: a painter nowadays never gets enough for his work (in his own opinion), and if he be a popular artist he too frequently even approaches his purchaser in what may be called the auctioneer spirit, offering his work first of all for a price which he knows it is not worth, and which he scarcely even hopes to get, on the chance, as was once said to me, of finding a flat. And then if the picture be not sold, as it generally is not, at the first-named price, the sum asked is two-thirds, then half, then probably a quarter. And finally, if none of these values are sufficiently attractive to the purchaser, sooner or later the work finds its way to Christie's sale-room, and is then sold, roughly speaking, for its actual value. And as far as my experience goes, this value averages, except in the case of a few of the very best men, from a quarter to a sixth of the price at which the artist would first have estimated his work.

There is little progress that we can perceive in such a state of things, and it is very questionable whether the artist is really any better off for fluking 500*l.* or 1,000*l.* now and again for a picture which is worth 50*l.*, and raising his expenditure, as he invariably does, on the assumption that the fluke will be perpetual. In the old days if he only got 30*l.* or 40*l.*, he only lived at the rate of 300*l.* or 400*l.* per annum, and he lived the life which was best suited to his nature, and best suited to make him capable of producing pictures.

Again, the majority of people hardly understand the various ways in which this influence of fashion works to the deterioration of art. Consider for a moment the case of a landscape painter who is at the present time fashionable, and receiving large prices for his pictures. He must not only have a large house in some expensive neighbourhood, and entertain therein, but he must also be 'seen about,' as the phrase is, in order to maintain his vogue. Where Society goes he must go also, and at the same time; and in order to sell for those large sums of money he must appeal to a very limited class, and a class who are accustomed to have all their conventions and prejudices consulted to the utmost possible

degree ; moreover, to a class who for the most part lead artificial, unwholesome 'town' lives, and whose predilections therefore are likely to be for unwholesome artificial 'town' art. The simplicity of subject which marked the earlier painting of which I have been speaking would have little attraction for the fashionable picture buyer either then or now, and, since the painter now bows to Society, to the fashionable picture buyer he *must* appeal. What do we find? Look round the Royal Academy and say how many pictures there are in which a plain, simple English sentiment has been the motive of the artist's work ; and then look round and compare with the few you have been able to discover, the multitudinous representations in which artificiality, either of dress or sentiment, plays the chief part.

Look at this picture by Mr. G. D. Leslie¹ for an example of that older, quieter, truer, and essentially more beautiful style which used to mark the majority of our pictures even when they were, technically speaking, most awkward, most imperfect, and most uninteresting. Life to these two girls, who have opened the window to enjoy the sunshine and the fresh air, may not be intensely exciting, may be full of rather narrow, uneventful pleasures and pain ; but is it possible to look at them and not think of them as fresh and clean, physically and spiritually, not to be glad that they have a quiet time, not to envy a little their youth and innocence and the pleasant natural surroundings of their lives? It seems to me to matter here very little whether in this Mr. Leslie has or has not idealised his facts. Perhaps even the more honour to him if he has done so ; for it is no small honour for a man to have so pure a conception of English maidenhood, and a touch at once so gentle, so firm, and so loving upon the little everyday incidents of English life.

Yes ! struggle as hard as we may, each of us is bound to remain, like Mr. Gilbert's self-righteous hero, an English man, temptations to belong to other nations notwithstanding. And so why should not our art be as essentially English as ourselves? Indeed it must be, if we hide it with as many fanciful foreign clothes as it takes to make Mr. Beerbohm Tree into Sir John Falstaff. And as in that clever personation, the clothes will never seem to quite belong to the body, but be carried about by it more or less uneasily.

Perhaps the great secret of Sir John Millais' popularity lies in his recognition, possibly his unconscious recognition, of the above. His

¹ It will be in the Academy exhibition this year.



HOME. G. D. Leslie, R.A.

pictures have, beyond and above all other qualities, this English quality, and they appeal to all classes for that very reason. A sort of personal affection for this painter, as well as for his pictures, obtains with very many people who have never set eyes upon him; he is 'in touch' with them mentally and spiritually, and his little maidens with bird's-nests and brooms, spiders, violets, or caller-herrin, by whatever fanciful name they may be called, please from their purely human quality even more than by their skill. And at an early period of his career Sir John Millais, then little more than a boy, did a large number of drawings for the illustration of Anthony Trollope's novels, which not only showed him at his very best, but remain to this day the most perfect presentment which has ever been given by art of the character and the appearance, and what may be called the 'local colour,' of England and the English people. Doubtless some of this achievement was owing to the nature of the stories illustrated ('Framley Parsonage,' 'Orley Farm,' and 'The Small House at Allington') and the perfect reciprocity of feeling between the artist and the author, but when all this is allowed for, the perfect kindness, grace, simplicity, and strength of these drawings are most admirable. The extent to which they reflect that decency of ordered life, that modesty of demeanour, that fearless purity and absolute innocence which are, or at least were, the ideals of English girlhood, is almost beyond belief; and if we pass from the mental and moral aspect of the drawings to their technical qualities, we find a most fitting correspondence between the means employed and the effect produced. The execution is extremely simple and straightforward; the whole attempt is to give the very kernel of the selected incident; the representation of the scene seems to have been the only idea in the artist's mind. And with this singleness of intention there has come—how, who shall say?—such grace of gesture, such dignity of form, such appropriateness and delicacy of hinted or wrought-out detail as would be hard to parallel, impossible to surpass. Lily Dale and Lucy Robarts are no dearer and sweeter in Trollope's printed pages, than as Millais has shown them us in the old garden at Allington or in the 'Framley Parsonage;' and as for Johnnie Eames and Crosbie, without the painter's help their characters would be but half understood.

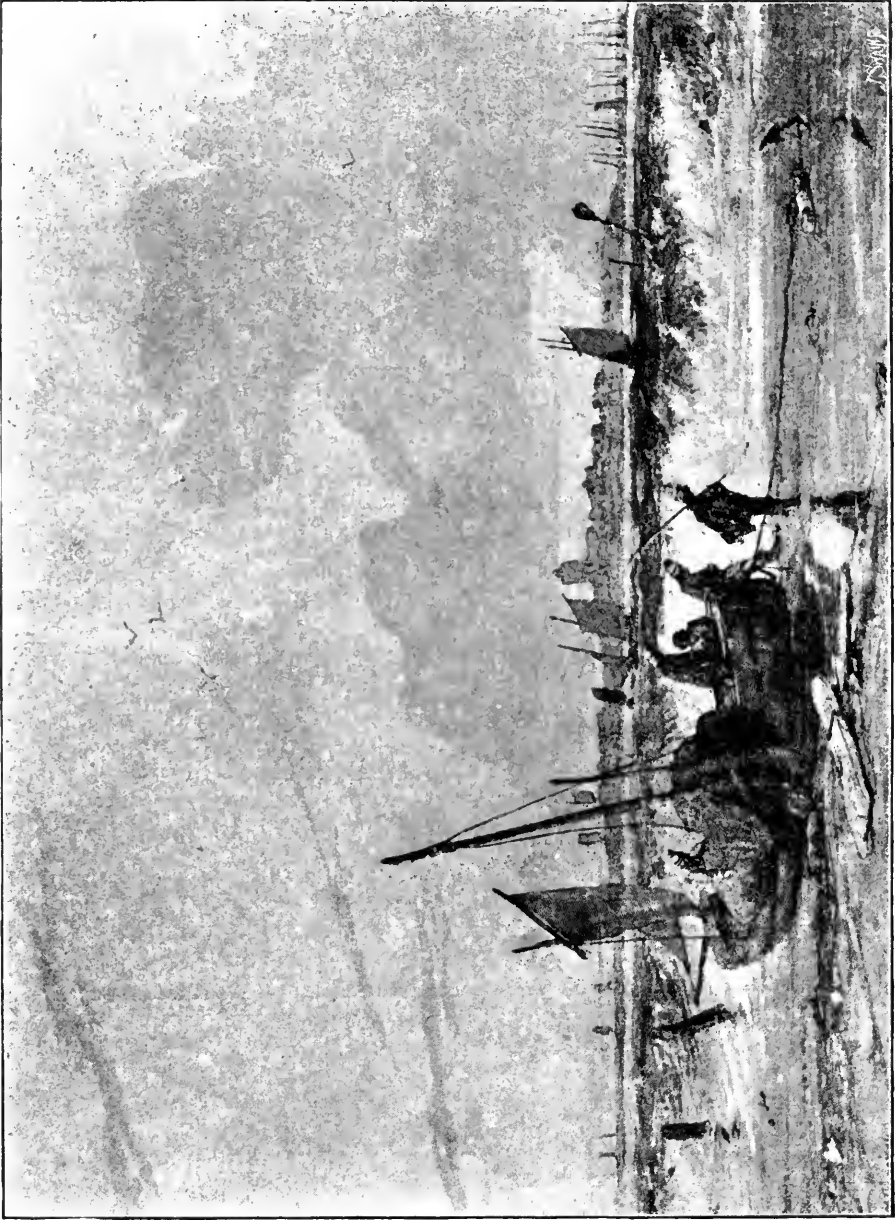
Mr. Luke Fildes is another artist who, though in a far inferior degree to Sir John Millais, showed a similar capacity in illustration, and the spirit of whose painting has remained wholly national. His Venetian women, of whom he paints so many, are transparently of British origin, and wear their coloured robes fresh from a laundress in the Euston

Road. They are far too clean, too buxom, too fresh and unsophisticated for the Venetian flower-girls they represent, and suggest the character of such women even less than they reproduce their exterior. If we want a Venetian subject-picture which shall be veritable, we must get Van Haanen or some other foreigner to paint it for us, or be content with merest caricature of reality.

It is strange, however, to notice how strongly our æsthetic ideas are setting nowadays in the direction of the reproduction of foreign methods, subjects, and ideas. An awful horror of being thought British seems to have seized upon our artists, and with the exception of that large class who confine their efforts to the nursery, and the denizens thereof, I can hardly remember one popular academician who does not seek either his subjects or his method of treating them across the sea. Look, for instance, at Mr. Marcus Stone, who one would think should be national enough if he gave his idiosyncrasies fair play. He paints us English lovers in English gardens, but he does it in such a way, with such accessories of big hats and feathers, Empire dresses, painted furniture, and general bric-à-brac, as to render his compositions akin to an opera bouffe. Then there is Mr. Phil Morris, who is patriotic enough at heart, and has in bygone days done many deliciously dreamy pictures of idealised rustic life, but who now has become so entirely fascinated by the clothes which people, and especially babies, wear, that he almost forgets there is any kind of humanity beneath them. Mr. Orchardson has an excuse, for he is, if I mistake not, half a Frenchman by birth, but even he has given up to furniture and architecture a good deal of what was meant for mankind, and will only allow us now and then to perceive how great is his power of depicting human feeling.

As a little contrast to this art of the rich, look at the picture by the late Paul Falconer Poole, R.A., of 'The Sisters.'¹ In it three qualities speak for themselves—simplicity, grace, and naturalness; but though all the facts of the scene are here rendered truly and clearly, yet the work has besides these merits a touch of style which quite justifies it as a work of art; and it is just this last-mentioned quality which is gradually disappearing from English painting. Our artists are getting into a habit of dull realism with regard to the outside of the matters with which their pictures are concerned, and seem to think that if only technical qualities are sufficiently thorough, all else can be dispensed with. Composition too is growing day by day more rare; the pre-Raphaelites unconsciously struck it a hard blow in their search for

¹ The frontispiece to this number.



SEA-COAST SCENE. R. P. Bonington, R.A.

certain essential qualities which they thought the attention given to composition had tended to obscure ; and the influence of the later French art, and its devotees of value and impressionism, has helped to complete the work. A few men like Sir Frederick Leighton and Mr. Orchardson still make a study of composition, but, for the most part, it has ceased to be cared for or greatly sought, and no small proportion of the decrease of dignity and interest which is notable in English painting at the present time is due to this fact.

Yet it may be doubted whether great landscape painting is possible without the element of composition entering very largely into the scheme of the painter. Certainly no great landscape art in England has as yet existed which did not depend almost mainly upon this quality. And it would be interesting to show, though I have no space here for such a demonstration, how large a share is played by this characteristic in the most apparently simple works of Cox and De Wint. Cox especially was a great master in the art of composing landscape ; and there is a large and elaborate water-colour of his, of Æneas approaching Carthage, which is as elaborate in this respect as Turner's more famous picture in the National Gallery.¹ Indeed, at one period there is no doubt that Cox studied most carefully not only Turner but Claude, and gained from his acquaintance with the latter much of his power in delineating those calm and sunny scenes and atmospheres, which at first sight come as a surprise to those who only know the rough winds and rainy skies of his usual work. A good specimen of the part rightly played by composition in a landscape is to be found on the opposite page in this sea-coast scene by Richard Bonington. It will be seen that the pleasantness of form in this picture depends almost entirely on the introduction of the boat in the foreground, and especially in the manner in which its masts are introduced. Anyone who will take the trouble to cover with his hand these masts will find that the beauty of the picture is thereby almost wholly destroyed ; and it is worth noting not only that the masts are absolutely wanted in that position, but they are wanting at that special angle at which they are placed. Perfectly vertical lines would absolutely destroy the effect.

On one last point there is a marked change in the oil-painting of the present day as compared with that of the earlier half of the century, and that is in the absence of finish, in the completeness of the work offered to

¹ ' Dido building Carthage.'

the public. Painting (the actual brushwork) has become altogether more hurried, more slap-dash, more incomplete. It is no uncommon thing to find in an Academy picture portions of the composition left in entirely different states as regards the actual handling of the paint: you may even notice portions which have not been painted at all. No doubt there are several reasons for this, which, to some extent, excuse the alteration: we live in an age of competition and hurry; and we paint at the highest of high pressure; and if painters fare more luxuriously than of old, they must do their work as quickly as may be; and if it is sufficiently good to look well in the exhibition and to please the patron, there must be a great temptation to carry it no further. But still, making all allowances for our different civilisation, we might fairly expect a greater proportion of completed work from our most popular painters than we get just now. And it surely should be some inducement to them to give us such work if they consider that not only have all the great masters of former times given it ungrudgingly, but that even in our own experience the paintings on which such labour has been bestowed have brought most enduring fame to their artists, and so from even the rough standpoint of pecuniary value the labour has been by no means wasted. Finish, rightly understood, is not only a grace but a necessity in a picture. No incomplete thing is really a work of art if its incompleteness has arisen from the artist's choice.

It is difficult to speak on this subject without being misunderstood. A just-begun sketch might perhaps be called incomplete, and yet be wholly free from the deficiency to which I am alluding. And an unfinished picture no doubt may be a work of art as far as it goes. But the point is this—that the master who deliberately refuses to give to one portion of his composition the work which is necessary to bring it into entire harmony and consistency with the rest, is deliberately falling short of that implied contract which he has made, if I may use the expression, with both nature and public. His acquired and instinctive knowledge say to him 'this scene,' or 'this man, should be represented in such and such a way;' and if, knowing that, he only chooses to partially so represent him, he has committed an irredeemable sin, has forfeited his birthright as an artist, and has betrayed the trust of the public. And mind this: he has betrayed it the more in proportion as he is a great and popular artist. For to such men we come day after day, our minds full of business, our eyes full of ugliness, and our hearts full of worries, and we ask them silently but sincerely to make us forget the business, to substitute beauty for the ugliness, and to quiet the



AN EASTERN LOVE-LETTER.

From the original Watercolour by John Lewis, R.A.

worries with whatsoever things they have found or thought to be of noble meaning or lovely sight. And we trust them to do this to the utmost of their power, and we pay them and honour them because we believe they can and will do it. We, so to speak, are not on our guard with them ; but they are on their parole with us ; and very many of them certainly keep their implied contract most thoroughly and loyally. I am proud to say that I know several painters, men of extremely moderate income, almost if not entirely dependent upon the sale of their work, whose chief anxiety is that the picture should be as good as they can make it, and who think of that first, and that only, till it is finished.

I know a great painter, perhaps the greatest now living in England, whom I found one day at work on a small canvas of a girl's head. It seemed to me the picture (it was a portrait) was one of the most beautiful that I had ever seen, and I expressed this opinion with tolerable frankness ; but the artist's reply rather startled me. After thanking me for my courtesy, he said : ' I am glad you like the head, but it's not right, and what's more I'm just going to take it out ; I can't get the eyes right.' I asked him what he meant, and his answer was to the effect that he had had the head in and out five times, and couldn't get the colour of the girl's eyes to his satisfaction, and so was going to give up the portrait. And consequently give it up he did, to the best of my belief. At all events the picture was never exhibited, and I am almost certain never sold.

To those who know what is implied in the above incident it will not seem a little thing that a great painter should so frankly confess and struggle so hard to remedy his failure, and should finally accept defeat rather than give to the world what he knew or believed to be wrong. And I shall not have written this paper altogether in vain if I can persuade some of those folk who have much money to spend upon works of art, to spend it chiefly upon such as evidence this desire of perfection ; for believe me in this, if you doubt all else in the present paper, that only in such a spirit is fine artistic work produced. You cannot inspire fine painting by money, you cannot produce it for money ; and you can only encourage it by love and sympathy, and it can only be produced by the man who puts his whole heart and mind and strength into each portion of his work.

As some illustration of a painter who did this, look at the picture by

Mr. Lewis which faces the preceding page (and the other at the head of this paper by the same artist), and think of how impossible it would be that such labour as has been spent therein should ever be actually paid for in hard cash. The work has been done in such fashion because that was the only way in which the artist found it possible to carry out all he saw ; and he has been profoundly indifferent to the fact that he might have saved himself, in this or that detail, so much unremunerated labour. Why, the very patterning of the maid's shawl in the picture from which this reproduction has been made, is a miracle of patient industry, needing the use of a lens to appreciate ; and a result which, to nine hundred and ninety-nine people out of every thousand, would have been equivalent, might have been obtained in that portion of the composition for a tithe of the labour. Of course there is no necessity for finish to be of this missal-painting kind ; I take it only as an extreme instance of conscientiousness in work. For the lack of this conscientiousness is the besetting sin of modern English painting ; at least of that portion which is nowadays most popular. The elaborate, delicate, dignified work of our earlier landscapists has been succeeded by roughly effective sketches such as those of the Scotch school, or by conventionally finished studio paintings such as those of Mr. Leader, or by elaborate but uninformative realistic renderings of nature, which have no real pretensions to be called pictures ; and the solidity and finish of the handiwork itself have to a great extent disappeared.

The remedy is difficult, and at the present time probably impossible : it is to be found for the artistic workman in a return to a healthier character of life, in the forgetting of the patron and the Queen Anne palace for whom and in which the painter has lived of late, and the return to the two natures from which all the beauty of art has ever sprung—the inner nature of the heart and mind, and the outer nature of the visible physical world. Not in dress, not in drama, not in imitation of this or that passing fashion ; not in seeking to please any special class, or in seeking to delineate any special kind of subject is his salvation to be found ; but in opening the mind and eye to the truths which he alone can discover, the beauties which he alone can feel, and the real pathos and interest of that drama of life which has gone on since the world began.

HARRY QUILTER.

Australian Writers

ALL literature in a new country must labour under one obvious disadvantage. The audience to which it appeals is not the one whose judgment, from a literary point of view, is of importance. Those who understand it best are not those on whom its success chiefly depends. It is therefore required of writers of new things to be sufficiently above mediocrity to overcome the indolent dislike of unfamiliar scenes which is one great characteristic of the reading public, and to make the interest of the work independent of the local points, which will be surely missed, and the local colour, which will not be appreciated. The famous lines—

The wood-weele sang, and wold not cease,
 Sitting upon the spraye,
 Soe loud, he wakened Robin Hood
 In the greenwood where he lay,

would probably never have been so much admired if the bird treated of had been an exotic fowl, sitting on a tree of foreign growth. Australian literature suffers, naturally, from these hindrances, and the literary traveller who is taken

Beyond the rainless Barwon,
 Beyond the red Barcoo,

may be intelligent, but can hardly be expected to be appreciative of any traits but those belonging to our common humanity. Things really as impossible as a palm tree in Robin Hood's greenwood would not astonish him did he meet with them.

In considering Australian writers, I will divide them, no other classification suggesting itself, simply into poets and prose writers, and will endeavour to show why, and to what degree, they have a claim to attention outside Australia.

Of the poet who is first in the affections of every Australian, Adam Lindsay Gordon, much has already been written in English as well as Australian magazines. His life and circumstances are too well known to need recapitulation—a life fitly symbolised by the monument on his grave: a broken column with a laurel-wreath on it. He is considered by all his (adopted) countrymen as pre-eminently the poet of the horse, and the landscapes in which he places horse and rider are most true and delicately coloured sketches of Australian scenery. As one reads one can see the wonderful pale turquoise blue of the far-distant hills and smell the golden wattle-blossom. *A propos* of wattle, it is strange that in the dedication of 'Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes' Gordon speaks of

Lands where bright blossoms are scentless
And songless bright birds.

For the most part the 'bright birds' are songless, though far from dumb. But the flowers! The honey-scented gum-blossom, the still stronger wattle, the faint, sweet clematis, the 'fringed violet,' that smells like vanilla—all these, and many more, seem to accuse Gordon of injustice when he would imply that the bush flowers are without perfume. Yet that he loved wild flowers let the last lines of 'The Sick Stockrider' witness—

Let me slumber in the hollow where the wattle-blossoms wave,
With never stone or rail to fence my bed;
Should the sturdy station children pull the bush flowers on my grave,
I may chance to hear them romping overhead.

If this may be taken as an expression of his own wish as well as the imagined feeling of the dying stockman, it is pleasant to think that pale, faintly tinted wild flowers *do* grow in starry luxuriance round the poet's unfenced grave.

Undoubtedly the best of Gordon's poems are 'From the Wreck,' 'How we Beat the Favourite,' 'The Sick Stockrider,' and 'The Rhyme of the Joyous Guard.' These four show all his characteristics in their finest development. 'From the Wreck' is the story of a ride from a station on the coast to a neighbouring township to get help for a ship

wrecked on the reef. Delay is death to all still on board the fast breaking vessel, so, mounted on the best station horses, two men start, while it is yet dark, with the parting injunction from the overseer—

And ride, boys, the pair of you, ride for your souls.

And so they ride, the best ride, as far as I know, that has yet been written, for it is by a poet who was also a horseman. Compare it for a moment with 'How we Carried the News from Ghent to Aix.' I have often heard people say the two poems were alike. Alike! In what? In this only—in each case the riders carry news of instant moment, in each case the others fail and the hero comes in alone. There was once an American girl who said of a celebrated sculptor, with whom she had just waltzed, 'He may sculp well, but he don't dance well.' Now, Mr. Browning is a great poet, but 'he don't ride well.' To establish my position I need scarcely do more than quote. Browning first—

Not a word to each other, we kept the great pace,
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place ;
I turned in my saddle and made its girth tight,
Then shortened each stirrup and set the pique right,
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,—

It must have been 'a great pace entirely,' but it seems strange that the horse was not thrown out of his stride by his rider's acrobatic performances ; but it was not so, for we have the astonishing assertion—

Nor galloped less steadily, Roland, a whit !

Later, when the horse is nearly dead beat, the rider takes off his boots, and *leans forward* to pat his ears : altogether reminding one of the pursuer of 'Woolfordinez,' who, as 'Bon Gaultier' tells us—

His feet once more regaining,
Doffed his jacket, doffed his smalls.

Now for our bush poet and gentleman rider. He is on a young blood filly, 'bred very nearly as clean as Eclipse,' who has been

. . . Awkward enough in the dark ;
She was eager and headstrong, and barely half broke ;
She had had me too close to a big stringybark,
And had made a near thing of a crooked sheoak ;

But now, on the open, lit up by the morn,
She flung the white foam-flakes from nostril to neck,
And chased him—I hatless, with shirt-sleeves all torn
(For he may ride ragged who rides from a wreck),

And faster and faster across the wide heath
 We rode till we raced. Then I gave her her head,
 And she, stretching out with the bit in her teeth,
 She caught him, outpaced him, and passed him, and led.

We neared the new fence; we were wide of the track;
 I looked right and left—she had never been tried
 At a stiff leap. 'Twas little he cared on the black.
 'You're more than a mile from the gateway,' he cried.
 I hung to her head, touched her flank with the spurs
 (In the red streak of rail not the ghost of a gap),
 She shortened her long stroke, she pricked her sharp ears,
 She flung it behind her with hardly a rap.

After that—

She led, and as oft as he came to her side,
 She took the bit, free and untiring as yet;
 Her neck was arched double, her nostrils were wide,
 And the tips of her tapering ears nearly met.

Well, certainly, 'for a green, grass-fed mare, 'twas a far thing and fast,'
 and if she perished early, at least she lives in song.

'How we Beat the Favourite' is simply a description of a race, but it is the best of Gordon's many racing rhymes, and stirs the blood until one feels that even people who never ride must surely understand it. This, however, I have ascertained by experiment to be an erroneous impression. From a poem of such continuous action it is difficult to quote, but these are the lines which describe how the mare 'Iseult' was overtaken by the favourite:—

Then crashed a low binder, and then close behind her
 The sword to the strokes of the favourite shook;
 His rush roused her mettle, yet ever so little
 She shortened her stride as we raced at the brook.

She rose when I hit her; I saw the stream glitter;
 A wide scarlet nostril flashed close to my knee.
 Between sky and water, The Clown came and caught her—
 The space that he cleared was a caution to see.

Perhaps the lines hitherto given may be considered as claiming admiration for Gordon rather as a horseman than as a poet, but in 'The Sick Stockrider' and 'The Rhyme of the Joyous Guard' we have something more. The former poem has been regarded by many as the gem

of the collection, and so has been quoted in every article treating of Gordon. It came, doubtless, fresh from his own heart and experience, and is sad, with great simplicity of pathos. Some lines must be given besides those quoted earlier, and it may be noted, by the way, how accurate Gordon usually is in descriptive words. 'Gleaming' is not merely alliterative, as all will acknowledge who have seen the silver plains of an Australian summer.

'Twas merry, in the glowing morn, among the gleaming grass
 To wander, as we've wandered many a mile,
 And blow the cool tobacco cloud, and watch the white wreaths pass,
 Sitting loosely in the saddle all the while.
 'Twas merry in the blackwoods, when we spied the station roofs,
 To wheel the wild scrub cattle at the yard
 With a running fire of stockwhips, and a fiery run of hoofs,
 Oh ! the hardest day was never then too hard !

In these hours when life is ebbing, how those days when life was young
 Come back to us—how clearly I recall
 Even the yarns Jack Hall invented, and the songs Jem Roper sung.

In 'The Rhyme of the Joyous Guard' Gordon strikes his highest note of passion, yet, strangely enough, this poem has been seldom or slightly noticed in reviews of his works, probably because the subject treated of is not Australian. Everyone will remember that 'La Garde Joyeuse' was the name of Sir Lancelot's castle, changed afterwards to 'La Garde Doloreuse'—but of this change Gordon takes no notice. The poem is supposed to be a monologue by Lancelot at the time when all is ended, the Knights of the Table Round dispersed or dead, and he himself, as the old chroniclers tell us, 'a holy man.' There is no trace of Tennyson in this poem (indeed, the metre shows Swinburne's influence), yet the Lancelot of the 'Rhyme' is the same man that Elaine looked upon and loved, 'with the love that was her doom'—the same man whom Sir Ector apostrophises in that 'noble and joyous book, La Mort Darthur':—'Thou were the truest friend to thy lover that ever bestrood horse, and thou were the truest lover of sinful man that ever loved woman ; and thou were the kindest man that ever strook with sword, and thou were the goodliest person that ever came within presse of knights, and thou were the meekest man and gentlest that ever eate in halle among ladies ; and thou were the sternest man to thy mortal foe that ever put speare in rest.'

Speaking of 'the speare in rest,' hear his reminiscences of the old

battles, when 'we saw the heathen banners displayed, and the heathen lances cluster':—

Then a steel-shod rush and a steel-clad ring,
And a crash of the spear staves splintering,
And the billowy battle blended.
Riot of chargers, revel of blows,
And fierce flusht faces of fighting foes,
From croup to bridle that reeled and rose,
In a sparkle of sword-play splendid.

And the long lithe sword in the hand became
As a leaping light, as a falling flame,
As a fire through the flax that hasted ;
Slender, and shining, and beautiful,
How it shore through shivering casque and skull,
And never a stroke was void and null,
And never a thrust was wasted.

So Lancelot lives his life over again, with all its passionate love and its bitter remorse ; and I think, in his unavailing regret, he draws a sweeter and truer picture of the blameless king than we have yet had.

Had he lightly loved, had he trusted less,
I had sinned, perchance, with the sinfulness
Which through prayer and penance is pardoned.
Oh, love most loyal ! Oh, faith most sure !
In the purity of a soul so pure
I found my safeguard—I sinned secure,
Till my heart to the sin grew hardened.

Yet with all his repentance he cannot banish the thought of Guinevere, especially as she was in the days when

The deep, dark fires in those dreamy eyes,
Like seas clear-coloured in summer skies,
Were guiltless of future treason ;

and, careless of his own spiritual safety while her salvation is uncertain, he cries to the Saviour, with a naïve faith in works—

I pray Thee deal with me as Thou wilt ;
Yet the blood of Thy foes I have freely spilt,
And, moreover, mine is the greater guilt
In the sight of Thee and Thy Father.

That saint, Thy servant, was counted dear
Whose sword in the garden grazed the ear

Of Thine enemy, Lord, Redeemer !
 Not thus on the shattering visor jarred
 In this hand the iron of the hilt cross-barred,
 When the blade was swallowed up to the guard
 Through the teeth of the strong blasphemer.

If ever I smote as a man should smite,
 If I struck one stroke that seemed good in Thy sight,
 By Thy loving mercy prevailing,
 Lord ! let her stand in the light of Thy face,
 Clothed with Thy love and crowned with Thy grace,
 When I gnash my teeth in the terrible place
 That is filled with weeping and wailing.

For an artistic close, this poem should perhaps end two verses sooner than it does, but Gordon is always a careless workman. This failing, together with lessening inspiration, and sometimes reckless borrowing, make 'Ashtaroth' and 'Sea Spray and Smoke Drift' of very little, if any, literary value, though here and there there is a spark of the old fire, a breath of the old sweetness. All his best work is in the little volume from which I have quoted, viz.—'Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes'—and even in that the influence of such different writers as Swinburne and Whyte Melville is clearly traceable. In summing up Gordon's literary merits, may we not say of him that he was a true poet, who found his echo in the hearts of the people to whom he sang? Though we may add that his verse need not have lost in power what it might have gained in music had he taken more trouble with his art and not been satisfied with

Rhymes rudely strung, with intent less
 Of sound than of words.

We cannot say of him, 'He sang sae sweet and sae very complete,' but we may grant the sweetness, and much fire as well.

Queensland has this advantage over Victoria and South Australia, that her poet, Brunton Stephens, is still living and writing, so that we may yet hope to welcome poems from him that shall equal, if they do not surpass, those he has already written. He is a far greater master of his art than Gordon was, and has, indeed, a marked facility and power of versification, reminding one in some of his lighter pieces of Calverley—the same ease and gracefulness, the same air of playing with the fetters of rhythm and rhyme.

Any student of Swinburne who has been in a mosquito country will appreciate the following verses from

THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

(A FRUSTRATION.)

Oh glories, not gilded, but golden,
 Oh daughters of night unexcelled,
 By the sons of the North un beholden,
 By our sons (if we have them) beheld ;
 Oh jewels the midnight enriching,
 Oh four, which are double of twain !
 Oh mystical—bother the itching !
 Mosquitos again !

You alone I can anchor my eye on ;
 Of you, and you only, I write :
 And I now look awry on Orion,
 That once was my chiefest delight.
 Ye exalt me high over the petty
 Conditions of pleasure and pain—
 Oh Heaven ! here are these maladetti
 Mosquitos again !

Ye chrysolite, crystalline creatures,
 Wan watchers, the fairest afield,
 Stars—and garters ! are these my own features
 In the merciless mirror revealed ?
 They are mine, even mine, and none other,
 And my hands, how they slacken and strain !
 Oh my sister, my spouse, and my mother !
 I am going insane !

If this should remind the too intelligent reader of another poet's address to his son, Brunton Stephens doubtless intended the resemblance. But I cannot quote more of his humorous poems—not even the two 'Chinee Cooks'; nor the address to the piccaninny, who stands before the author 'all unabashed, unhaberdashed, unheeding;' nor 'The Great Pig Story'—not because they are unworthy, but because to be appreciated they must be read 'all in all or not at all.' 'Mosquitos' I quoted chiefly to bespeak British toleration for authors whose muse is liable to be so harried and goaded. Some of the poems are rather in Bret Harte's style—for instance, 'Drought and Doctrine,' one verse of which describes a not uncommon state of domestic affairs:—

Well, you see the wife 's got notions about a heap o' things that ain't
 To be handled by a man as don't pretend to be a saint ;
 So I minds 'the cultivation,' smokes my pipe, and makes no stir,
 An' religion an' such p'intns I lays entirely on to her.

Of Brunton Stephens's more serious poems we must notice first 'Convict Once.' The conception of this does not strike one as original, and the plot is disagreeable, but the versification is liquid, flowing, and at times magnificent.

Out on the orb-studded night, and the crescent effulgence of Dian ;
 Out on the far-gleaming star-dust that marks where the angels have trod ;
 Out on the gem-pointed Cross, and the glittering pomp of Orion,
 Flaming in measureless azure, the coronal jewels of God.

Luminous streams of delight in the silent immensity flowing ;
 Journeying surgelessly on through impalpable ether of peace,
 How can I think of myself when infinitude o'er me is glowing,
 Glowing with tokens of love from the land where my sorrows shall cease ?

Those who have camped out in the great Australian solitudes can realise the force of 'How can I think of myself?' I attribute the slight popularity of this poem to the sense of a certain incongruity between the subject of the poem and the splendour of the diction. In quite a different style, very simple and strong, is 'A Lost Chance,' founded on the well-known story of a shepherd who for years grazed his flocks over the land where, later, rich mines were found. On hearing of the discovery he went mad. In the poem he recalls his sins and sufferings, and the reparation wealth would have enabled him to make, and, unlike Job, he will 'curse God and die':—

In the round of conscious being, from the rising to the setting
 Of thine imaged self, Thy merciless, unsympathising sun,
 Was there one from hard Disaster's hand so piteously shrinking
 Whom this boon had more advantaged? God, I ask Thee, was there one?
 In Thy passionless immunity, Thou knowest there was none !

Henry Kendall is a writer very different from, and very inferior to, Gordon and Brunton Stephens. His reviewers generally dwell much on the fact that he was a true Australian, having been born in the country ; but his vision was narrowed rather than improved by an entirely colonial education, and he is not more inspired by the spirit of 'the Great South Land' than the other writers whom we call Australian. The sad circumstances of Kendall's life—the jar between the ideal and the real (for 'the spirit truly was willing, but the flesh was weak')—rose to the dignity of tragedy through his keen perception of the situation. But the personal circumstances of a man's life should not, I think, be taken into consideration in judging of his works. They may increase the interest, but cannot add to the literary value. Of course, experience

is generally necessary to writers, but it is with the result, not with the experience itself, that we have to do as critics. In this connection take the following lines, the strongest, I think, Kendall ever wrote, though their force is rather that of realism than of poetry :—

I only hear the brutal curse
 Of landlord clamouring for his pay ;
 And yonder is the pauper's hearse
 That comes to take a child away.
 Apart, and with the half-grey head
 Of sudden age, again I see
 The father writing by the dead
 To earn the undertaker's fee.

.

Kendall's descriptions of scenery are not very good ; the places described do not form pictures, though their attributes are carefully catalogued. He is not happy in epithets, which, if original, are apt to be obscure. He is fond of metaphor, but does not manage it easily. 'On a Cattle Track,' quoted in the *Contemporary Review*¹ by Mr. Stephen Thompson, is one of Kendall's best poems on Australian subjects.

Among the prose writers Mrs. Campbell Praed, Marcus Clarke, Rolf Boldrewood, and 'A. C.,' or Ada Cambridge, are the most distinguished. They differ widely in tone, manner, and style, and also in choice of subjects. But all of them, though Australian by birth, adoption, or long residence, are essentially English by literary kinship. This, of course, is inevitable, for Australians at present are simply people of British race living in another land—intellectually nourished on the same food, with the same household traditions, the same race sympathies and prejudices. The difference between Australia and the mother-country is not the difference between east and west. There is no startling contact with older civilisations and faiths that have lasted longer than our own. The difference is merely, if one may say so, physical, for no new element is introduced into Anglo-Australian life—only the old elements are sometimes shaken up and remixed, in another climate and a new country. For this reason it is hard to say if there will ever be a distinctively Australian school of literature. If there should be, its development will probably be slow, and perhaps one of its determining influences might be a phase very truly noted by Mrs. Campbell Praed. In one of her books, 'The Head Station,' she says, speaking of that love of reading, so far from uncommon in the bush :—' . . . books, . . .

¹ Of 1887 I think.—C. M. G.

become living realities in the solitude and monotony of existence among the gum trees. The typical Australian is an odd combination of the practical and the ideal. He is like a student who learns to read to himself a foreign language, but does not attain to its pronunciation. He has no knowledge of current jargon or society slang. He has, unconsciously, rejected vulgarisms and shallow conceits; but all the deeper thoughts—the poetry of life, which appeals to the soul—he has made his own.'

Seeing life in this way is like looking at a landscape through a photographic camera. Certainly what one beholds is the reflection of a real scene; but what metallic colours! what glittering outlines! One soon ceases to notice that the picture is upside down, and unless it is pointed out by some scientific person, one does not observe where the perspective is false. So do these bush students look on life, through the medium of books—combining a simple and secluded existence with the literary study of complex civilisation and old-world problems. From among these sequestered thinkers may arise some Brontë of the bush to found a school of Australian literature. Not that ignorance of life, or of anything else, is a power *per se*, but I think a youth so spent and self-trained may, when experience has corrected false impressions, leave a judgment self-reliant and unbiased by prejudice, together with a habit of estimating books, men, and manners solely on their merits.

To take our authors in detail, Mrs. Campell Praed, from whom we have just quoted is not unknown to English readers. In all her novels she is very dramatic and pictorial, and, sooner than be dull, would perhaps outstep the 'modesty of nature.' She belongs, in many essentials, to a school of to-day whose motto would seem to be not so much 'art for art's sake,' as 'sensation for sensation's sake.' In her most powerful situations she fails to convey that sense of the inevitable which distinguishes the great masters of fiction. On the contrary, sin and suffering, as presented in her books, too often seem like highly spiced baits for jaded literary palates. She does not deal much in development of character, being essentially a story-teller; and she tells her stories well, though circumstances play round her characters without materially modifying them. Her local colouring is perhaps laid on with too lavish a brush, but it is fine colour and skilfully used. Her bush interiors and landscapes are picturesque and truthful. Of her Australian novels, 'Policy and Passion,' now about to be republished under the title of 'Longleat of Kooralbyn,' is well described by its first title. The

political part is very clever, and the Premier of Leichardt's Land perhaps the strongest character this author has ever drawn. The air is lurid with passion, whose victims describe their feelings with a rather unusual frankness. The character of Honoria, Longleat's daughter, is suggestive of French rather than English influences, but 'in the breezy moral atmosphere of Australia' all things work together for good, and we avoid a catastrophe which would not have been to the taste of an Australian public. 'The Head Station' is a less ambitious work, but perhaps not the worse for that. Its fault is a lack of strength and of centre. 'An Australian Heroine' has the scene chiefly laid in England, though there are some excellent bush sketches in the earlier part of the book. Here, as elsewhere, Mrs. Campbell Praed shows, at times, remarkable insight into some phases of woman's character. She has written, besides, some very excellent short bush stories, but most of her other books are studies of the Australian in England, or else they deal altogether with European life, what Rolf Boldrewood calls the 'stage Australian' being occasionally introduced to enliven the scene—this type adapting itself better to British comprehension than more tame and truthful delineations. Since the time of Bernardin de St. Pierre, the *ingénue* has been a favourite with authors; for, besides the endearing qualities inalienably belonging to this character, it may always be depended on for affording striking contrasts to the worldliness of the other personages, thereby heightening many effects.

Marcus Clarke is a man of one book. He has written others, but on 'His Natural Life'¹ his fame will always rest. It has been often read and reviewed before now, and in Tasmania holds the same place as the 'Lady of the Lake' does in the Highlands of Scotland. Strangers in Hobart have the scenes of Rufus Dawes' adventures pointed out to them as if he were an historical person. Founded on fact, and compiled from authentic records, this book, though descriptive of a state of things passed away for ever, lives, and will live, from the force of its own vitality. Through the most horrible scenes of convict life one reads on and on, unable to escape from the spell of its dreadful interest. 'His Natural Life' belongs to that school of realism which owns a slight softening towards the romantic. 'Les Misérables' is the only book with which it can be compared, though it is in no sense an imitation of that great work. No moral purpose mars this fearful chronicle of convict life, no *Deus ex machina* interferes to save the innocent victims of fatality. Only just at the end a sense of poetic justice slightly stays the author's hand,

¹ Called in some editions by the fuller title, *For the Term of His Natural Life*.

and he grants Rufus Dawes in death that satisfaction which he never had in life. I have said no moral purpose mars this work ; it would be better to say none is obtruded, for Marcus Clarke states in his dedication that his intention was to expose the evils of the convict system ; but, for whatever reason he began, his subject seems to have possessed him from the outset. The plot and sub-plots are mere framework, the action is continuous, and the characters all fulfil the first and greatest requisite—they live. No one who has read of Rufus Dawes, James North, and Maurice Frere could ever forget them, any more than he could forget Jean Valjean or Tito Melema.

One of the most terrible, and at the same time touching, incidents in the book is the meeting between Sylvia (Maurice Frere's young wife) and the two little boy convicts of Point Puer, with its tragic ending. Sylvia is waiting, on a bench overlooking the sea, for her husband, who has gone to inspect the body of a boy who had drowned himself that day. She, however, knows nothing of the ghastly occurrence. During her honeymoon such unpleasant details of convict life are not obtruded on her notice.

While resting thus she became aware of another presence, and, turning her head, beheld a small boy, with his cap in one hand and a hammer in the other. The appearance of the little creature, clad in a uniform of grey cloth that was too large for him, and holding in his withered little hand a hammer that was too heavy for him, had something pathetic about it.

'What is it, you mite?' asked Sylvia.

'We thought you might have seen him, mum,' said the little figure, opening its blue eyes with wonder at the kindness of the tone.

'Him! Whom?'

'Cranky Brown, mum,' returned the child ; 'him as did it this morning. Me and Billy knowed him, mum ; he was a mate of ours, and we wanted to know if he looked happy.'

'What do you mean, child?' said she, with a strange terror at her heart ; and then, filled with pity at the aspect of the little being, she drew him to her, with sudden womanly instinct, and kissed him.

He looked up at her with joyful surprise.

'Oh!' he said.

Sylvia kissed him again.

'Does nobody ever kiss you, poor little man?' said she.

'Mother used to,' was the reply ; 'but she's at home. Oh, mum,' with a sudden crimsoning of the little face, 'may I fetch Billy?'

And, taking courage from the bright young face, he gravely marched to an angle of the rock and brought out another little creature, with another grey uniform and another hammer.

'This is Billy, mum,' he said. 'Billy never had no mother. Kiss Billy.'

The young wife felt the tears rush to her eyes. 'You two poor babies!' she cried; and then, forgetting that she was a lady dressed in silk and lace, she fell on her knees in the dust, and, folding the friendless pair in her arms, wept over them.

'What is the matter, Sylvia?' said Frere, when he came up, 'You've been crying.'

'Nothing, Maurice; at least, I will tell you by-and-by.'

When they were alone that evening she told him of the two little boys, and he laughed.

'Artful little humbugs,' he said, and supported his argument by so many illustrations of the precocious wickedness of juvenile felons that his wife was half convinced against her will.

Unfortunately, when Sylvia went away, Tommy and Billy put into execution a plan which they had carried in their poor little heads for some weeks.

'I can do it now,' said Tommy. 'I feel strong.'

'Will it hurt much, Tommy?' said Billy, who was not so courageous.

'Not so much as a whipping.'

'I'm afraid! Oh! Tom, it's so deep! Don't leave me, Tom!'

The bigger boy took his little handkerchief from his neck and with it bound his own left hand to his companion's right.

'Now I *can't* leave you.'

'What was it the lady that kissed me said, Tommy?'

"Lord have pity of them two fatherless children!" repeated Tommy.

'Let's say it, Tom!'

And so the two babies knelt on the brink of the cliff, and raising the bound hands together, looked up at the sky, and ungrammatically said, 'Lord have pity on we two fatherless children!' and then they kissed each other and 'did it.'

As Mr. Stephen Thompson has justly remarked, the pictures of Australian scenery scattered through the book are admirable, though the narrative never pauses or slackens for description. Marcus Clarke, besides this book (which made the greater part of its success after his death), wrote papers, short stories, &c., in the *Australasian* and other journals, and I believe published a novel or two; but he never did anything else like 'His Natural Life.' Before going on to another writer, I will quote three or four verses of a translation from Heine by Marcus Clarke, both to show the versatility of his genius, and because any English rendering of Heine, which is not bad, is valuable, if only for its rarity. It will be seen that this poem is not open to the charge of being slavishly literal, but, on the contrary, has the easy flow of an original. Marcus Clarke had the disadvantage of not understanding German, and was therefore dependent on the literal translation of a friend.

THE SPHINX RIDDLE.

The fabled fairy wood at night's high noon :
 From bloomy lindens clouds of perfume roll ;
 The wonderful white splendour of the moon
 Enchants my soul.

What mystic music through the forest rings
 As pressing onward through the shade I go ?
 'Tis the lone nightingale, who sobs and sings
 Of love and of love's woe.

She sings her sad refrain of lovers' wiles
 In sweetest tones that all of sadness take ;
 She sings of love and woe, of tears and smiles—
 Ah me ! what dreams awake.

Onward I press, and lo ! a lawn spreads wide,
 Where, in embattled might, a castle stands,
 With shafted pinnacles on either side,
 Built not with hands.

If it be true that art is 'un coin du monde vu à travers un tempérament,' then Rolf Boldrewood has certainly some claim to be called an artist. That he is not more widely known is probably because most of his works have been published only in weekly Australian newspapers, thus being presented to a very limited public—a public, however, which has always welcomed them. Only two of his stories have so far appeared in book form—'Ups and Downs of Colonial Life' and 'Old Melbourne Memories.' The former work has had a tolerable success in England, and has been well noticed by the press ; but it is not generally known, even by those who have read the book, that the publishers changed its name and ending, preferring the commonplace title it now bears to the original one of 'The Squatter's Dream,' with its suggestive motto, 'A dream that was not all a dream.'

Rolf Boldrewood's true and vivid pictures of Australian life and pastoral enterprise have the glow of a poetic nature shed over them—'the consecration of the poet's dream.' And the land thus hallowed for him is almost the country of his birth (so young was he when he first landed in Port Jackson), and he loves it with a patriotism which is too pleasing and touching to be called narrow. Much that he tells in his books is a record of his own experience, and fact—sometimes thinly disguised, sometimes not at all—gives life to the story or the description. Drought at the time when rain meant salvation, floods that drowned

the sheep intended to make their owner's fortune, consequent interviews in bank parlours, encounters with bushrangers and blacks, adventures of all sorts by flood and fell—who should write of these things but one who has known them all? One would seek in vain for passion in his pages, and nothing could be more unlike the awful fascination of 'His Natural Life' than the stories of this author, who has ridden for miles over the country he describes, 'sitting loosely in the saddle all the while,' and dreaming of Scott, and Thackeray, and 'battles long ago.' His proclivities are unmistakably romantic, though kept in bounds by a sense of humour and good taste. He would no more deal with any attachment not strictly proper than he would describe in detail the killing of a pig. Indeed, the love story is always the weakest part of his book, but it is a mere peg, and there is not much of it. Youth is the season of all bliss and happiness to him, and the youth of the colony of Victoria one of the most delightful times the world has known. The beginning of the end of this period came when gold 'broke out,' and though he firmly believes in a glorious future, yet

Alas for the song on the Argive hill
And the dance in the Cretan vale!

It seems that later generations can never hope to have quite such times as those old ones. He went out early to seek his fortune, as he tells in 'Old Melbourne Memories':—

A modest drove and slender outfit were mine; all that the hard times had spared. Two or three hundred well-bred cattle, a dray and team, with provisions for six months, two stock-horses, one faithful old servant, one young ditto (unfaithful), 1*l.* in my purse—*voilà tout*. Rather a limited capital to begin the world with; but what did I want with money in those days? I was a boy, which means a prince, happy, hopeful, healthy beyond all latter-day possibilities, bound on a journey to seek my fortune. All the fairy-tale conditions were fulfilled. I had 'horse to ride and weapon to wear'—that is, a 12-ft. stockwhip by Nangus Jack—clothes, tools, guns, and ammunition; a new world around and beyond. What could money do for the gentleman-adventurer, burning with anticipations of heroic exploration? Such thoughts must have passed through my brain, inasmuch as I invested 75 per cent. of my cash in the purchase of a cattle-dog. Poor Dora! she barked her last some thirty-five years ago.

As I have already said, Rolf Boldrewood has so far published only two of his works in book form,¹ but there is now a probability of others being given to a larger public than the readers of a New South Wales

¹ Two of his sketches appeared in the *Cornhill* some years ago—'A Kangaroo Drive,' and 'Shearing in Riverina.'

newspaper, and I think when that public reads 'Robbery under Arms'¹ and 'The Colonial Reformer,' it will not accuse me of overrating their author. In the last-mentioned work occurs one of the cleverest of his character sketches, 'Totty Freeman, the Selector's Daughter.' Not many types have had time to develop in Australia; but this is one, and Mr. Boldrewood has marked it. A good deal that I said in the beginning of this article applies to his writings. It would be hard for the untravelled Englishman to understand how excellent is the description of the breaking up of the drought; what a daring thing it was to fence a run while everyone else still shepherded; how humorously true to life are the experiences and attitude of mind of Ernest Neuchamp, the 'Colonial Reformer.' Rolf Boldrewood, under the less romantic name of T. A. Browne, is at present police magistrate in New South Wales; but to one so ardent and untiring as he is the duties of this position are not so arduous as to preclude literary labour, for he can read in the saddle and write anywhere.

'A. C.,' or Ada Cambridge, is the last of the authors I have chosen for review, and again one has to regret that most of her best works are not published as books, but are buried in the columns of the *Australasian* and other papers—'Across the Grain,' for instance, 'Against the Rules,' and that brilliant sketch, 'The Little Minx.' Without any dramatic situations, such as Mrs. Praed delights in, her stories flow on with a strong undercurrent of feeling, and a passionate conviction that 'love should still be lord of all.' But she pauses again and again for wayside sketches, and becomes the Trollope of bush clergy, the Jane Austen of township society. A less interest-compelling story-teller than Mrs. Campbell Praed, she has much more humour; less anxious to mark the differences between the old country and the new, she sees them quite as clearly. I have called Ada Cambridge an Australian writer, and so she is, for it is in Australia that she has come to her fullest development, and it is of that country she writes. But by birth and education she is an Englishwoman.

Other authors there are, notably 'Tasma,' whose sketches, articles, and brilliant little stories have made one hope for more sustained effort, while her command of two languages has enabled her to make a name

¹ Since writing the above, *Robbery under Arms* has been published in England, and has been received in a most kind and flattering manner, fully justifying my anticipations. It is about to be issued in a cheaper form, and this time it is to be hoped the author will not allow his publishers to destroy the originality and the local flavour of the work by changing the *dénouement* or the title.

as a French lecturer as well as an Australian writer. If Australia included New Zealand, as some English people think it does, I could not have passed over 'The Pakeha Maori.' As it is, he is outside my province. Indeed, all I have tried to do is to show with tolerable accuracy to what rank in literature the Australian colonies have so far been able to attain, and to this end I have considered the leading representatives of *belles-lettres* in that part of the Southern Hemisphere, omitting perforce many lesser writers,¹ and taking no notice of such scientific treatises, histories, or travels as may have, hitherto, been produced in Australia.

C. M. GREENE.

¹ Including most of those who have been assembled together by Mr. Douglas B. W. Sladen in a large and imposing volume, and labelled 'Australian Poets.' Many of the 'poets,' until unearthed by Mr. Sladen, were content with the obscurity of manuscript, in which retirement their fellow colonists would willingly have let them rest. But Mr. Sladen, whose poetic standard is by no means unattainably high, feeling an unshared admiration for these very inglorious Miltons, has presented them to the British public as typical Australian writers. He himself is one of the most conspicuous of the bards, and gives us such lines as the following :—

' Captain, the Hon'able Charles Le Grey,
No. 1000 Cromwell Road, West.'

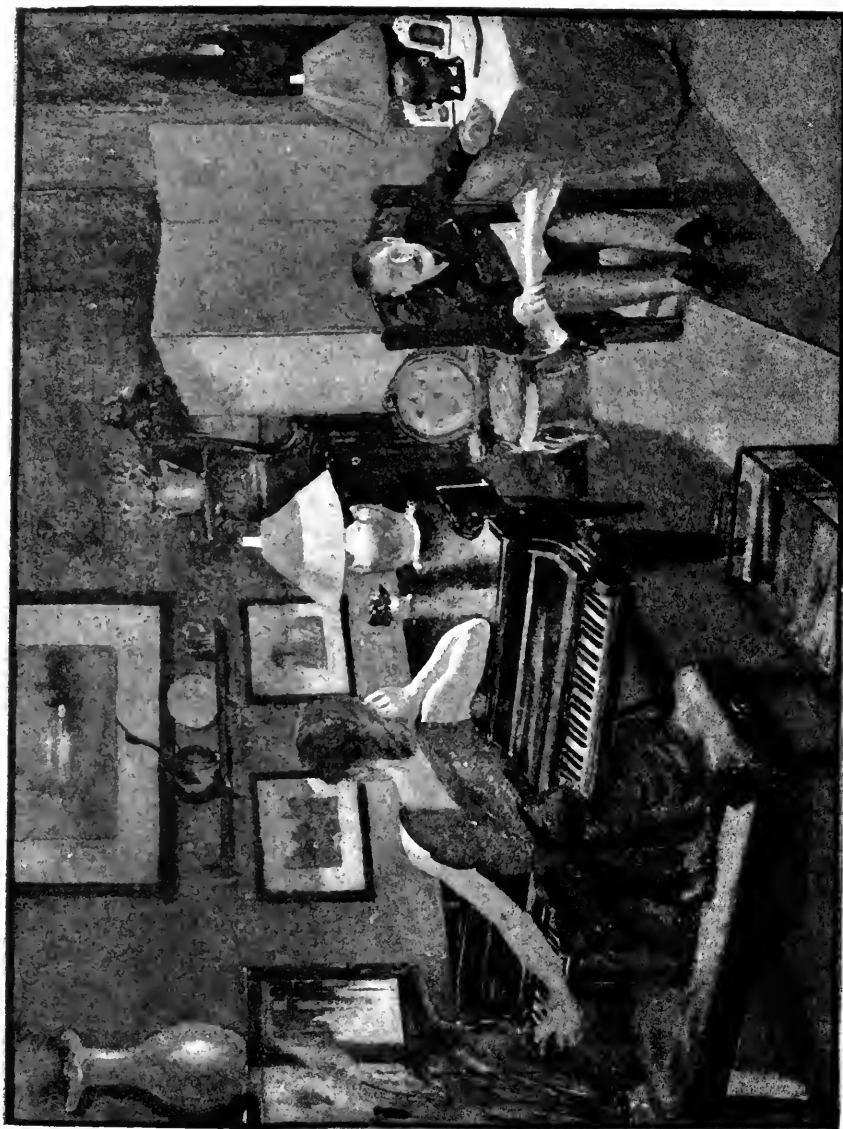
And again—

' An ankle stockinged in black silk, and rounded as a palm ;
Her dress is of the hue of milk, and making of Madame.'

But it would be doing Mr. Sladen injustice to imply that his Muse is always trifling with aristocracy and fashion. On the contrary she often inspires him with profound and original reflections, such as the following : ' How hard it sometimes is to swim when shipwrecked and alone !'

Also I have omitted to notice *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab*, the success of which in London was, and is, a mystery to Melbourne readers. *Madame Midas*, by the same author, will be admired by those who liked the *Hansom Cab*.

C. M. G.



UN SOIR D'ÉTÉ. R. Bunny.

L'Amour Sublime

Les mondaines aiment ce qui brille, non pas ce qui respandit.

ERNEST HELLO.

M. EVARISTE ROUSSEAU-LATOUCHE, député de l'un de nos départements les plus éclairés, siégeait au centre gauche de notre Parlement.

Au physique, c'était un de ces hommes qui ont toujours eu l'air d'un oncle.

Quarante-cinq ans, environ ; l'encolure un peu molle, résistante pourtant ; la chair des joues offrait quelques menues bouffissures, l'âge ayant ses droits ; mais il en humectait chaque matin, de crèmes diverses, la couperose. Le nez long et froid. Les yeux grisâtres. La lèvre inférieure franche, rouge, un peu épaisse : la supérieure très fine et formant la ligne quatrième de la carrure du menton. La voix bien timbrée, précise.—Brun encore, mais ceci grâce à ces innocentes 'applications' de teinture qui sont de mode.

C'était le type de l'homme de nos jours, exempt de superstitions, ouvert à tous les aspects de l'esprit, peu dupe des grands mots, cubique en ses projets financiers, industriels ou politiques.

En 1876, il avait épousé Mlle. Frédérique d'Allepraine ; la tutrice de cette orpheline de dix-sept ans la lui ayant accordée à cause de l'extérieur, à la fois sérieux et engageant, de cet honnête homme ;—et puis les situations se convenaient . . .

Rousseau-Latouche avait fait sa fortune dans les lins. Il ne s'était enrichi que par le travail—et, aussi, grâce à quelque peu de savoir-faire,—

sans parler de certaines circonstances dont il est convenu que les sots seuls négligent de profiter ; tout le monde l'estimait donc, de l'estime actuelle.

Au moral, il avait les idées françaises d'aujourd'hui, les idées ayant cours,—excepté en quelques négligeables esprits. Ses convictions se résumaient en celles-ci :—

1° Qu'en fait de religions, tous les cultes imaginables ayant eu leurs fervents et leurs martyrs, le Christianisme, en ses nuances diverses, ne devait plus être considéré que comme un mode analogue de cette ' mysticité ' qui s'efface d'elle-même—brume traversé par le soleil levant de la Science.

2° Qu'en fait de politique, le régime royal, en France (et ailleurs), ayant fait son temps, s'annule également, de soi-même.

3° Qu'en fait de morale pratique, il faut, tout bonnement, se laisser vivre selon les règles salubres de l'honnêteté (ceci autant que possible),—sans être hostile au Bien, c'est-à-dire au Progrès.

4° Qu'en fait d'attitude sociale, le mieux est de laisser, en souriant, périr les gens en retard, dont le cerveau n'est pas d'une pondération calme et dont les derniers groupes tendent à disparaître comme les Peaux-Rouges.

Bref, c'était un être éminemment sympathique, ainsi que le sont, de nos jours, presque tous ceux qui—les mains vides, mais ouvertes—sont doués d'assez d'empire sur eux-mêmes pour pouvoir prononcer, non seulement sans rire, mais avec une sincérité d'accent convaincante, le mot '*Fraternité*' ;—c'est-à-dire le mot le plus lucratif de notre époque.

Madame Rousseau-Latouche, née Frédérique d'Allepraine, en tant que nature, différait de son mari.

C'était une personne atteinte d'âme ;—un être d'*au-delà* joint à un être de terre. Elle était d'un genre de beauté à la fois grave, exquis et durable. Il ressortait de sa personne une sympathie pénétrante, mais qui humiliait un peu. Le regard chaste et froid de ses yeux bleus éclairait, d'intérieurement, sa transparente pâleur ; et la grâce de son affabilité charmait,—bien qu'un peu glacée, à cause des gens dont le sourire trop volontiers s'affine.

En dépit des trente ans dont elle approchait, elle pouvait inspirer les sentiments d'un amour auguste, d'une passion noble et profonde. Quelque surpris que fussent, à sa vue, les visiteurs ou même les passants, il était difficile de ne pas se sentir moins qu'elle en sa présence,—et de ne pas rendre hommage à la simplicité si tranquillement élevée de cet être d'exception, perdu en un milieu d'individus affairés. Dans les soirées,

elle semblait, malgré son évidente bonne volonté, si étrangère à son entourage, que les femmes la déclaraient 'supérieure' avec un demi-sourire qui servait de transition pour parler de choses plus gaies.

Ses goûts étaient incompréhensibles, extraordinaires. Ainsi, musicienne, elle n'aimait exclusivement et sans jamais une concession, que cette musique dont l'aile porte les intelligences bien nées vers ces régions suprêmes de l'Esprit qu'illumine la persistante notion de Dieu,—d'une espérable immortalité en cette incréée 'Lumière' où toute souffrance mortelle est oubliée.

Elle ne lisait que ces livres, si rares, où vibre la spiritualité d'un style pur. Peu mondaine, malgré les exigences de sa position, c'était à peine si elle acceptait de figurer en d'inévitables ou officielles fêtes. Taciturne, elle préférait l'isolement, chez elle, dans sa chambre, où sa manière de tuer le temps consistait, le plus souvent, à prier, en chrétienne simple, pénétrée d'espérance. Privée d'enfants, ses meilleures distractions étaient de porter, elle-même, à des pauvres, quelque argent, des choses utiles, ceci le plus possible, et en calculant de son mieux ces dépenses; car Evariste, sans précisément l'entraver ici, serrait, devant toutes exagérations, et non sans sagesse, les cordons de la bourse.

M. Rousseau-Latouche, en conservateur sagace, en esprit éclectique, aux vues larges, comprenant toutes les aberrations des êtres non parvenus encore à sa sérénité intellectuelle, non seulement trouvait très excusable, en sa chère Frédérique, cette 'mysticité' qu'il qualifiait de féminine, mais, secrètement, n'en était point fâché. Ceci pour plusieurs motifs concluants.

D'abord, parce que, si ce genre de goûts témoignait, en elle, d'une race 'noble,' le mieux est, aujourd'hui, d'absoudre, avec une indulgence discrète (une déférence, même), ces particularités d'atavisme destinées à s'atténuer avec les générations. On ne peut extirper, sans danger, ces espèces de taches de naissance—qui, d'ailleurs, donnent du piquant à une femme. Puis,—tout en reconnaissant, en soi-même, la fondamentale frivolité de pareilles inclinations, l'on doit ne pas oublier qu'en de certains milieux, influents encore, et dont les préjugés sont par conséquent ménageables, l'on peut être fier, négligemment, de laisser constater, en sa femme, ces travers sacrés, flatteurs même et qu'ainsi l'on utilise. C'est une parure distinguée.

Ensuite, cela présente,—en attendant qu'il soit trouvé mieux,—des garanties d'honnêteté conjugale des plus appréciables, aux yeux surtout d'un homme d'Etat, absorbé par des labeurs d'affaires, de législation, etc.,—qui, enfin, 'n'a pas le temps' de veiller avec soin sur son foyer. En somme donc, ces diverses tendances d'un tempérament imaginaire



constituant, à son estime, en sa chère femme, une sorte de préservatif organique, une égide naturelle contre les nombreuses tentations si fréquentes de l'existence moderne, Evariste, — bien qu'hostile, en principe, à leur essence, — avait fait, en bon opportuniste, la part du feu. — Que lui importait, après tout ? Ne vivons-nous pas en un siècle de pensée libre ? Eh bien ? du moment où cela non seulement ne le gênait pas, mais — redisons-le — lui pouvait être utile, flatteur même, entre temps, pourquoi ce clairvoyant époux eût-il risqué sa quiétude, en essayant, sans profit, de guérir sa femme de cette maladie incurable et natale qu'on appelle l'âme ? . . . Tout pesé, ce vice de conformation ne lui semblait pas absolument rédhitoire.

Presque toute l'année, les Rousseau-Latouche habitaient leur belle maison de l'avenue des Ternes. L'été, aux vacances de la Chambre, Evariste emmenait sa femme en une délicieuse maison de campagne, aux environs de Sceaux. Comme on n'y recevait pas, les soirées étaient, parfois, un peu longues ; mais on se levait de meilleure heure. Un peu de solitude, cela retrempe et rasseoit l'esprit.

De grands jardins, un bouquet de bois, de belles attenances, en-

touraient cette propriété d'agrément. N'étant pas insensible aux charmes de la nature, M. Rousseau-Latouche, le matin, vers sept heures, en veston de coutil à bouttonnière enrubannée et le chef abrité d'un panama contre les feux de l'aurore, ne se refusait pas, tout comme un simple mortel, à parcourir, le sécateur officiel en main, ses allées bordurées de rosiers, d'arbres fruitiers et de melonnières. Puis, jusqu'à l'heure du déjeuner, il s'enfermait en son cabinet, y dépouillait sa correspondance, lisait, en ses journaux, les échos du jour, et songeait mûrement à des projets de loi—qu'il s'efforçait même de trouver urgents, étant un homme de bonne volonté.

Pendant la journée, Madame s'occupait des nécessiteux que le curé de la localité lui avait recommandés ;—ce qui, avec un peu de musique et de lecture, suffisait à combler les six semaines que l'on passait en cet exil.

Vers la fin de juillet, l'an dernier, les Rousseau-Latouche reçurent, à l'improviste, la visite exceptionnelle d'un jeune parent venu de Jumièges, la vieille ville, et venu pour voir Paris—sans autre motif. Peut-être s'y fixerait-il, selon des circonstances—si difficiles à prévoir aujourd'hui.

M. Bénédicte d'Allepraine se trouvait être le cousin germain de Frédérique. Il était plus jeune qu'elle d'environ six années. Ils avaient joué ensemble, autrefois, chez leurs parents ; et, sans s'être revus depuis l'adolescence, ils avaient toujours trouvé, dans leurs lettres de relations, entre famille, un mot aimable les rappelant l'un à l'autre. C'était un jeune homme assez beau, peu parleur, d'une douceur tout à fait grave et charmante, de grande distinction d'esprit et de manières parfaites, bien que M. Rousseau-Latouche les trouvât (mais avec sympathie) un peu 'provinciales.'

Or, par une coïncidence vraiment singulière, étant surtout donné la rareté de ces sortes de caractères, la nature intellectuelle de M. Bénédicte d'Allepraine se trouvait être pareille à celle de Frédérique. Oui, le tour essentiellement pensif de son esprit l'avait malheureusement conduit à certain dédain des choses terre-à-terre et à l'amour assez exclusif des choses d'en haut ; ceci au point que sa fortune, bien que des plus modestes, lui suffisait et qu'il ne s'ingéniait en rien pour l'augmenter, ce qui confinait à l'imprévoyance.

Ce n'était pas qu'il fut né poète ; il l'était plutôt *devenu*, par un ensemble de raisonnements logiques et, disons-le tout bas, des plus solides, à la vue de toutes les feuilles sèches dont se payent, jusqu'à la mort, la plupart des individus soi-disant positifs. S'il acceptait de 'croire' un peu par force, aux réalités relatives dont nous relevons tous, bon ou



mal gré nous, c'était avec un enjouement qui laissait deviner la mince estime qu'il professait pour la tyrannie bien momentanée de ces choses. Bref, il s'était, de très bonne heure—et ceci grâce à des instincts natus—détaché de bien des ambitions, de bien des désirs, et ne reconnaissait, pour méritant le titre de sérieux, que ce qui correspondait aux goûts sagement divins de son âme.

Hâtons-nous d'ajouter que, dans ses relations, c'était un cœur d'une droiture excessive, incapable d'un adultère, d'une lâcheté, d'une simple indécatesse, et que cette qualité, comme le rayon d'une étoile, transparaisait de sa personne. Quelque réfractaire qu'il se jugeât quant à l'action violente, s'il eût découvert, au monde, quelque belle cause à défendre qui ne fût illusoire qu'à demi, certes, il se fût donné la peine d'être ce que les passants appellent 'un

homme' et de façon, même, probablement, à démontrer, sans ostentation, le néant, l'incapacité de ceux qui l'eussent raillé sur les 'nuages' de ses idées généreuses ; mais, cette belle cause, il ne l'entrevoyait guère au milieu du farouche conflit d'intérêts qui, de nos jours, étouffe d'avance, sous la ridicule et le dédain, tout effort tenté vers quoi que ce soit d'élevé, de désintéressé, de digne d'être.—S'isolant donc en soi-même, avec une grande mélancolie, c'était comme s'il se fût fait naturaliser d'un autre monde.

Bénédict reçut un accueil amical chez les Rousseau-Latouche ; on s'ennuyait, parfois ; ce jeune homme représentait, au moins pour Evariste, quelques heures plus agréables, une distraction. Puis, il était de la famille. M. d'Allepraine dut céder à l'invitation formelle de passer les vacances avec eux.

En quelques jours, Frédérique et Bénédicte, s'étant reconnus *du même pays*, se mirent, naturellement, à s'aimer d'un amour idéal, aussi chaste que profond, et que sa candeur même légitimait presque absolument. Certes, ils n'étaient pas sans tristesse ; mais leur sentiment était plus haut que ce qui leur causait cette tristesse.—Oh ! cependant, ne pas s'être épousés ! Quel éternel soupir ! Quel morne serrement de cœur !

L'épreuve était lourde.—Sans doute, ils expiaient quelque ancestral crime ! Il fallait subir, sans faiblesse, la douleur que Dieu leur accordait, douleur si rude qu'ils pouvaient se croire des élus,

Rousseau-Latouche, en homme de tact, s'aperçut très vite de ce nébuleux sentiment dont leurs organismes, moins équilibrés que le sien, les rendaient victimes. Comment l'eussent-ils dissimulé ? C'était lisible en leur innocence même—en la réserve qu'ils se témoignaient.

Evariste,—nous l'avons donné à entendre,—était un de ces hommes qui s'expliquent les choses sans jamais s'emporter, son calme énergique lui conférant le don *d'étiqueter* toujours, d'une manière sérieuse, un fait quelconque, sans l'isoler de son ambiance—et, par conséquent, de le dominer, en l'utilisant même, s'il se pouvait,—dans la mesure du convenable, bien entendu.

Si donc son premier mouvement, instinctif, immédiat, fut de congédier Bénédicte sous un prétexte poli, le second fut tout autre, après réflexion :—tout autre !

Etant données, en effet, ces deux natures 'phénoménales,' il fallait bien se garder, au contraire, de renforcer, en le contrecarrant, en ayant même l'air de le remarquer, cette sorte d' 'angélisme' futile, ce cousinage idéal dont il redevenait à lui-même de dédaigner d'être jaloux, du moment où il en tenait solidement l'objet réel. Leur honnêteté, qu'il sentait impeccable, le garantissait. Dès lors, il ne pouvait qu'être flatté, dans sa vanité d'homme de quarante-cinq ans, d'avoir pour femme une personne qu'un jeune homme aimait—et aimerait—*en vain* ! La *qualité* de leur inclination réciproque, il la comprenait exactement. C'était une sorte d'affectif, de morbide et vague penchant, éclos de trop mystiques aspirations et sans plus de consistance matérielle que le vertige résulté d'un duo de musique allemande, chanté avec une exagération de laisser-aller. Il lui suffirait, à lui, Rousseau-Latouche, d'un peu de circonspection pour circonscrire ce prétendu 'amour' dans ces mêmes nuages d'où il émanait, et paralyser, d'avance, en lui, toutes échappées vers nos pâles mais importantes réalités. Il était bon de temporiser. Rien d'alarmant, en cette fumée juvénile,—qui se dégageait d'un couple de cerveaux ébriolés par une manière de tour de valse,—dans l'azur, et qui se disséminerait de soi-même au vent des désillusions de chaque jour.



Tous deux étaient, à n'en pas douter, d'une intégrité de conscience aussi évidente que la transparence du cristal de roche ; ils étaient incapables d'un abus de confiance, d'une déshonnête chute en nos grossièretés sensuelles, — enfin d'un adultère, pourvu, bien entendu, que le Hasard ne vînt pas les tenter outre mesure. Son mariage leur était aussi désespérant que sacré, — car leur nature était de prendre au sérieux ces sortes de choses au point qu'ils eussent rougi de s'embrasser en cachette comme d'une insulte mutuelle ! Dès lors, tous deux ne méritaient, au fond — (avec son estime !) — qu'un doux sourire. Il était l'homme, — eux étaient des enfants ; — des 'bébés' ivres d'intangibles ! — Conclusion : la ligne de conduite que lui dictaient la plus élémentaire prudence et le sentiment de sa rationnelle supériorité, devait être de fermer les yeux, de ne rien brusquer, de laisser, enfin, s'user, faute d'aliment physique, ce platonique 'amour' — qui, — supposait-il, — si nulle absolvable occasion nulle circonstance . . . irrésistible . . . ne leur était offerte, pour ainsi dire *de force*, n'avait rien de vraiment sérieux, — et qu'au surplus les souffles hivernaux de la rentrée à Paris, (en admettant, par impossible, qu'il durât jusque là) dissiperaient comme un mirage. Il n'en resterait entre eux trois qu'un innocent souvenir de villégiature, — agréable, même, à tout prendre.

Cependant, les soirs, — dans les promenades aux jardins, — au déjeuner, au dîner, surtout dans le salon, lorsqu'on s'y attardait en causerie, — quelle que fût la retenue froide qu'ils se témoignaient, Frédérique et

Bénédict semblaient se complaire à ne parler que d' 'idéautés,' de *sur-existences par delà le trépas*, d'unions futures, de nuptiales fusions célestes,—ou de choses d'un art très élevé,—choses qui, pour M. Rousseau-Latouche, n'étaient, au fond, que des rêveries, des jeux d'esprit, du clinquant.

En vain cherchait-il, de temps à autre, à ramener la conversation sur un terrain plus solide,—le terrain politique par exemple :—on l'écoutait, certes, avec la déférence qui lui était due : mais, s'il s'agissait de lui répondre, on ne pouvait que se reconnaître trop peu versés en ces questions graves, et aussi d'une intelligence trop insuffisamment pratique, pour se permettre de risquer un avis en cette matière.—De sorte que, par d'insensibles fissures, la conversation glissait entre les mains (cependant bien serrées) du conservateur, et s'enfuyait en rêves mystiques. Bref, ils avaient l'air de fiancés que séparait un tuteur opiniâtre, et qui, à force d'ennuis, devenus insoucieux de se posséder sur la terre, faisaient, naïvement, leurs malles devant lui, Rousseau-Latouche, député du centre, pour les sphères éthérées.

C'était l'absurde s'installant dans la vie réelle.

Ceci dura quinze longs jours, au cours desquels Evariste, tout en n'ayant qu'à se louer de sa femme et de Bénédict au point de vue des convenances, en était tout doucement arrivé à se sentir comme *étranger* chez lui. Il ne pouvait s'expliquer ce phénomène, trouvant au-dessous de sa dignité de prendre au sérieux l'impalpable. Bien souvent il avait eu, de nouveau, la violente démangeaison de congédier Bénédict,—poliment, mais en ayant soin d'isoler Frédérique de cette scène d'adieux qui, présumait-il, ne se fût point terminée sans tiédeur. Et toujours le motif qui l'avait maintenu dans l'espèce de neutralité modérée dont il avait préféré l'option dès le principe, n'était autre que la dédaigneuse pitié qu'il ressentait, disons-nous, pour cet immatériel amour, et qu'il eût eu l'air de reconnaître, comme VALABLE, en s'en effarouchant. Oui, c'était un homme trop soucieux de sa dignité morale pour accéder à cette concession risible.

A de certains moments, il en venait à *regretter* de ne pouvoir, vraiment, leur adresser aucun reproche, fondé sur la moindre inconséquence de



leur part. C'est qu'il avait affaire non pas à des amoureux de la vie mais à des amants de la Vie. A la fin, ceci l'énerva jusqu'à refroidir l'amour que Frédérique lui avait inspiré si longtemps. Les êtres *trop* équilibrés ne pardonnent pas volontiers l'âme, lorsque, par des riens inintelligibles pour eux (mais très sensibles), elle les humilie de son inviolable présence. L'âme prend, alors, à leurs yeux, les proportions d'un grief: et, même amoureux, cela les dégoûte bientôt de tout corps affligé de cette infirmité.

C'est pourquoi l'idée vint à Evariste,—l'idée étrange et cependant *naturelle*!—de les humilier à son tour, de leur montrer, de leur PROUVER qu'ils étaient, 'au fond,' des êtres de chair et d'os comme lui, et comme 'tout le monde'!... Et que, sous les dehors de leurs belles phrases, plus ou moins rédundantes, mais aussi creuses qu'idéales, se cachaient les sens purement *humains* d'une passion *très banale*!... Et que ce n'était pas la peine de le prendre de si haut avec les choses terrestres, quand, après tout, l'on n'en faisait fi qu'en paroles!

Il se mit donc—sans trop se rendre compte de la vilainie compassée d'un tel procédé—à leur tendre des pièges! à les laisser seuls, aux jardins, par exemple,—alors qu'il les observait de loin, muni d'une forte jumelle marine.—(Oh! certes, dès le premier baiser, par exemple, il serait survenu, et leur eût, en souriant, fait constater leur hypocrite faiblesse!)... Malheureusement pour lui, Frédérique et Bénédicte ne donnèrent, en ces occasions, aucune prise à ses remontrances, ne réalisèrent pas son singulier *espoir*. Ils se parlèrent peu, et se séparèrent bientôt, sans affectation, par simple convenance. Frédérique devant aller rendre ses visites à des pauvres, Bénédicte lui remettait un peu d'or, pour l'aider en ces futilités toutes féminines. De là les quelques paroles entre eux échangées. Evariste les trouvait au moins imbéciles.

Le fait est qu'aux yeux d'un jeune homme ordinaire, de ce que l'on appelle un Parisien, Bénédicte eût passé pour un simple sot et Frédérique pour une coquette s'amusant d'un provincial. Rien de plus. Cependant le lien qui les unissait, pour vague qu'il fut, était, positivement, plus solide que... s'ils eussent été coupables. Evariste, qui, tout d'abord, s'était épuisé, en manifestations tendres, pour Frédérique (la sentant comme s'échapper), avait renoncé à la lutte devant le dévoué sourire de sa femme. Il semblait n'en être plus, à présent, que le propriétaire; une dédaigneuse aversion pour cette malheureuse insensée s'agrippait en son raisonnable cœur centre gauche. Cette énigmatique passion que Bénédicte et Frédérique paraissaient n'éprouver que sous condition perpétuelle d'un sublime Futur, il finissait par la reconnaître pour la plus vivace de toutes, pour l'indéracinable, celle sur quoi



ILS RÉCITAIENT LEUR PRIÈRE DU SOIR. R. Bunny.

s'émoussent tous les sarcasmes. Il sonda le mal d'un coup d'œil : le divorce était l'unique issue !—Il fallait le rendre inévitable, le *forcer*,—car Frédérique, en bonne chrétienne, s'y fût refusée à l'amiable, le divorce étant défendu.—L'indifférente résignation qu'elle avait mise à supporter les cauteleuses tendresses de son mari le prouvait d'avance, outre mesure, et celui-ci ne s'illusionnait pas à cet égard.

En ces conjonctures, le plus tôt d'en finir était le mieux : la situation devenant intolérable.

L'épisode avait duré cinq semaines ; c'était trop ! Il en avait pardessus les oreilles ! Ayant négligé, à force de souci, ses lotions normales de teinture, sa barbe et ses cheveux étaient *devenus* réellement gris. Il fallait agir, sans le moindre retard, car l'excellent homme comptait se remarier, en toute hâte, aussitôt, s'il se pouvait, après le prononcé du Tribunal.

Soudainement, il annonça donc le prochain retour à Paris, et simula, comme dans les romans et pièces de théâtre les plus rudimentaires,—un départ de deux ou trois jours : il allait, disait-il, jeter un coup d'œil sur l'état de son hôtel en l'avenue des Ternes.

M. Rousseau-Latouche avait, tout justement, pour ami d'enfance, non point le commissaire de police de Sceaux, mais un commissaire de police des environs, qu'il avait fait nommer à ce poste.

Il alla donc le trouver et s'ouvrit à lui, ne lui taisant rien, lui précisant les choses telles qu'elles étaient, avec une clarté d'élocution dont il manquait à la Chambre, mais qu'il trouvait quand il s'agissait d'élucider ses affaires personnelles.—Tout fut raconté à dîner, en tête à tête.

Il fallut du temps, quelques heures, pour que le commissaire se rendit un compte exact de la situation, qu'il finit, par entrevoir, à la longue, grâce à la sagacité spéciale qui est inhérente à cette profession.

L'on arriva donc, en tapinois, le *lendemain* du 'départ,' afin de ne rien brusquer, d'endormir tous soupçons. Deux heures après le dernier train du soir, on pénétra dans la maison, grâce aux clefs doubles d'Evariste, dont toutes les mesures étaient prises.

Il faisait une nuit d'automne, superbe, douce, bien étoilée.

On monta l'escalier, sans faire le moindre bruit. Il était près d'une heure du matin : le point capital était de les surprendre, comme on dit, *flagrante delicto*.

La porte du salon n'était pas fermée, on parlait à l'intérieur. Le commissaire, avec des précautions extrêmes, couvrit sans que la serrure grinçât. Quel spectacle écœurant s'offrit, alors, à leurs yeux hagards !

Les deux amants, le dos tourné à la porte, et chacun les mains jointes sur le balcon d'une fenêtre ouverte, aussi bien vêtus qu'en plein midi,

contemplaient, l'un vers l'autre, l'auguste nuit de lumière, avec des regards d'espérance, et récitaient ensemble, à l'unisson, leur prière du soir, d'une voix lente, mais dont la terrible simplicité d'accent semblait devoir glacer le sourire des gens les plus éclairés.

A ce tableau, M. Rousseau-Latouche demeura comme saisi d'une sorte d'hébètement grave : sur le moment, il eut, même, comme un vertige et craignit pour sa raison !—Son ami, le froid commissaire de police, reçut, entre ses bras, cet homme d'état chancelant, et d'un ton de commisération profonde lui dit alors naïvement à l'oreille ce peu de mots :

—Pauvre ami ! Pas MÊME . . . *trompé* ! . . .

La légende nous affirme (hâtons-nous de l'ajouter) qu'il se servit d'une expression plus technique, chère à Molière.

Le fait est que pour l'honorable M. Rousseau-Latouche, ç'avait été jouer de malheur d'être tombé sur deux êtres aussi . . . *intraitables* !

COMTE DE VILLIERS DE L'ISLE-ADAM.

Life Insurance in 1889

I

THE recent collapse of the Briton Medical and General Life Association and the Sovereign Life Assurance Company, and the equivocal nature of the transactions revealed by subsequent investigations, constitute a sufficient apology for directing public attention to the methods in which the business of life insurance is now carried on. There is reason to fear that these disasters, deplorable enough in themselves, are the forerunners of still more serious trouble ; already rumours are afloat of other impending failures ; and the time has come, as it seems to me, when a few plain words are needed as to the system under which this state of affairs has arisen—the more so because, as I shall presently show, the public have no adequate means of informing themselves on the subject, and for the most part fall an easy prey to the seductions of some more or less unscrupulous agent.

The solvency of a Life Insurance office is tested by a periodical valuation of its assets and liabilities. The accuracy of this valuation depends on

- (1) The tables of mortality used by the actuary ;
- (2) The rate of interest at which he assumes that the funds will accumulate ;
- (3) The solidity of the investments ; and
- (4) The sufficiency of the sum reserved to meet future expenses of management.

I shall endeavour to show that a very dangerous latitude is permitted as regards the first two particulars; that the information furnished by the companies as to their investments and expenditure is quite insufficient; that, although the management charges are often extravagantly high, no obligation exists to make adequate provision for meeting them; and that the competition between rival companies, so far from benefiting the community, tends to aggravate these evils. I shall go on to indicate objections, on grounds of both fairness and consistency, to existing methods of distributing bonuses; and it will be necessary to say a few words as to the relative merits of proprietary and mutual offices.

An inquiry of this nature must inevitably, I fear, be found somewhat dry and not a little wearisome; but the subject is of almost national importance, and affects interests so widespread and so varied that some indulgence on this score may perhaps be conceded. It was well said by Mr. Babbage that 'there are few situations in life in which it is not desirable, at some period or other, to enter into contracts of this kind.' I desire to place the principal facts of the case in a simple and connected form before those who have not had time or opportunity to look into the matter for themselves, and I shall avoid as far as possible technicalities of any sort. I am confident that, when the evils which lie at the root of the present system of conducting life insurance business are once fairly grasped by the general public, it will not be long before a demand is raised, such as was raised in 1870, for drastic measures of reform.

Life insurance—or, at any rate, that form of life insurance with which I am here concerned—is quite a modern development of civilisation. It was not till the establishment of the Equitable Life Assurance Society in 1762 that policies began to be granted for the whole of life at uniform yearly premiums. Indeed, the Government had only two years previously refused a charter to the society, principally from disbelief in the principles of a scheme dependent 'on the truth of certain calculations taken from tables of life and death, whereby the chance of mortality is attempted to be reduced to a certain standard.' But it very shortly became evident that the granting of such policies, so far from being, as had been supposed, a dangerous speculation, was in reality one of the simplest and least risky of commercial undertakings. The most prosperous corn merchant is liable to be ruined by a sudden fall in the price of wheat; the wealthiest manufacturer may at length succumb to

a long-continued depression of trade ; but the prosperity of a life insurance office depends, or at least should depend, almost entirely upon a factor which, under ordinary conditions, is practically invariable, viz. the average duration of human life. So remarkable is the uniformity revealed by a comparison of vital statistics, that the theory of the subject might almost lay claim to a place among the exact sciences.

But in this, as in other matters, the path of practice diverges widely from that laid down by theory. The actual business, although of so recent origin, has passed through several phases ; and even now the principles upon which it is conducted are by no means so scientific as is generally supposed. They are the outcome of a century of experience working, through a series of more or less successful modifications, upon primitive methods that were of necessity empirical, and, as a matter of fact, were devised pretty much at haphazard. To take a single illustration. The life tables at one time in general use were the Northampton Tables, framed by Dr. Price in 1783 from records of the ages at death of 4,689 persons who were buried in a certain parish in that town during a period of forty-six years. It is now generally admitted that the principle of taking the 'mean age at death,' on which these tables were calculated, is fallacious. The celebrated Carlisle Tables, published by Mr. Milne a few years afterwards, and all subsequent life tables, rest on the more scientific principle of ascertaining the proportion of deaths at each year of age to the whole population, or, in other words, the average number of persons who die in each year of age out of a given number living. Accordingly the Northampton Tables have now been almost universally discarded by actuaries in estimating the liability on a policy, and have even been styled the 'False Northampton Tables.' But it is important to observe that this change has, as a rule, been carried out without any corresponding alterations in the tables of premiums, which are still, in many cases, those deduced from Dr. Price's calculations ; so that we find a number of offices nowadays charging premiums on one basis while they compute their liabilities and declare bonuses on quite another. Now consider that some score of different life tables are or have been in use for actuarial purposes, that several offices have changed their life tables more than once without any corresponding modifications in their tables of premiums, and that there is nothing to prevent their doing so again if they should see fit ; consider, again, that the rate of interest assumed at the periodical valuations varies from 3 to 4 per cent., and that changes of practice in this respect are of common occurrence ; note, as an instance of the result of these proceedings, that of eighty-

seven ordinary life offices now in existence, the only two which have tables of premiums compiled from identical data no longer use the same life tables, and, until recently, valued at widely different rates of interest ; and some idea may be formed of the extraordinary anomalies underlying and interwoven in the system of life insurance which has grown up around us. Moreover, even if there were two offices charging the same premiums, using the same life tables, and assuming the same rate of interest in all calculations, they would still have the choice of a dozen different methods of distributing their profits, each of them more or less plausible and having its supporters in actuarial circles, and each more or less difficult, if not altogether elusive, of comparison with the rest.

The year 1870 witnessed the most important epoch in the history of life insurance. Up to that date every society was absolutely its own lawgiver, and its position was a matter of mere assertion on its own part and of pure conjecture on the part of the insurer. The disastrous failures of the European and Albert offices opened the eyes of the public to the treacherous nature of the fabric in which they had blindly been fancying themselves secure, and obliged the Government to take the whole question in hand ; and on August 9, 1870, the 'Life Assurance Companies Bill' became law. Its principal provisions are—

(1) That every new company shall, before commencing business, deposit 20,000*l.* with the Court of Chancery.

(2) That every company shall, under a heavy penalty for default, deposit at the Board of Trade once a year a statement of its revenue account and balance sheet, and once in every five years a complete actuarial statement showing its financial condition, with full particulars as to the method of valuation, the system on which the profits are distributed, and the average rate of interest earned on investments. In the case of offices established before the passing of the Act the interval between the actuarial statements is extended permissively to ten years.

(3) That proposals for the amalgamation of two companies, or for transferring the business of one office to another, may be resisted by policy-holders representing one-tenth of the total amount assured in either company.

(4) That any company may be wound up on the application of any shareholder or policy-holder if it be proved to be insolvent.

It would be difficult to over-estimate the beneficial effect of this legislation. Between 1844 and 1870 no fewer than two hundred and seventy-two life insurance companies were started, of which only twenty-seven now survive—and some of these could very well be spared. Since 1870 only nine new companies have appeared; and to-day the whole number of offices is ninety-seven, of which three have ceased to take new business.¹ On the other hand, the amount paid annually in premiums has steadily risen from something under ten millions in 1871 to upwards of seventeen and a half millions. These figures speak for themselves. The necessity of finding 20,000*l.* has proved an effectual preventive to the promotion of bubble companies; and, while the weaker offices have been gradually disappearing, the Act has kept a salutary check upon the proceedings of those which survive. Consequently an increased inducement has been afforded to provident husbands and fathers to ‘have recourse,’ in the words of the younger Pitt, ‘to that easy, certain, and advantageous method of providing for their families by insuring their lives.’

So far the Act has answered its purpose. But it is open to question whether the feeling of security thus induced does not tend to counteract in no small degree the sterling advantages that have been secured by Government intervention. The impression is far too common that, since all insurance offices are under the supervision of the Board of Trade, it does not much matter which of them an insurer selects. At the same time the companies—some of them seeing perhaps in the extinction of their fellows a foreshadowing of their own doom; some of them, it may be, conscious that ‘in the course of justice,’ they could not hope to ‘see salvation,’ and all alike, no doubt, recognising that in an ever-narrowing circle of combatants the struggle for existence must of necessity become increasingly acute—vie with each other in hyperbole, and tax to the utmost their inventive genius to devise new ‘special features’ wherewith to attract new business. The insurer is bewildered by specious prospectuses and agents’ circulars, which for the most part are written as if the business of insurance were a kind of philanthropic conjuring, in which the office recommended had shown itself peculiarly proficient. ‘Some of these productions,’ remarked Mr. Babbage, writing more than sixty years ago of the prospectuses of his day, ‘would appear, from their composition, rather to be addressed to those thoughtless people whose

¹ This includes ten industrial offices; so that the number of offices transacting ordinary life insurance business is now reduced practically to eighty-four.

credulity is periodically duped by the splendid promises of the lottery than to a class whose forethought and prudence are so decidedly evinced by the very circumstance of their desire to provide against the uncertainty of life.' The criticism might have been penned yesterday; and it can scarcely at any time have been more aptly illustrated than by the remarkable announcement recently advertised in the leading daily prints by one of the oldest and most respectable life insurance offices, underneath a statement showing the bonuses allotted to certain of its policies at the last division of surplus:—'IMPORTANT NOTICE.—The above extraordinary results prove that a With Profit Policy opened with the Sun Life Office can be had at considerably *less than cost price*.' But I fear it must be admitted that the companies and their agents are right in their estimate of human gullibility. Two examples will suffice to show how little the actual prosperity of an office affects the extent of its new business.

First, let us compare two proprietary offices. The Gresham Life Assurance Society issues policies at rates which are, on the whole, appreciably higher than those charged by the Equity and Law Life Assurance Society. The financial position of the Gresham is arrived at on the assumption that its funds will accumulate at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum; the Equity and Law actuary assumes interest at 3 per cent. only and, moreover, uses a stricter table of mortality. It follows that the liability on an Equity and Law policy is taken at a higher figure than the liability on an equivalent policy in the Gresham: that is to say, the Equity and Law reserves a larger sum than the Gresham does to meet an equal risk. Further than this, the amount of capital embarked in the Equity and Law Society, and available of course to meet any deficiency in the future, is nearly three times that contributed by the shareholders in the Gresham, while the guaranteed capital is 1,000,000*l.* as against 100,000*l.* It might naturally be supposed that the Gresham would declare larger bonuses than those allotted to the Equity and Law policy-holders, who of course have to pay in the shape of a reduction of profit for the additional security afforded them. Now look at the facts. The Gresham, which values its policies triennially, received during the three years ended June 30, 1885, 1,643,949*l.* in premiums, and declared a profit for that period of 93,057*l.*, of which 76,800*l.* was divided among the policy-holders; the Equity and Law, which values quinquennially, received during the five years ended December 31, 1884, 697,676*l.* in premiums, and declared a profit for that period of 376,741*l.*, of which 304,689*l.* was divided among the policy-holders. In other

words, the Gresham, charging higher rates of premium, and valuing on a less secure basis, returns its policy-holders less than 5 per cent. of their money as against nearly 44 per cent. returned by the Equity and Law. Yet the returns show that 5,448 new policies were issued by the Gresham in the year 1886-7—the first financial year following the publication of the figures I have quoted—while the Equity and Law granted but 293 policies during the corresponding twelve months ended December 31, 1886. On turning to the record of management expenses and agents' commission we obtain a clue to the mystery. It appears that the Gresham office expended during the year 1886-7 no less a sum than 102,170*l.* on its management and 57,814*l.* in commission, making a total of about 160,000*l.*, or more than one-fourth of the whole premium income. The cost of conducting the 'renewal' business, estimated at the very liberal rate of 7½ per cent. on the income derived from renewed policies (523,428*l.*), would be 39,257*l.*; and 5,368*l.* was expended for annuity business. Deducting these amounts from the total expenditure, we have a balance of 115,359*l.* attributable entirely to new insurance business. The new premiums received during the year amounted to 69,392*l.*; so that we arrive at the startling result that the whole of the first year's premiums and about two-thirds of the second year's premiums were absorbed in initial expenses.

An examination of the accounts of previous years shows that these figures are not exceptional; and the proportion of the premium income reserved at the last valuation to cover future expenses falls far short of the actual rate of expenditure for several years past. When it is considered that, in spite of all this extravagance, the shareholders find it in their consciences to pay themselves dividends and bonuses amounting to some forty per cent. per annum on the paid-up capital, it is impossible to avoid asking the question, How long is this company, with its 40,000 policy-holders and its 16,000,000*l.* of insurances, likely to go on? It is also worth noticing that, while the average amount of the 293 new policies granted by the Equity and Law Society in 1886 is 1,340*l.*, the 5,448 insurances with the Gresham average only 359*l.*, from which it seems tolerably clear that the victims of the agency system are principally to be found among the poorer classes of the community, who mostly have neither training nor opportunity to master the intricacies of insurance business, although their providence involves probably a far greater personal sacrifice than that of wealthier men, and although the selection of a sound office is, generally speaking, of more vital moment

to the man who insures for a few hundred pounds than to him who can afford to take out a policy for thousands.

Secondly, to take the case of two mutual offices. For the sake of simplicity I select the Mutual and the Reliance Mutual societies, which have nearly the same premium income, use the same life tables, and assume the same rate of interest, and whose tables of premiums differ very slightly for policies effected between the ages of twenty-five and forty. The Mutual accounts for the three years ended December 31, 1885, showed a profit of 101,527*l.*, the premiums received during that period amounting to 238,127*l.*; the Reliance valuation made in 1883 showed a profit of 45,400*l.* for the five years ended December 31, 1882, on premiums amounting 409,448*l.* That is to say, the Mutual profit was proportionately nearly four times that made by the Reliance. The Mutual income from investments is about 50,000*l.* a year, while the Reliance receives barely half that sum; and, so far as the quality of the securities can be gauged from the meagre information furnished under the Act of 1870, the funds of the wealthier office are better placed than those of the Reliance, with its 40,376*l.* of 'loans upon personal security,' not to mention the significant fact that the Reliance reports 19,378*l.* of 'outstanding interest,' as against 5,338*l.* reported by the Mutual. Coming to the important question of expenses, the last accounts of the Mutual show an expenditure during the year 1887 of 13,500*l.*, or nearly 17 per cent. on its premium income; and I cannot but regard this as excessive, especially for an office whose business shows little sign of increasing. But the Reliance expenditure for management and commission amounted to upwards of 18,300*l.* during the same year, being more than 21 per cent. on the premium income! So much for the relative merits of the two societies. Yet in 1886 the number of policies effected with the Reliance was 446 as against 310 granted by the Mutual.

What, then, are the criteria for deciding whether an insurance office is established on a sound footing, or, in plain terms, for distinguishing between a good office and a bad one? First and before all, it is clearly essential that the life tables on which the society's calculations are based should be absolutely safe; that is to say, that the expectation of life at any age should not be overstated in the tables. The Carlisle Tables, for instance, which are still used by some eight or ten offices, are satisfactory as regards the expectation of life of a man at any age under forty, but they become a dangerous guide for older lives, so that actuarial valuations made on these tables may fall short of the true liability, the

greater portion of which (unless the office be quite a new one) arises from policies on lives of men beyond forty years of age at the date of valuation. The tables now considered the most trustworthy are those known as the 'Combined H^M and $H^{M(s)}$,' which were compiled from statistics furnished by twenty of the largest offices, and embracing upwards of 160,000 lives. They show the average after-lifetime of 'healthy males' of all ages (1) from the date of insurance, and (2) from a date five years later, when experience shows that the advantage of medical selection has practically disappeared. It is satisfactory to notice that there is a tendency towards a more general adoption of these tables, which are now used at thirteen of the best offices.

Secondly, it is scarcely less essential that, in determining a society's financial position, the actuary should not assume that its funds will accumulate at too high a rate of interest. For valuation purposes it seems hard to defend the assumption of a higher rate than 3 per cent., although a few good offices value at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and one or two even at 4 per cent. An investigation of solvency which is based on the ' H^M and $H^{M(s)}$ ' Tables, and in which interest is computed at 3 per cent., may, as a rule, be regarded as thoroughly sound; but at present only seven offices adopt this standard.¹

The rate of interest assumed may profitably be compared with the rate actually earned for two or three years immediately preceding the valuation; and in some cases the result of the comparison is eminently unsatisfactory. Thus, the Scottish Imperial Insurance Company at its

¹ These are the Alliance, the Clerical, Medical, and General, the Equity and Law, the Guardian, the Legal and General, the Marine and General, and the United Kingdom Temperance societies.

In order that the difference in the results obtained by adopting different bases of valuation may be properly appreciated, I have roughly calculated the probable effect of a change of tables on the reserves of two well-known offices, viz. the Clerical, Medical, and General Life Assurance Society and the Eagle Insurance Company, the one estimating its liabilities by the H^M and $H^{M(s)}$ 3 per cent. Tables, the other using the Carlisle 4 per cent. Tables. The actual sum reserved by the Clerical, Medical, and General at its last investigation was 2,232,586*l.*, the declared surplus was 483,173*l.*, and 312,500*l.* was divided among the policy-holders. If the valuation had been made by the Carlisle Tables at the same rate of interest, I find a reserve would have been required of about 2,062,000*l.*, so that the surplus for distribution in bonuses would have been increased by some 170,000*l.* If, in addition to using the Carlisle Tables, interest had been computed at the rate of 4 per cent., a reserve of about 1,884,000*l.* would have sufficed, and there would have been a further increase of about 178,000*l.* in the apparent profits, enabling the society to declare a bonus twice as large as that actually paid. On the other hand, the sum reserved by the Eagle in 1888 was 2,535,642*l.*, and the funds were 2,703,807*l.*, giving a surplus of 168,165*l.*, of which 134,294*l.* was divided among the policy-holders. But, if the valuation had been made on the basis of the H^M and $H^{M(s)}$ 3 per cent. Tables, I question whether a reserve of 2,900,000*l.* would have sufficed; and, assuming that amount to be approximately correct, there would have been a deficit of some 200,000*l.*

last valuation in 1886 assumed that its funds would accumulate at the rate of 4 per cent., although, on its own showing, the average rate actually earned on its investments during the preceding three years was only 3*l.* 11*s.* 1*d.* per cent. By this proceeding, which seems to me to be little short of scandalous, a so-called 'surplus' of some 27,000*l.* was arrived at, and a bonus—a poor one enough, it is true—was declared. The financial prospects of a man, who, having an income of 355*l.* a year, determines to regulate his life on the assumption that he has 400*l.*, are patent to the most uninstructed intelligence; and the actuary of the Scottish Imperial Insurance Company would, doubtless, have no difficulty in predicting, in such a case, the precise date of the final catastrophe. Yet the accounts were passed, apparently without challenge, by the Board of Trade; the society continues to issue hundreds of new policies every year; and nothing is done either to compel an alteration in the present basis of valuation, or even to put the public on their guard by exposing its rottenness. Equally serious is the case of the West of England Company, which contrives to show a bare surplus by assuming a rate of interest above what it has been earning for the last two or three years.

Now let us suppose that an insurer has at some personal trouble informed himself upon these two points, and has effected a policy with one of the seven offices to which I have referred. It may seem scarcely credible to the general reader, but it is nevertheless the simple fact, that no security whatever exists that the society selected will not, at the very next valuation after the completion of the contract, throw over the approved life table and raise the assumed rate of interest, say, to 4 per cent. Indeed, instances of such proceedings are numerous enough. In the public mind—that is to say, in the mind of that section of the public which is not altogether gulled by the representations of agents—the chief index of a society's prosperity is its rate of bonus. This view, no doubt, is in a large measure fallacious, but it is not unreasonable, and the keen competition between rival companies, to which I have already referred, gives birth not only to ingenious devices for puffing, but also to a perilous anxiety to conceal the consequences of an unfortunate quinquennium by maintaining a former rate of bonus, even at some sacrifice of stability. A society which has adopted a thoroughly secure basis of valuation is in much the same relative position as a bank with a large reserve fund; and to abandon or impair that basis in order to increase or even to maintain the previous rate of bonus corresponds to a determination by the bank shareholders to divide a

portion of the reserve fund among themselves in order to increase or to maintain their dividends. It is unnecessary to say that such a step would most assuredly be followed by a considerable fall in the market value of the bank shares ; but such are the peculiar immunities enjoyed by life insurance companies that similar tactics have practically no adverse effect on their popularity, and indeed have sometimes been resorted to with a view to extension of business. In spite of the fact that the rate of interest obtainable on first-class investments has for some years past been steadily declining, no fewer than six offices have raised their hypothetical rate at recent investigations ; while two other offices¹ took a different step backwards by abandoning the combined H^M and $H^{M(5)}$ Tables in favour of the H^M Table alone, which is, of course, not nearly so secure. The offices which raised their rate of interest are entrusted with funds amounting in the aggregate to 19,000,000*l.*, and the effect of their action has been to increase their hypothetical revenue by upwards of 95,000*l.* a year. Yet in no instance was the actual rate of interest at which the funds were invested higher than at the previous valuation, and in four cases it was appreciably lower.

But to return. A third particular as to which a prudent man may reasonably seek information is the nature of the securities in which a society's funds are invested. Here the particulars required by the Act of 1870 appear to me to be insufficient. The greater portion of the insurance companies' funds is invested in mortgages, and in land, house property, and ground rents, and the amount so invested at the present time exceeds 88,800,000*l.* Most people nowadays distinguish between an English mortgage and an Irish mortgage, or between English land and Irish land, or between house property in the City of London and house property in a decaying suburb. But the home mortgages are all lumped together in the accounts under the title of 'Mortgages on Property within the United Kingdom ;' mortgages (if any) on property abroad are treated no less indiscriminately ; and the land and houses may, for anything that the balance-sheets tell us, be on the other side of the world.

In the fourth place, it is important to notice what proportion of the premium income is swallowed up in working expenses. It is fairly obvious that, unless the members of a society enjoy exceptionally long

¹ The Law Life Assurance Society and the London Assurance Corporation. The latter office, however, simultaneously reduced its rate of interest from 4 to 3½ per cent.

life, its net profits must depend, on the one hand, on the success of its investments, and, on the other hand, on the economy of the management.¹ Consequently, the ratio of the management expenses (including commission) to the premium income is a valuable, although not by any means sufficient, test of the stability of an office. So fully is this recognised by the companies themselves, that some of them do not scruple to violate the canons of strict accounting in order to reduce the apparent amount of their expenses, and I may instance the device conceived by one prominent company, which has a number of expensive branch offices, of purchasing the buildings and omitting to debit the expense account with any rent. At the same time, the internecine conflict between the little cliques of insurance wirepullers waxes fiercer and more costly, and the sinews of war have to be found by the unfortunate policy-holders, who are every year mulcted more heavily in charges for agencies, advertisements, commission, and whatever other weapons of offence or defence the companies may think fit to employ. The accounts just published show that 15 per cent. of the premium income of ordinary life offices was expended in 1887, as against 13½ per cent. in 1880;² and, if the industrial offices be included, the expenses have risen during the last ten years from barely one-sixth to more than one-fifth of the premium income. On turning from the accounts of a proprietary office to those of a mutual office, it is as a rule observable that the ratio of management expenses to premium income becomes much higher, while the sum expended in commission is relatively low. The reason is not very difficult to find. The proprietary offices are managed by shareholders, whose interest it is to keep down expenses of all kinds as much as possible. But inasmuch as they receive a fixed proportion—say 20 per cent.—of the profits, it is clearly worth their while to pay any sum for commission or advertising, provided that some additional profit can thus be secured. The net profits increase, and the number of shares among which they are divided remains the same; but it by no means follows that the policy-holders' portion of the profits increases in the same proportion as the number of policies entitled to participation. In short, the shareholders have everything to gain from an increase of profits; the policy-holders individually may have much to lose. On the other hand, the managers of a mutual office are more concerned to vote themselves and their friends generous salaries than to spend money in touting for increase of work;

¹ Some profit is derived from 'non-participating' business (*i.e.* from insurances effected at rates under which the policy-holder is not entitled to share in the profits), and also from surrenders and lapses; but the amount of the latter is comparatively inconsiderable.

² See the tabular statement at the foot of page 17.

and, so long as the new business is sufficient to maintain the vitality of the office, they have no temptation to extravagance in the direction of advertisements or commission. It is, I think, desirable that the information required by the Act should be amplified, so as to show separately how much is paid (1) in directors' and auditors' fees, (2) in actuaries' salaries, (3) for the permanent staff, (4) for the fixed agency staff (if any), (5) for pensions, (6) for medical fees, (7) for advertising, (8) for rent, (9) for general office expenses, including stamps, printing, and stationery, and (10) for law charges. Some few offices, it is true, give their expenses in detail, but the usual practice is a bare compliance with the Act, which only requires that sums paid as commission should be shown separately from the rest of the expenses.

But by far the most important question in this connection is whether the annual expenses are within the amount allowed for that purpose at the periodical valuations. The usual system of ascertaining a society's net liability is as follows. The present value of the premiums that, according to the life tables, will become payable, less a percentage reserved for expenses, is deducted from the present value of the total amount assured, and, according as the liability so computed falls short of or exceeds the funds in hand, the accounts show a surplus or a deficit. In most well-conducted offices the whole of the 'loading'—that is, the whole of the margin between the actual office premiums and the 'net' or 'pure' premiums which, independently of expenses, would at the assumed rate of interest correspond to the amounts assured—is reserved for future expenses. It will readily be seen that, if the proportion actually expended of the premium income exceeds the amount reserved for expenditure, the valuation is *pro tanto* invalidated; and, especially after the surplus shown by such valuation has been divided among the shareholders and policy-holders, the solvency of the office becomes a matter of reasonable doubt.

When this test is applied to the accounts of certain offices, the results are sufficiently alarming. I have already referred to the insufficiency of the provision for future expenses in the valuation of the Gresham Life Assurance Society. Another well-known office, which vies with the Gresham in extravagances, is the British Equitable Assurance Company. At the last valuation, the present value of the policies then in force was estimated at 2,681,271*l.*, and the present value of the gross premiums at 2,071,375*l.*; while the allowance made for expenses was 415,783*l.*, being about 20 per cent. of the value of the

premiums. The net liability on life policies, obtained by adding together the first and third amounts and deducting the second, was stated to be 1,025,679*l.*, to which 61,941*l.* was added in respect of certain adjustments and to provide for annuities, making 1,087,620*l.* in all. Against this the funds were 1,153,497*l.*, so that a surplus was shown of 65,877*l.*; and a further sum of 28,072*l.*, representing 'shareholders' accumulated profit on non-participating business,' is also available in case of need. But the actual expenses, including commission, during the year 1887-88 were 40,778*l.*, and the premiums received amounted to 154,022*l.*, so that the true proportion of expenses to premium income is rather more than 26 per cent. If the actuary had computed the future expenses of the business on this basis, he would have had to allow 548,396*l.* on that account, and the society's net liability would thus have amounted to 1,220,233*l.* Therefore, instead of a surplus of nearly 66,000*l.*, there would have been a deficit of about the same amount; and, seeing that 61,168*l.* has been appropriated, and that the ratio of expenses to premium income is steadily increasing, it is tolerably safe to say that the society, assuming its present methods of conducting business to be continued, is prospectively behindhand to the extent of some 100,000*l.* It is worth remarking that the shareholders of this office enjoy a dividend of 11 per cent. per annum; but the policy-holders, notwithstanding the insufficiency of the reserve, have to content themselves with little more than half the bonus they would receive from some other offices.

Taking next the accounts of the Whittington Assurance Company, and applying the same test, I find that the reserve proper to expenses was underestimated at the last valuation by more than 101,000*l.*, so that the valuation balance sheet should have shown a deficit of nearly 92,000*l.*, instead of a surplus of 9,566*l.* Assuming the present rate of expenditure to continue, the whole of the uncalled capital of the company (78,240*l.*) will not suffice to meet its liabilities. Similarly it may be shown that if the London and Lancashire Life Assurance Company had estimated its expenses at the present rate—nearly one-fourth of the premium income—the accounts would have shown a deficiency of about 15,000*l.* in 1883, instead of a surplus of 36,119*l.*, and a deficiency of about 8,000*l.* in 1888, instead of a surplus of 54,106*l.*

The four offices I have cited are all proprietary; and, indeed, proprietary offices are as a rule the worst offenders in the way of extravagant and even improvident expenditure, because they are for

reasons already explained much more eager and lavish in the pursuit of new business than are the mutual societies. But even these latter are not always free from reproach on this score. I find, for example, that if the British Empire Mutual Life Assurance Company had, at its recent valuation, estimated its future expenses at the rate which obtained during the three years under review, there would, to say the least of it, have been no surplus to distribute.

It may be contended, of course, that the payment of commission, as well as the cost of advertising and other disbursements in connection with new business, may at any time be reduced or cease altogether, and that the expenses, so diminished, would fall well within the margin allowed for them. But I am now dealing simply with facts as I find them; and the undeniable fact with which we have here to reckon is, that these expenses, so far from showing signs of diminution, are increasing, not only in actual amount, but in a greater ratio than the premium income.

Before leaving the subject of expenditure it may be observed that many societies of whose stability there can be no question are far from being blameless in this respect. For instance, the Mutual Life Assurance Society, which, as already hinted, is too expensively managed, pays its directors fees amounting to 2,194*l.* a year, being more than 2½ per cent. of the gross premiums received during the year. The last accounts of the Sun Life Assurance Society show an expenditure of 36,985*l.* out of a premium income of 183,543*l.*; while the Standard Life Assurance Company spent 103,519*l.* out of a premium income of 644,807*l.* It is scarcely necessary to say that these amounts are excessive, or that in any ordinary business such a proportion of working expenses to 'turn-over' would be out of the question. But, if any proof were required, it would be found in the fact that the expenditure of two or three of the best offices, which pay no commission, does not exceed 6 per cent. of their premium income. Nor must it be inferred that this standard is attained by exceptional economy, for I am informed that a well-known mutual office, which is on the whole more cheaply managed than any other, and whose expenses are under 14,000*l.* a year,¹ nevertheless contrives to spare no less than 4,500*l.* of that amount for feeing its directors.

¹ About 4 per cent. of the gross premium income. The premiums, however, are exceptionally high; but, even assuming them to be reduced to correspondence with average rates, the expenses would be barely 5 per cent. of the reduced amount.

As regards the payment of commission, it is sometimes urged that it is really a management expense, is less costly in proportion to its results than advertising, and moreover is not paid until it has been actually earned. It is also argued that, inasmuch as increase of business does not lead to a proportionate increase of ordinary expenses, these may, even with the addition of commission, bear eventually a less ratio to the whole premium income than the cost of conducting business naturally accruing would have borne to the amount of the premiums received independently of commission. Thus, if we assume that there are two offices doing originally the same amount of business at a permanent cost of 10,000*l.* a year in each case, and that one of them doubles its new business every year by the payment of, say, 5,000*l.* in commission and an additional 2,000*l.* in other expenses, this latter office will ultimately have doubled its entire business, and other things being equal, will in the long run pay the better bonus. But although this argument is incontrovertible, I do not find that there are many offices to which the illustration would apply. In fact, a comparison of the Board of Trade returns for the past few years shows that, in the aggregate, the outgo, not for commission only, but even for other management charges, bears a steadily increasing ratio to the whole amount received from the public in premiums;¹ and as a rule the heaviest payments for commission are made either by proprietary offices with a view, as I have already pointed out, to augmenting the profits of the shareholders, or by mutual societies which are in an unsound condition and can but trust to an influx of new premiums to enable them to stave off impending ruin. Besides, it should be borne in mind that whatever justification may be found for the payment of commission, so far as it concerns the interest of any individual office, there can be no question that to the whole body of insurers, considered collectively, the 672,000*l.* paid away on this account in 1887 was little better than a dead loss.² This remark applies equally

¹ The following table shows the proportion of expenses to premium income for the seven years from 1880 to 1887. Industrial offices are not included in the calculation.

Year	Commission	Other Expenses	Total Expenses
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
1880	4·216	9·275	13·491
1881	4·351	9·632	13·983
1882	4·397	9·401	13·798
1883	4·455	9·270	13·725
1884	4·619	9·518	14·137
1885	4·725	9·798	14·523
1886	4·886	9·922	14·808
1887	4·946	10·131	15·077

² If industrial companies be included, the amount now expended in commission exceeds

of course to the cost of advertising, which should certainly appear separately in the published accounts.¹

It would be beyond the scope of this article to enter into the relative merits and demerits of the various methods adopted by different societies of distributing their surplus funds; but it is important to notice that, although nearly every office gives the insurer the option of taking his bonus in the shape of an immediate cash payment, or in reduction of the premium, or by way of an addition to the amount of the policy, it is, financially speaking, not at all a matter of indifference which course he selects. Thus in many offices the 'cash equivalent' is not, as it might reasonably be supposed to be, the actual share of profits ascertained to belong to the insurer, but only the 'surrender value' of the reversionary bonus which, according to the tables adopted, would be equivalent to such share. The reduction of premiums is computed on the same principle, so that practically the insurer has no alternative to increasing his insurance, unless he is willing to submit to considerable loss. On the other hand, there are offices where the cash bonus represents the full share of profit actually due, while the reversionary bonus falls short of the true equivalent. It would not be difficult to fill a fair-sized volume with an exposition of similar inconsistencies

1,700,000/ a year; but, as the whole of the profits of those institutions belong to the shareholders, the payment of commission becomes entirely a matter of expediency on their part, and the insurers are not affected so long as the companies remain solvent.

¹ Mr. Francis Baily, in an interesting pamphlet published in 1810, thus expresses himself on the subject of commission: 'Many of the public companies . . . allow a liberal commission (generally 5 per cent. on the payment made) to any person who will procure an insurance to be effected at their office; and this commission is also allowed to any person who makes the annual payment, provided it be not the party himself!!—an artifice which is easily seen through, but which opens such a door to fraud and imposition, that it cannot be too severely reprobated. And, however much it may be sanctioned by the directors in their public capacity, we are all aware what their emotions would be if they discovered any of their tradesmen tampering with their own servants in this opprobrious manner, since they must well know who would eventually pay for it. I omit to give the names of those companies who have adopted this nefarious practice, under the hope that such a mean and improper artifice will not be encouraged in future.' Whether this sweeping denunciation is practically unjustifiable, or whether, as some assert, the standard of commercial morality in this country has fallen during the past eighty years, it is certain that the employment of commission agents has become an established feature in the conduct of insurance business. The degree of regard which would nowadays be paid to a threat to publish the name of a company following this practice, and the futility of the hope under which Mr. Baily exercised his forbearance, may be judged by the fact that a similar reticence at the present day would have to be extended to nearly every company on the official list of the Board of Trade. The societies which, by reason of their reputation and wealth, have hitherto been enabled to refrain from this form of competition with their rivals are only four in number; namely, the Clergy Mutual Assurance Society, the Equitable Life Assurance Society, the London Life Association, and the Metropolitan Life Assurance Society. They are all, as might be surmised, mutual associations, and have comparatively little inducement to spend money in extending their business.

of procedure, but for my present purpose the examples I have given may perhaps suffice.

Strictly speaking, bonuses can scarcely be called profits. They are a necessary consequence of the fact that the companies charge higher rates of premium than their obligations require, and a policy-holder has morally as much right to a return, in some shape or other, of the excess when ascertained, as he has to the payment of the amount written on the face of his contract. In the case of a mutual office, there is no other way of disposing of the surplus than by dividing it among the members. A proprietary office returns only a portion of the surplus; but the amount retained by the shareholders is, in theory at any rate, represented to the policy-holders by the additional security afforded by the capital. Here, then, a question arises in which considerations of security and of profit appear to be in some measure opposed. The bonuses of a mutual society, and even the sums originally assured, depend wholly for their ultimate realisation on the successful working of the society; whereas the policy-holders in a proprietary office have the material guarantee of the paid-up and uncalled capital. Professor de Morgan observes that 'such a provision is an obvious good;' but he goes on to say that it is 'a question how much it is worth, and whether it may not be bought at too high a price.'

The proprietary system is emphatically condemned by many authorities, who assert that extraneous funds are only needed in the early stages of a society's existence, when the expenses of management are proportionately high, and when the number of members is not sufficient to exclude the chance of appreciable deviations of average from the figures in the life tables. It stands to reason, they say, that an office which divides the whole of its profits among the insured must, other things being equal, be more advantageous to them than an office which gives them only a share of its profits. It is maintained further that the amount appropriated by the shareholders is altogether disproportionate to the extent of the security afforded; and there is certainly a striking disparity in the estimates of the companies themselves of the value of their guarantee, the portion of the surplus retained varying from one-third to one twenty-first part, while one office appropriates 5 per cent. of the gross premium income quite independently of the surplus, and two or three others have no fixed apportionment. The greatly enhanced prices at which the shares of the leading companies are quoted are a sufficient indication of the relation existing in the

minds of investors between the dividends to be received and the risks to be incurred ; and it may also be noticed that in 1844 the policy-holders in the Economic Life Assurance Society (now a mutual office) thought it worth their while to pay off the shareholders at a price twice the nominal value of the shares.

The aspect of the question from the policy-holders' standpoint may perhaps be made clearer by an example, and I select for the purpose one of the best-managed and most prosperous of the proprietary companies.¹ At its last quinquennial investigation this company divided 375,000*l.*, of which 62,500*l.* was paid to the shareholders. The paid-up capital is 50,000*l.*, on which a yearly dividend of 5 per cent. is paid in addition to the quinquennial 'bonus,' so that the shareholders received 75,000*l.* in all during the five years, which is at the rate of 30 per cent. per annum on the amount of the capital. The average rate of interest at which the funds are invested is rather more than 4 per cent. Assuming roughly that the capital of 50,000*l.* and a reserve fund of equal amount accumulated some forty years ago are invested at 5 per cent., they would produce 25,000*l.* in the five years, leaving 50,000*l.* to be paid by the policy-holders. Now the sum divided among the policy-holders was 312,500*l.*, so that if there had been no proprietary, and the business had been equally well managed, the actual bonus might have been improved by just 16 per cent. I believe this to be a fairly representative result as regards the best proprietary offices.

On the other hand, it is urged that the absence of capital in mutual societies obliges them to keep larger reserves, which have sometimes been described as 'capital in disguise.' But there is the important difference that the additional amount so reserved is invested and accumulates for the benefit of the policy-holders, while the dividends on capital go into the pockets of the shareholders. The argument that the best offices of each class are about equally prosperous and pay much the same rate of bonus has more practical force, but this is merely another way of saying that the proprietary offices are so much better managed than the mutual offices that they can pay equally good bonuses to their policy-holders, even after deducting what is paid to the shareholders. I am inclined to think that such an assertion would not be altogether groundless ; yet, supposing that it could be fully justified, its effect would be rather to condemn the management of the mutual offices than to vindicate the proprietary principle. The fact remains

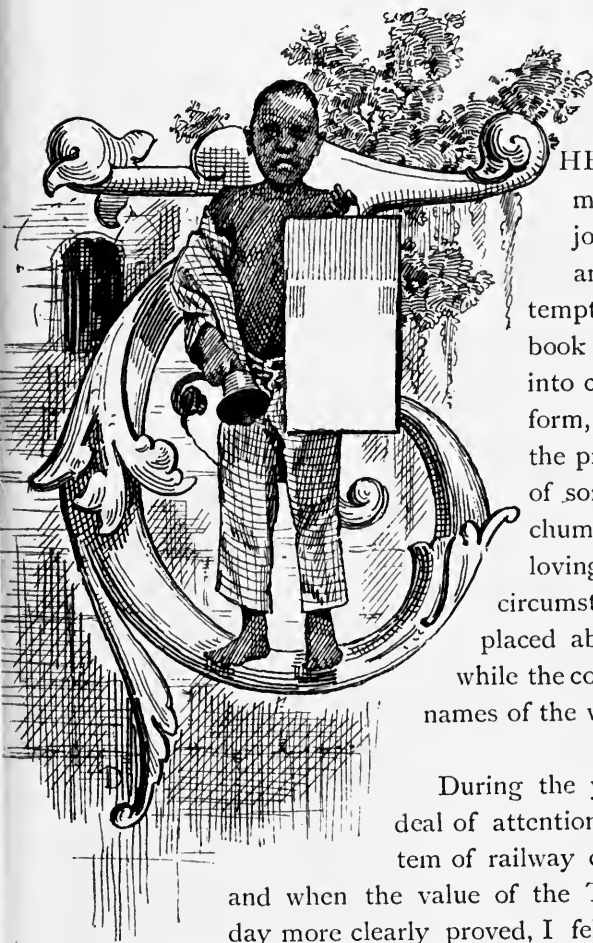
¹ The Clerical, Medical, and General Life Assurance Society.

that these heavy dividends do go from the policy-holders to the shareholders, and, whether they are regarded as payment for increased security, or for good management, or for both of these advantages combined, the policy-holders are indisputably deprived of a considerable percentage of the surplus which would otherwise belong to them. For many years past this question has been debated on both sides with untiring energy and some freedom of recrimination, and apparently the only conclusion to be derived from the controversy is that the champions of each party are tolerably correct in their strictures on the other.

Here for the present I must pause. I have tried to indicate, to such extent as considerations of space would allow, some of the anomalies and inconsistencies of the existing system of life insurance. We have seen that the licence enjoyed by the companies is scarcely less absolute or less dangerous than that assumed by the directorate of a transatlantic railway company, while the interests at stake are infinitely more important; that year after year, whether from the interested action of shareholders and directors or under stress of competition, a large and increasing proportion of the policy-holders' money is dissipated in extravagant expenses; that the public are daily beguiled by representations conceived in a vein that would be better suited to the prospectus of a newly discovered gold-mine; and that the information extracted from the companies under the Act of 1870, besides being in some respects incomplete and even misleading, is from the technical nature of the subject, so difficult of application as to be of little value to the large majority of insurers. Many of these evils, and especially the power now possessed by a company of changing its basis of valuation, might no doubt be removed by legislation. Others, however, present greater difficulty. In a future article I hope to discuss such remedies as appear feasible; and in any inquiry of the sort the larger question, whether the whole business of granting life policies should not be made a function of the State, cannot be left out of consideration.

WALTER MONTAGU GATTIE.

From Kimberley through the Transvaal to Delagoa Bay



THE work of the last decade of my life has necessitated several journeys through South Africa, and the following is a crude attempt at putting some of my notebook jottings and my reminiscences into consecutive and, I trust, readable form, in the hope that they may during the present flood of immigration prove of some slight service to the 'new chum,' and at the same time afford to loving hearts at home a glimpse of the circumstances in which the absentee is placed abroad. I need scarcely say that, while the country is accurately described, the names of the white actors are fictitious.

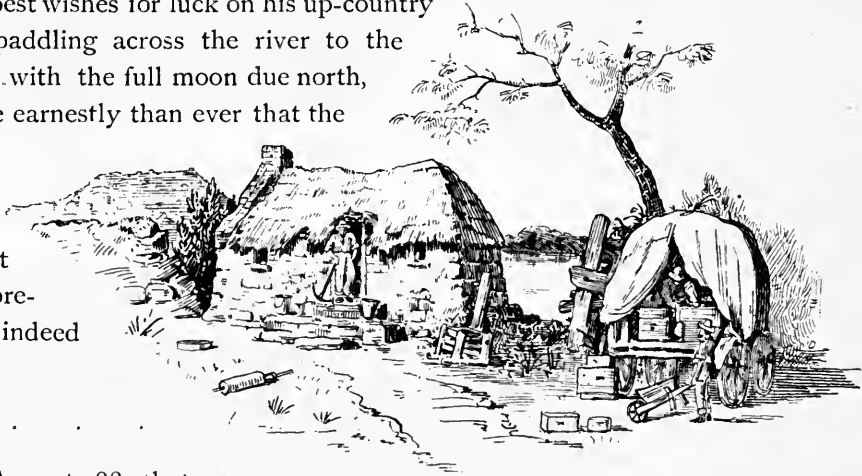
During the years in question I gave a good deal of attention to the question of the best system of railway communication in South Africa; and when the value of the Transvaal gold-fields was day by day more clearly proved, I felt that no real solution could be arrived at without a knowledge of the actual circumstances obtaining at that much talked of but little known harbour, Delagoa Bay, and the country between it and the capital of the Transvaal.

With these thoughts in my mind I was one Sabbath evening lazily sailing in my canoe along the willow-fringed southern bank of the river Vaal near Barkly, when I noticed a trader's wagon outspanned near a hut occupied by one of those diggers who prefer the fresh air, rough life, and possibly also the somewhat gambling character of search for diamonds in the river gravels, to the regular pay, discipline, and dust of Kimberley.



A trader's chat is always worth listening to, so fresh and crisp as compared with the *réchauffé* of the last camp scandal and journal-strained home news ; so, lowering my tiny sail and bringing my frail craft broadside on to a convenient flower-painted, grass-clad bank, I gingerly stepped out, looped the painter over a handy stump, and following a path leading through the work-attesting heaps of *débris* and boulders, found myself in front of the cottage, where, chatting with the owner, sat his old chum, a well-known hunter and trader, then on his way to the north of Shoshong with such European treasures as the native covets. Taking the proffered stool and filling my glass, I joined in the palaver, which presently turned on the new fields and the necessity of opening up the Delagoa Bay route. Long into the night I listened, picking up hints as to the landmarks on the way, the spots where good water was to be found, how best to avoid the dangers of cattle and horse sickness, of the Tsetse fly, and the deadly coast fever ; until at length, as I was bound to be in Kimberley early, I was compelled to leave, when, as parting advice, my mentor expatiated on the advantages during travel through the Transvaal to be reaped from a certain knowledge of 'kitchen Dutch' and of the Old Testament, from an ample supply of sugar for the ladies and 'square face' for the gentlemen, and explained exactly the etiquette to be observed in 'kissing the baby.'

So, with best wishes for luck on his up-country trip, I left, paddling across the river to the 'Hermitage' with the full moon due north, longing more earnestly than ever that the opportunity for making the journey to the west might soon present itself, as indeed it did.



It was in August 1885 that we three—that is, the Doctor, better known as 'Pill,' the engineer, or 'Pencil' (from his incorrigible habit of making hideous sketches of everything and everybody), and the goldseeker, or 'Pan'—were looking for a suitable equipment in Kimberley for the journey, when we heard that at Pretoria we could get all that we required and should thus greatly shorten the road; so thither by coach we went, and were put up by my old friend Maclane, then prospecting for gold in the neighbourhood, who had a pleasant and roomy bungalow standing in a large compound fenced by rose hedges, above which towered a row of lofty gum-trees (*Eucalyptus*).

The town of Pretoria has been so often and so well described that I will not trouble the reader with any further account of it. When we were there, although the one topic of conversation was 'gold,' and specimens of reef were in every man's hand, house and pocket, the palmy days of Pretoria had yet to come with the discovery of the 'Banket reef,' and thus we were able to secure a good wagon at the fairly moderate price of seventy pounds and a span of twenty oxen, several of which were salted, for an additional sum of one hundred and thirty pounds. A driver, 'Adonis,' with his assistant, 'Snowball'—the first ugly beyond belief, the latter black as iron sand—were engaged, and our new purchases housed in Maclane's compound, where, under Pencil's directions, we worked with a will at side-tents, fittings, &c., until, at a further cost of about eighty pounds, we found ourselves masters of as comfortable and ship-shape a home on wheels as ever crossed the continent. When fully pitched it formed a veritable four-roomed canvas house with verandah at either end and proof against the roughest weather, whilst



ten minutes sufficed to strike and roll up the side-tents and start it on its road as an ordinary ox-wagon.

Beyond the almost innumerable odds and ends that form the usual equipments for such a journey, each of the party brought a few specialities: Pill a small chest that became unpleasant when jolted in hot weather, but proved most useful on more than one occasion; Pencil had the materials to which we owe the accompanying sketches and a choice assortment of mapping tools; whilst Pan took a pickaxe, shovel, crowbar, and hammers, with—last, but not least—some iron dishes for gold washing, which were habitually used as basins, and from which indeed he derived his nickname.

We had a pleasant time during this week of preparation. Maclane was a charming host, the Pretorians hospitable and laughter-loving, and there was much fun over our many mistakes in the, to us, new country and new language—as, for instance, when Pill, wishing to study the botany of the country and the vernacular at the same time, sent for a work he saw advertised, which was entitled ‘*Bloemen in het Kaapland geplukt*’ (Flowers picked in South Africa), and which turned out to be a collection of hymns and nursery rhymes; but the tables were turned in our favour immediately afterwards by an episode that attended the introduction of the first fresh oysters into the capital of the Transvaal.

When in Kimberley an old, tried friend—now, alas! no more—with whom I was lunching at the club on the day of my departure, asked me whether he could do anything for me after I left. We had just had some capital oysters, and I said, ‘Yes, do send me up a few dozen by the following coach; it will be some time ere I taste them again.’ Some days after we reached Pretoria they arrived, and after the old biscuit tin, seaweed, and salt-water-soaked matting, with which they had been protected

from the heat and dust of the road, had been carefully removed, critically was each one examined to see whether it still retained (mark of golden virtue, especially among oysters!) a closed mouth. A certain number, luckily but a small percentage, were condemned, 'Pill' ungallantly remarking that they were probably ladies, and some six and a half dozen of hale sound ones, the first ever seen in the capital of the South African Republic, gladdened our eyes as they lay in state on Maclane's largest dish. In the garden the ripe lemons hung invitingly on the trees, fresh butter (curiously enough a rarity in that land of grass and cattle) was in the house, manufactured but that morning in a little glass churn that Pencil had designed and made out of a big pickle bottle; a dozen dry chilies were bruised in the mortar, a bottle of Cape hock direct from the canvas water-cooler was uncorked, thin bread and butter sliced, a strong sardine-tin-opener entrusted to Pill's sinewy hands (he hailed from Colchester), and we four sat down to the feast.

But when some three and a half dozen had been appreciatively enjoyed in almost religious silence, Pan spoke up. (He had made a lot of friends in the place.) The disadvantages of gluttony were first dilated on, with the awful consequences that would probably follow were we compelled to place ourselves at Pill's tender mercies, and the stern necessity of its repression in ourselves, who possibly for the first time in our lives had an object in view (here Pencil and Pill both frowned), was strongly insisted on; then he painted in glowing colours the true happiness that must follow success in the missionaries' highest aim—the creation and satisfaction of new desires and wants in mankind; and concluded by pointing out that we now had an opportunity of demonstrating to the Pretorian host (not Maclane) the absolute necessity of a line of railway from the coast, by means of which these and many other hitherto unattainable delicacies might be daily offered to the burghers. (This last won Pencil's heart.) So we formed a committee; by an overwhelming majority voted Pan into the chair; appointed Maclane hon. secretary; and over what was left of the wine—that for consistency's sake we had dubbed 'Chablis'—a list was prepared: six small plates found with six clean table napkins (Maclane was a perfect Sybarite); six grand old lemons pulled by a cleft bamboo from the highest branches of the tree (where the best fruit grows); six pats of fresh butter, cunningly stamped out with an old jam tin (this was Pan's suggestion), and six dark-hued boys sped in various directions to lay the novel delicacies at the feet of six local magnates. Time to write notes there was none, for the dinner-hour was at hand.

Then we four having dined, with appetites encouraged by generosity and tempered by oysters, smoked our 'Old Judge' cigarettes and several pipes of the mild Transvaal tobacco on the stoep (verandah), ever perfumed after sunset by the eucalypti and rose hedges around, dallied with a game or two of *bézique*, drank the nightcaps of whisky and potash water (from the 'Hecla' works), and so to bed, lulled by the rippling sounds of the water furrows, and to that perfect repose to be perhaps only enjoyed by a well-tired man after a virtuous action such as ours, and in a spot where, credit being practically unknown, the restless dun is conspicuous by his absence.

I must pass lightly over our morning drive to the 'Fountains,' the delicious tub in a pool fringed with maidenhair fern, foliage domed, and surface-bubbled by the fall above, the return to the house, the rapid disappearance of some capital crisp chops and juicy teal, and the perusal of five notes of warm thanks—but one was missing, and that we mourned over like the lost piece of silver. Had the Martyns unexpectedly driven out to their farm? Were they ingrates? Had they no knife? Ought we to have sent them one? And could it be, as we scarcely dared to fear, that six oysters, but yester-even fragrant and luscious, might now be wasting their perfume on the upland air?

The uncertainty created a thirst that led us perhaps earlier, perhaps not, to the club; for be it known that ancient custom has ordained that in Pretoria (latitude $25^{\circ} 40'$ south) the sun is over the yard-arm by 11 A.M., when, as on our way we rode down the side of the market square, the mystery of that missing note—Pan in a jovial mood suggested the 'Lost Chord,' for which he was reproved—

was solved.

Out of Bourke's store strode Charlie Martyn, long since settled in those parts with his pretty, country-born wife and a troop of little semi-rebels; and, seeing us, came up so convulsed with emotion that it was some time ere we could



gather from his incoherent, laughter-broken words what he wanted to explain.

He had been out to the farm and had reached home late the night before ; and as he called for a 'boy' to take his horse round to the stall, his wife, running from the stoep to greet him, exclaimed, 'Oh Charlie! you will be so glad to hear that Mr. Maclane's party must have struck the reef at last, for he has sent you half-a-dozen specimens of quartz. But,' she added gravely, 'I fear that either their luck has turned their heads, or they have been too much in the sun' (a local expression), 'as they put them all wet in a napkin, on a plate, with a sour lemon and a pat of butter.'

A couple of days after this all our arrangements were complete. A small 'Tottie,' who was known as 'Blazes,' was secured as 'voorlooper' (the leader of the foremost pair of oxen), and we engaged a capital cook, of varied talents, one John, who—on the strength of a family tradition of some slight indiscretion on the part of an ancestress, and consequent admixture of white blood in his veins—not traceable in his complexion or wool—habitually employed, amongst other adjectives, the word 'black' when describing or abusing less fortunate natives, though scarcely in the complimentary sense recently attributed to the epithet. John's career had been a varied one, and beyond his knowledge of cookery he owned a curiously cracked falsetto voice, which had been utilised first in a missionary choir, and subsequently in a travelling minstrel company. His repertoire of hymns and patter songs was extensive, and being naturally proud of his attainments, they were often called into requisition on the march, more especially on Sunday evenings.

It was about seven o'clock one morning early in September, all having been made ready the day before, that the oxen were inspanned, Adonis cracked his whip with pistol-like sound and precision, and we were fairly on our journey.

Inclination bids me tell of our pleasant picnic that day at the Dorns, where our friends trooped out to bid us 'God speed,' dilate on the varied experiences and mistakes of the earlier portions of our journey, and describe at length the country passed through, especially interesting in many parts as the scene of sad episodes in the late unhappy war. But my space is limited, and in order to leave room for detail of the latter and less known portion of the route, I must pass

at once to Lijdenburg, merely noting that we were four days on the road to Middelburg, a distance of 83 miles. There we remained for a couple of days, doing the trek thence to Lijdenburg, a length of 106 miles, in six days more.

We left Lijdenburg one fine fresh morning in the early part of September, our road for the first four miles lying across the plain in which the town is situated, and which is some 4,500 feet above sea-level; then commencing the ascent of the Montagne des Sources, on whose eastern flanks are the chief sources of the Krokodil river, we made an early outspan by a small stream, and afterwards recommenced our upward toil. The views from this road are superb, the head waters of the streams being in precipitous gorges as much as 1,000 feet deep, their bold rocky sides clothed with small timber and bush. The spring was not yet far enough advanced to show them in all their beauty, as would have been the case a couple of months later, when the magnolia bush is in full bloom, the tall tree-ferns at their best, and marvellous varieties of aloes and bulbs paint every spot where they can find root-hold with masses of brilliant colour. The absence of such colour, however, added to the mystery and gloom of these ravines, though here and there the Kafir boom, which like our almond and peach bursts into blossom before the leaf, shone out in a blaze of scarlet glory amid the grey slate rock. Pan was happy, for reef and indications of reef were everywhere visible, whilst down below, wherever water was available, we could see signs of workings. The road then skirted the northern slope of the Moodies Berg, one of the higher points of the range, and hence we got a good view of the Mauch's Berg, 7,200 feet above the sea, and said to be the highest peak in the Transvaal. This mountain, unlike most others in the neighbourhood, is peaked at the top, with parallel bars indicating the alternations of the slate, dolomitic limestone, and quartzite, of which the whole of the Lijdenburg country consists. The constant ascent told upon the oxen, and we camped out early for the night at a stream with good water, fifteen miles from the town. This stream is a tiny affluent of the Krokodil, our height above the sea at this spot being 6,900 feet; in fact, within 70 feet of the highest point crossed by the road. The following day our morning trek led us across a series of rugged spurs on the north flank of the hill above the head waters of the Sabie River that go by the expressive name of the Devil's Knuckles, and after passing it we unanimously agreed that in the whole of our time we had never crossed a bit of road that could compare with it for roughness, and that every

other highway was relatively good, this alone bad—an opinion we had occasion, however, to modify when descending the Drakensberg. The road then crossed over the ridge, passing above the head waters of Nels River, the scenery being of the same grand character as that of the previous day; we then descended rapidly, making our midday halt at a stream near 'Ross Hill,' one of the Lijdenburg gold mines. Spitzkop, the beacon mountain of the Lijdenburg fields, was now plainly visible, being only some six miles from us, and boldly did its foliaged dolomite cap stand out against the eastern sky—a curious contrast to its barren slate and quartzite flanks. By half-past five we found ourselves close to Watkin's store, situated on its northern slope, and here we found several transport riders—among them, to our great delight, MacIntyre and O'Grady, both on their way to Delagoa Bay. They told us that, although we were a little late, the season was very favourable, that there had been no fever to talk of as yet on the road, and that the rivers were still low; further, that there was but little fly, so that we should not have much trouble on that score; on the other hand that, although there was a good deal of talk of lions, the game, as a rule, had all gone off, and that shooting we should probably get none. Finding that we still had plenty of time before dinner, we then rode through the works of the Spitzkop gold company to the edge of the mountain, or Drakensberg, of which the native name is Quathlamba, in order to get a view of the lone country we were now to cross and to see what is said to be one of the finest panoramas in the world. The ground up to the very edge consisted of a grassy slope cut into and delved here and there in the gold search; the road was a fair one, and in a little over a quarter of an hour we reached the point of descent and gazed yearningly over, when, instead of the wide view we had anticipated, all we could see was a sudden descent of some 300 feet, and then a vast ocean-like expanse of white mist that in the far distance mingled with the sky, looking as though the whole country was buried beneath a staub lavine. The sun was nearing the range we had just crossed in its western course, and the cliff on which we stood threw on the cloud-sea below deep and ever-lengthening shadows, at the extreme edge of which we fancied that we could dimly make out our own. As the sun lowered, the pace at which the dull grey veil spread towards the Indian Ocean rapidly increased; when he dipped behind the Mauchberg we remembered that we had lunched early, and as the after-glow died away, thankful that the waxing moon was already old enough to befriend us mid the pitfalls on the road, we trotted sharply back to the wagons. When we got to Watkin's, we found there several employés of the gold companies around and a sprinkling

of independent diggers. Nuggets were exhibited, quartz specimens licked and peered into, and it was fairly late ere we got back to the wagon and turned in. The next day we remained camped out by the fine old sugar-loaf mountain, and under Pan's guidance went the round of the neighbouring gold workings.

The following morning we were up betimes, and with kindly wishes for our safe arrival at the bay we started on the last stage of our journey, accompanied by O'Grady and MacIntyre.

A little over an hour brought us to the edge, and, the morning being clear, a marvellous view lay below and before and around. Far to the north could be traced the continuation of the precipitous break or fault on which we stood, the curious gap of the Blyde Poort being visible by the distant horizon; to the south, on the other hand, all seemed broken up into hills and groups of hills, until in the blue distance the scene was bounded by the Swazie mountains; but what interested us the most was the view ahead. At our feet in the first place were the long spurs extending far into the plain 4,000 feet below, on one of which the tortuous track we had to follow looked like a ribbon that had been flung from the point at which we stood; whilst between, and on the sides of, these spurs the innumerable streams that unite to form the northern and southern Sand rivers shone up as though on a cunningly executed map. Away in the far far distance we could see but little, the sun being still low, but yet MacIntyre was able to point out to us two dark specks as respectively 'Ship Mountain' and 'Pretorius Kop.' On a clear evening, he told us, with the sun in the west, there is no difficulty in seeing the Lebombo range, a chance that we had lost through the mist of the previous day. And now the wagons began the descent, O'Grady's being first, then MacIntyre's, and ours last. A friend of O'Grady's, who was one of the best men at the work in the country, also accompanied us to near the Transvaal frontier. We had, however, only gone some 300 yards down a track, about the pitch of an ordinary thatch roof and somewhat rougher than an average torrent bed, when MacIntyre's wagon, after surmounting a bigger boulder than usual, came down awkwardly and nearly heeled over, whilst those who were close to it heard an ominous crack, and on examination it was seen that one of the side or buck beams had cracked right across, though fortunately in a diagonal direction. A council of war was held, and as O'Grady and his friend Black were confident that it could be mended sufficiently well to get to the foot of the mountain it was

determined to do so. In one of the kloofs (ravines) close by were a number of slender trees some thirty feet high, quite straight, and about two feet six inches in circumference at six feet from the ground, a common form of timber near the top of the mountain, and as it was not possible from where we stood to see distinctly the foliage above and thus make sure of the right pole (the colour of wood and bark was curiously similar in all), half a dozen of the most likely-looking were felled, and, after being duly sat upon, one was selected and rudely adzed into shape. Holes were then bored through the faulty beam and the pole securely lashed on with riempjes, tightened by tourniquets and wedges. Pill was delighted with the first. This operation occupied in all some three hours, and, with the exception of an occasional tightening, carried the wagon into Lourenço Marques without further trouble.

Whilst this was going on we three had plenty of time to look around. The mountain consisted, as Pan explained, of grit, probably quartzite, and the startling thing was that all and every indication of reef, which at the top had been numerous, had suddenly but absolutely ceased; and this, subsequent observation completely confirmed, making Pan shake his head as to the correctness of the usually accepted ideas on the genesis of gold. Down the side of this slope were strewed huge isolated boulders exactly resembling the 'blocs perchés' or 'erratics' of the Alps, whilst here and there were rounded, hummocky bosses, which at first sight appeared to be indisputably 'roches moutonnées;' indeed, it seemed as though we had come across irrefragable testimony of glacial action. Pan, however, was mysteriously and unusually silent on the subject, and, as we afterwards found out, with good reason. The vegetation in the numerous ravines was exquisite, the older trees being festooned with grey-beard moss 10 and 20 feet long, whilst the upper branches seemed like hanging gardens with their wealth of aloes, bulbs, orchidaceous plants, and creepers of every class. Below, the rocks were hidden beneath a covering of mosses, club-mosses, and marvellous variety of ferns, whilst here and there were clusters of the tree-fern, resembling from their size small palm-trees, living in, and shading from the sun, quiet little pools of water.

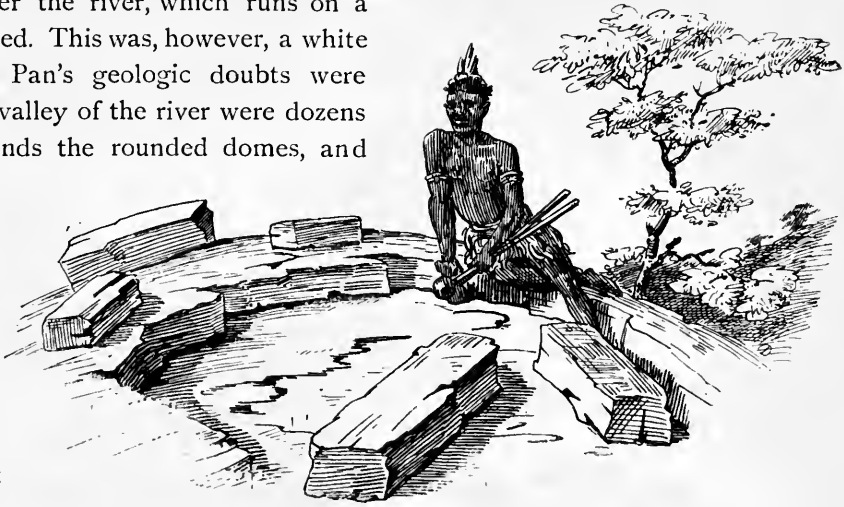
However, long before Pencil's hands were tired of sketching, or Pan had solved the erosion question, the wagon was mended, the oxen in-spanned, and down the breakneck path groaned, crashed, and rolled the heavy wagons. To have seen them for any ten minutes of this day's

route would have taught the greatest sceptic the necessity for making the Cape wagon so heavy and so strong. At a little after four we outspanned near a deserted Boer's hut at a spot where the road crossed a small stream about $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the top, by road, and some 1,300 feet below it. After this the road was fairly good for a bit, and the moon quite serviceable, so at half-past six we started again, travelling for an hour and a half, and getting over four miles, thus making a total of nine for the day.

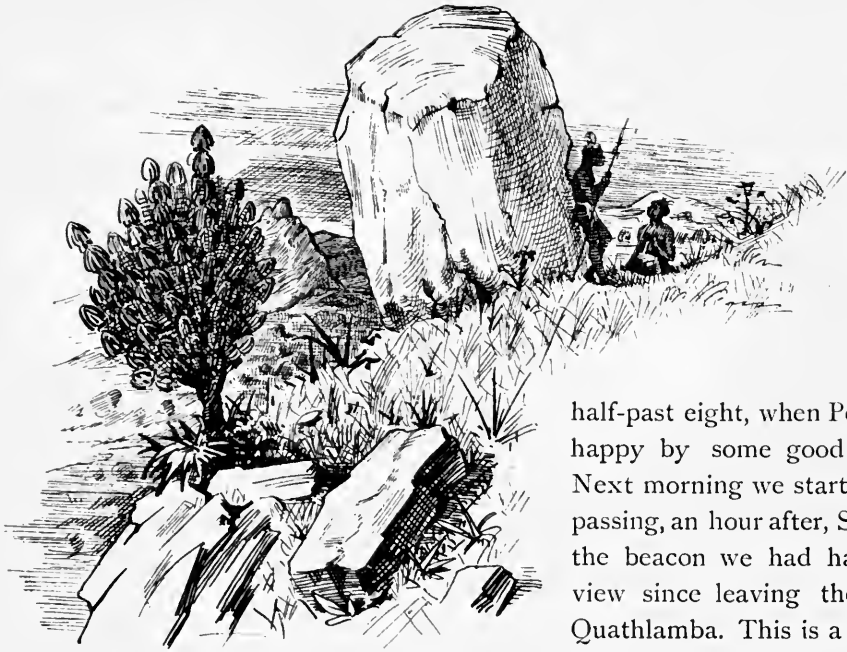
Next morning we did not get on the road until a quarter to nine; indeed, on this trek our travelling was, as a matter of course, regulated to that of our friends' more heavily laden wagons. The road, an extremely tortuous one, now lay along the watershed or spur between the 'Sabie' and Sand rivers, and afforded a charming view of the rough-and-tumble country on either side, granite masses peeping up here and there, boulder blocks and rounded domes being everywhere visible. On this march we shot three partridges, the only game of any sort or kind that we saw on the road. There were plenty of baboons, of course, on the Quathlamba, but even these fell away as we descended. We outspanned near a little stream about eleven, where we had evidently left all the grit behind, for the soil was of the same red disintegrated diorite so common above, whilst here and there well-defined reefs were seen. Pan had the best of it at this outspan, finding colour in the stream gravel, whilst clouds coming up just about eleven, and lasting till one, prevented Pencil doing his astronomical work, and necessitated our turning out with him after dinner, and holding his lanterns. The afternoon march was along a very similar country, during the whole of which 'Logokop,' an extraordinary pinnacle of granite rock, some 400 feet high, made a prominent object among the general rounded domes. On the top of the pinnacle were perched one or two enormous ninepine-like boulders with daylight between, looking as if the slightest wind must throw them off their balance and send them crashing down into the forest below. That evening we reached the last store at the western end of the route, 'Jourdan's,' at Sand river, some 2,500 feet above the sea, and 3,000 feet below the edge of the Berg, which during the afternoon march was still plainly visible, with Spitzkop, the Mauch Berg, and Graskop Peak beyond.

Sand river is in the fever district, and the storekeeper here is considered fortunate who completes his second year. Next morning we got off about a quarter to eleven and had a good deal of trouble in getting

the wagons over the river, which runs on a rough granite bed. This was, however, a white day, for here Pan's geologic doubts were solved; in the valley of the river were dozens of our old friends the rounded domes, and a few minutes afterwards Pill, who had ridden ahead, came back to tell us he had found a gigantic fossil onion in the act of peeling. Pan



went on derisively, followed by Pencil, as ever, note-book in hand, the sketch above showing what they found. Pan, however, was now happy, and explained that the boulders we had noticed were, so to speak, the very inside kernel of such onions as these, the *roches moutonnées*, the onions themselves. We shook our heads and reminded him of the similar formations on the grit of the Berg, but he explained again that the mountain really consisted of quartzite, which not unfrequently, and notably in South Africa, weathers exactly like basaltic rock. So fell our ideas about the ice-bound districts of the Transvaal. That night we spanned out a little after dark, being then some thirty-two miles from Spitzkop. The night was cloudy and warm, as was the following morning, feeling close and heavy after the fresh air of the uplands we had been traversing. We did not get off until a quarter to ten, and shortly after crossed the first marshy spot, the road being carried by means of trees laid transversely, over which the wagons jolted to some purpose. We spanned out a little after eleven by Pretorius Kop, a small conical granitic hill on the side of which was the boulder sketched overleaf, one of the 'perched blocks' spoken of previously. The vegetation was now rapidly changing to that of semi-tropical lands. The Meroola tree, from the plum of which the natives make an indifferent beer, was seen here and there, and the euphorbia with its dark green, cactus-like leaves and acrid-sap, half-covered the small basaltic mounds. At the side of Pretorius Kop were a few Kafir huts, but the occupants were on the point of leaving on account of the approaching unhealthy season; they brought us some giraffe and quagga skins for purchase which had been badly preserved and thus were not worth carriage; but we got some



goat's flesh and chickens from them, that in the dearth of game were very acceptable. We left late in the afternoon, spanning out at half-past eight, when Pencil was made happy by some good observations. Next morning we started about nine, passing, an hour after, Ship Mountain, the beacon we had had in frequent view since leaving the edge of the Quathlamba. This is a long, low ridge of basaltic blocks of reddish colour, amidst which grow in profusion the euphorbia and many other semi-tropical plants. It is popularly supposed to be called Ship Mountain because from its summit, it is said, can be seen the vessels in the Indian Ocean, but this is so manifestly a fable that we looked for another reason, and at last Pencil discovered some slight resemblance in it to a ship, keel upwards. Ship Mountain is about forty-five miles from Spitzkop, and 1,600 feet above the sea. Trees were now getting more plentiful and larger, and in a dry stream bed, near to which we made our mid-day halt, Pill found wistaria bushes in full bloom. Here we met some traders coming up from Delagoa Bay, and now ensued a long and earnest consultation about the dreaded Tsetse fly.

This pest of the lowlands of the eastern coast, the Limpopo river, and Khama's country, is found in patches wherever there is large game, and probably owes its existence to the buffalo, since where they have been completely cleared out the Tsetse disappears also. In size it is a little larger than the common house-fly, and something of the colour of a common bee, with three yellowish bars across the abdomen, beyond which the wings extend, lapping scissor-wise and making the insect look much longer than it really is. It has a curious sort of humming buzz, and its bite is fatal to the ox, the horse, and the dog; mules and even some of the smaller game are also said to be killed by

it. It feeds precisely like the mosquito, plunging the sucking tube, which ordinarily lies within the proboscis, deeply into the under layer of the skin. A few days after the animal is bitten its coat stares, there is a little running from the nose and eyes, with slight glandular swellings, and the poor brute falls steadily off until it dies. Fortunately, as is mentioned above, it is usually found in isolated patches, carefully noted by the natives or hunters, whilst, unlike the mosquito, it sleeps at night and does not feed during rain. Men and asses escape.

The result of the consultation was that we were to travel as little as possible during the day, spanning out, moreover, in spots that were known to be free of it. This is particularly the case (for well-known reasons) in the vicinity of regular camping places or native villages.

So that evening we started at sunset and camped for the night at Intomane, where we remained the whole of the next day. We were now in the country of lions, and by night the horses were tied up in the midst of the cattle, since by preference the lion will always take the former rather than the latter, whose huge horns can inflict a most serious wound. Large fires were also kept up. We heard the brutes roaring this and the following night or two, and also occasionally crossed their spoor, but saw nothing of them, to Pill's great disappointment.

The next was a great day with Pencil, for it was very clear although hot, and he was the whole time taking observations. Pan, too, had a good time with the crystalline rocks of the neighbourhood. Ship Mountain was visible from Intomane, but there I think we saw the last of it, the country now becoming very level and so wooded that but little could be seen from the road. That night we started at about half-past five, travelling until nine, then rested until half-past three in the morning, when we again inspanned, travelling to half-past five, thus getting past this particular zone of the fly. We again inspanned at nine, and passing through a good deal of fairly-wooded country with many small pools of stagnant water, reached the 'Krokodil' river, last seen by us between Middelburg and Lijdenburg, about half-past eleven, crossing it at once, and spanning out on the opposite side. The width is over 100 yards, the depth 4 feet, with a good sandy bottom. The top of the banks are some 20 feet above the bed, and about 250 yards apart, the current at the time we came through running four or five miles per hour. We were much struck on this morning's march by the enormous number of hanging nests on the trees; these are usually indicative of the

presence of snakes, but not one was noticed. As soon as we arrived the first thing thought of was the bath, and, what we believed, a convenient spot was selected, where there were trees close by to enable us to dress in the shade, and a quiet pool of deepish-looking water ; a belt of reeds at the edge seemed but little drawback ; still then and there it was that we learnt how the Krokodil reeds can prick, and recommend any future traveller to choose a spot free from them. Between this and the Komati there were said to be more patches of fly, so we started at half-past six, and after travelling until nine outspanned, starting next morning at a little after three and marching for three hours. The young fresh succulent grass was now becoming plentiful, and we put nose-bags, that we had been advised to make, on the horses, in order to prevent them from picking at it during the night, or while the dew was yet wet on it. Whether it was the result of this or not I cannot say, but as a fact we got them both quite safely to the Bay. At ten we started

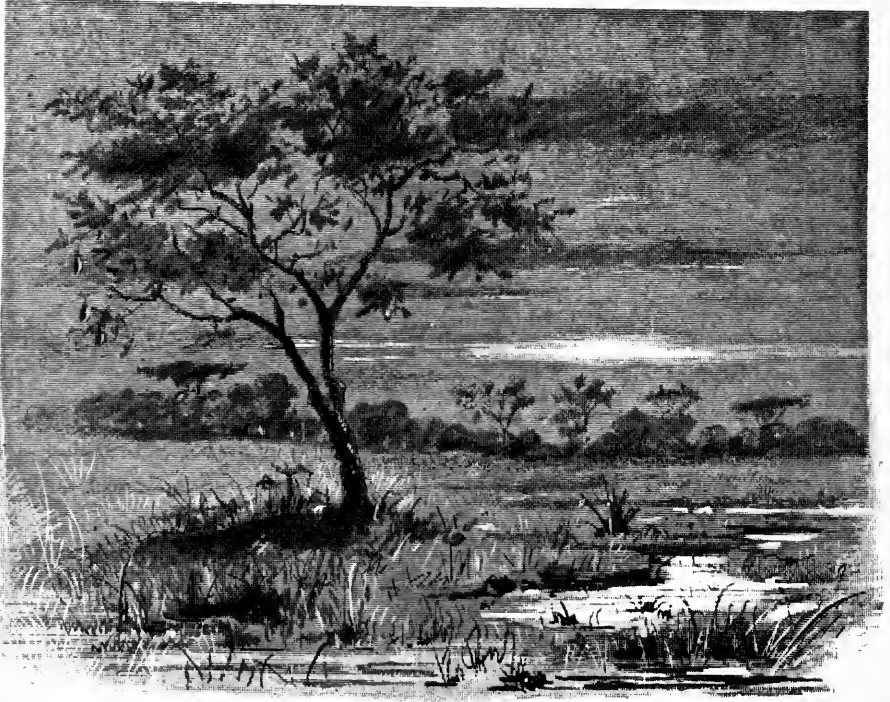


again, making the Komati river soon before noon. This we, having the lightest wagon, crossed first, and though we got a heavy jolting over the rough, rocky bottom, managed all right. Pan, however, who was riding 'Moscow,' getting into a deep hole got a thorough ducking. On looking back we saw that MacIntyre's wagon had stuck fast, whilst O'Grady, sweeping too far down the stream, had got his off-hind wheel into a hole and a capsize seemed more than likely ; however we at once sent back our span to help, and after twenty minutes of the usual row and profanity both were hauled safe to bank. The river was just 170 yards wide where we crossed, the depth varying from three to four feet, with deep holes on either side of the drift (ford). The Komati is distant by road some eighty-seven miles from Spitzkop, its level about 500 feet above the sea at this point. On the eastern side of the Komati is the Portuguese custom-house, where there are stationed a couple of their officers. We addressed the one who came to meet us in French, which he spoke very well ; he then introduced us to the com-

mandant, both capital company, and we fraternised for the rest of the day. Trouble with the baggage we had none, the statement that we had no contraband with us being accepted as quite sufficient.

From this point the range of the Lebombo Mountains was visible, and leaving the river in the evening and passing through a flat, park-like country, we reached the foot at nine o'clock. The Lebombo is a low ridge of basaltic hills, their height apparently nowhere more than some 400 feet, the highest point on the road over indeed is only 280 feet above the western base, the eastern being 60 feet lower. We started in the morning again soon after nine, crossing a sluggish little stream about ten, near which were two large and very old mimosas, a capital landmark. The stream was covered with blue water-lilies, whilst all round were magnificent bulbs in bloom, one red one being especially handsome, consisting of a circular disc of scarlet bells on a green stalk some 4 feet high. The road ran from this up a narrowing, well-wooded valley, which we followed until noon, spanning out at the summit of the road over the Lebombo. Here we remained until six, when we made an evening trek of two hours and a half, starting again at four in the morning, passing over low spurs on the eastern flank of the hills and spanning out at six o'clock at the entrance of a narrow gorge. Down this ran a stream that had cut for itself a channel some seven yards wide in the solid crystalline rock. The vegetation here was luxurious, huge euphorbias towering above the thick bush and scrub, with lovely aloes and bulbs in brilliant bloom. Here, too, were numbers of the fever-tree, mimosa of evil name, to sleep below whose branches is said to be certain death, and inasmuch as the tree itself grows in marshy ground or by the edge of stagnant pools, the statement is probably often correct. The look of the tree itself is enough moreover to give it a bad name, the trunk and branches being of a sickly greenish-yellow hue, covered with a light powder of the same colour that comes off readily on the hands or clothes. The foliage also is of light sickly green, of a feathery class, looking by moonlight like strata of vapour floating around the pale spectral trunk. As if to add to its bad character, the crimson stinking fungus is frequently found growing at its foot, of which no man with any sense of smell would pick twice with the hand.

At about half-past one we started on our way, following the course of the stream down a narrow valley about a mile long; the bottom was for the most part marshy, but here and there the bed of the stream came to the surface, forming deepish rock pools, in which water is found all



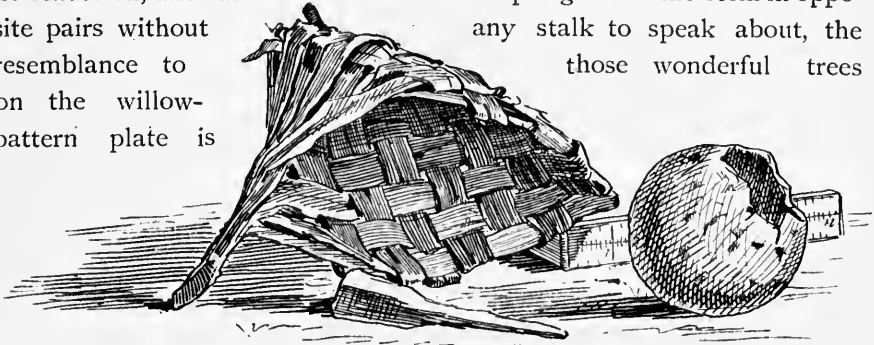
The Fever Tree.

the winter through. A ruined house, with a large sycamore fig beside it, showed that there must have been a station here in old days. After leaving the valley the bush was not so thick, but the road on the wet black soil, lately moistened by rain, was extremely heavy and must in the rains be absolutely impassable. There were about three miles of this, and then we passed over broad bands of red gravel, each a couple of hundred yards or so wide and of great length, almost free from bush, spanning out an hour before sundown. We were now about 114 miles from Spitzkop and but 400 feet above sea-level.

Beyond this, patches of fly were again reported by several transport riders, on their way with wagons from the coast, and so at half-past six we started on the road again, travelling till nearly ten. The road for the most part was soft, with muddy creeks at intervals, the air moist and warm, and for the first time on the journey we saw the dwarf palm from which the natives make the wine. We camped out by Pisene's Spruit, a nasty marshy spot, where the bull-frogs made infinitely more noise than even the lions had at Intomane. Their chorus is perhaps the more irritating because not constant. For a few moments there is comparative silence, then one with bell-like note will be heard, responded to by

a harsh roar or two, and as thousands of other voices join in, the din becomes simply infernal, to fall gradually down to silence, when the awful process is repeated during the entire night.

We none of us cared to remain long in this spot, and on starting, about four in the morning, Pill went round the camp, religiously administering to all hands a dose of his own dispensing, of quinine and whisky, that he swore by as a perfect safeguard against fever. We now, to our delight, got on a good firm road, which lasted over two miles, and near the end of which was a small store and house (Barnett's), and then came into heavy sand, on which grew large numbers of the small fan-palm, and where for the first time we made the acquaintance of the monkey orange. This fruit, about the size of a large orange, grows on a tree from 25 to 30 feet high. In September, when we saw it, the tree had no leaves on, and as the fruit springs from the stem in opposite pairs without any stalk to speak of, the resemblance to those wonderful trees on the willow-pattern plate is



ludicrous. The shell, or rind, of the fruit is as that of the gourd, and inside are lobes of yellow pulp with a hard kernel in each, like those of the 'Jack' fruit in Madras; the flavour is not unpleasant, having a faint savour of pineapple, with the same sub-acid flavour. When cleaned out and dried the gourd-like rind makes a capital cup.

Here, too, we first saw the process of the palm-wine extraction. One of the dwarf trees having been selected, the top is sliced off or deeply cut into. Over this is placed, to shield it from the drying effect of wind and sun, a cap, as shown in the sketch above, plaited from one of the fan-like leaves. A dripping gutter is also cut from a frond of the leaf and inserted just below the cut portion. Under the drip is placed the shell of a monkey orange. The wine, or rather 'must,' when first made, is a pleasant sub-acid sherbet-like drink, but I confess we did not care much for it as a beverage after fermentation. The method of ascertaining which of the hundreds of the palms around has been tapped

and is on draught is simple enough to the thirsty soul, for over and around each ever hovers a cloud of butterflies and other insects attracted by the smell of the juice.

About an hour after our start we came to the first marsh, which we skirted until seven o'clock, then outspanning by a small canteen (Shepherd's) some 127 miles from Spitzkop. At this point a road leaves for the Matolla river, striking it at a point to which lighters can sail from Lourenço Marques, sixteen miles from that place.

We started from Shepherd's a little before noon, passing many wagons on their way up, and travelling over a heavy, sandy flat, covered with the mimosas, principally of the 'flat-top' type, reached the side of the Matolla river or swamp about two, crossed it, and spanned out on the opposite bank. This creek or marsh is some 250 yards wide, and is crossed by a causeway 10 feet in breadth, and 4 or 5 feet above the level of the water. Midway there is a sluggish stream spanned by a bridge 20 feet wide. On the banks the vegetation assumes a tropical character, with tall palms, bamboos &c., midst which twine and festoon in every direction those curious creepers usually known by the name of 'monkey ropes,' whilst the upper branches of the trees are weighted down with lovely floral parasites.

The smell of the place was close and heavy. A more unhealthy-looking spot it would be hard to find, and glad were we to hurry off from all the beauty of its forest at about dusk, fortified by a strong dose of Pill's panacea.

We now traversed a sandy tract, where there were many native huts with patches of cultivation, principally of mealies and Kafir corn, and at three miles from the marsh found a well with good sweet water—a great treat after the varieties we had experienced on our way—only drunk, by Pill's order, in the form of cold tea or with a judicious admixture of the old whisky. We camped out at a quarter to nine.

Next morning we were off three-quarters of an hour before sunrise. Cultivation now became more frequent, as did shops and houses, owned for the most part by Parsees from Bombay; and when we halted at half-past six the sea itself, with vessels at anchor, was in sight. Breakfast over, we left at half-past nine, crossing, 2,000 yards farther on, the Infulane marsh at a mile from the bay. This creek or marsh

is also crossed by a causeway, nearly a mile and a half long, with a small brick arch in the middle, of about ten feet span. The condition of this causeway, as of the previous one, though not perfect, was very creditable to the Portuguese authorities. The bottom is extremely soft, and the roadway constantly sinks into it, cracking and breaking up as it descends, so that wagons and labourers have to be steadily employed carrying trees and stone to keep it in something like condition.

Our road now followed a sandy track, with patches of cultivation and many huts, the first tiled house being passed at a little after eleven, and at twenty minutes to twelve the town of Lourenço Marques itself was visible. The houses are mostly whitewashed, with blue borders to the eaves, windows, &c., and, being roofed with red tiles, the effect, as seen through the many palm trees, was extremely pretty. However, I confess we did not stay long to gaze at it, but hurried on, and a little after twelve found ourselves in the dining-room of the Hotel Marina, receiving many congratulations on our good luck on the trip, as we had lost neither horse nor ox, whilst the health of the whole party had been perfect; indeed the only casualty occurred to a native, who, walking without shoes, had stepped on a thorn, which Pill, after cutting down through the fellow's hoof—I use the term 'hoof' advisedly—with the object of extracting the broken point, stated must have penetrated an inch at least. The man, I may add, was sound again within twenty-four hours.

As far as external appearances go, Lourenço Marques is a pleasant enough little town with, as I mentioned above, white- and colour-washed houses and red-tiled roofs. The streets are not easy, being for the most part ankle-deep in sand that on a warm day makes walking a burden; whilst for the most part walk one must, owing to the scarcity of horses, to which the climate is simply deadly. Including our two, there were eight in the place when we were there. The town is built upon a spit of land separated from the high ground above (called, after the similar hill in Durban, the 'Berea') by a narrow marsh, across which the road is carried by a causeway. It faces the 'Spirito Santo,' or 'English' river, and is provided with a short jetty for the convenience of landing, the river being at this point about three-quarters of a mile broad.

The English river is some eight miles long, only taking that name below the junction of Matolla, Lourenço Marques, and Tembe rivers, six miles above the town.



The sketch above is made from a photograph taken on the Berea about half-way between the town and Reuben's Point, the northern cliff at the river mouth and at which the landlocked portion of the harbour commences. As a port the English river comes very near perfection. Just opposite the town is good anchorage, with a depth varying from 30 feet, 200 yards from the shore, to 70 feet in the deepest part, as mentioned above. This portion of the bay, which is absolutely landlocked, is about 500 acres in extent. The entrance is broad, with a depth on the bar of some 28 feet at high water, and sheltered anchorage outside. On the Berea is a station of the Eastern Telegraph Company, whose vessel is also anchored in the river, and pleasant enough it was to receive at breakfast, the morning after our arrival, a reply to a message despatched to London the evening before.

Lourenço Marques is distant from Spitzkop 139 miles, and from Barberton 135, the distance to the latter from Durban, the next nearest port, being 465; but even the Durban harbour can never be made to compete with that of Delagoa Bay, which is, practically speaking, the only natural harbour along 3,000 miles of coast, and is the key to the Transvaal.

Here we spent the next four or five days, two of us amusing ourselves in boating, either round Reuben's Point—whence the sea is open to the South Indian Ocean, the comparatively narrow mouth of the bay being about twenty miles distance—or to the other side of the river, just outside the beacon, where there are any quantity of fair oysters and dark

openers, whilst Pencil was busy taking the time and finding the errors of his chronometer. Still I must say that it was with light step that one afternoon I walked to the hotel from the jetty, making less of the sand than usual, and tossing a shilling to the little town-crier, who had so often amused us with his bell and utter ignorance of any language, never dreaming of the immortality destined for him in an initial letter—with light step, I say, for I was on my way to the Marina, with the news that the indicating flag had just been run up at the flagstaff above, showing that the 'Melrose' was entering the bay. She came in that evening. We had our last dinner together and a somewhat wistful farewell on the vessel next day, for two of our number were off on their return journey to Barberton, and those best of good fellows, MacIntyre and O'Grady, were to start back again as soon as their wagons could be loaded up. A last warm hand-shake all round, and then, as soon as they were safe in their shore boat, the ladder was hoisted up, and that evening I dined off Inyach Island, listening to one of Captain Rose's capital yarns on my way to Durban.

GEORGE KILGOUR.

John Bull's Purse-strings

THE guardian of the purse-strings should be a Cerberus of expenditure. In national affairs Parliament ought to be the watchdog, and those members of her Majesty's Government who preside over the various departments should assist Parliament, by a trained, intelligent, and thorough supervision of the expenditure in that section of the State machinery for the efficiency of which they have accepted the responsibility. In practice, unfortunately, the members who very frequently secure office are not necessarily, if at all, capable administrators. They are too frequently selected because they happen to possess the gift of speech, or are thought to have, to some extent at any rate, the ear of the House of Commons. It would be cruel though just to mention by name the men of to-day who have thus held office to the great injury of the nation, and who continue to pose as authorities upon subjects which they have grossly mismanaged, and of which in many cases they are practically ignorant, although they have nominally controlled them when in office. If the present system continues it will become essential, if the nation is ever to come by its own, to specifically name every man who has so held office and has failed to discharge his duty to the country. This information will have to be supplemented by a precise statement of all the abuses continued and extended during the time each had control of any department of the State, together with a full *exposé* of where each failed and why he failed.

It being no part of our present purpose to make these painful revelations, we will content ourselves with a brief description of how a Government office is constituted and worked. At the head of the great State departments are the Parliamentary chiefs, who are also members of the Cabinet. Parliamentary chiefs consist of two kinds—men who conscientiously endeavour to learn their work, and having done so to institute and enforce necessary reforms, and men who know absolutely nothing of business or administration, and who hold and act upon the belief that their function is to be a sort of puppet in the hands of the permanent official. These permanent officials are also of two classes—the really efficient who have carefully trained themselves in their duties, and who earnestly desire to secure and promote efficiency, and the schemers, who

regard the Civil Service as a safe refuge which leads to a pension whatever happens, and who are indoctrinated with the idea that promotion and pay can be secured much more rapidly by intrigue than by work. Unfortunately the first class of officials are as rare as they are valuable, whilst the second, especially in a great department like the Admiralty, are often so numerous that the office becomes a nest of intrigues and petty cliques, each warring against the other, to the neglect of the country's business and the abuse of the nation's trust.

Unfortunately circumstances favour the perpetuation of this abominable system. Theory declares that Parliament is supreme, and that nothing must be permitted to interfere with the responsibility of Cabinets or of individual Ministers in the discharge of their public duties. If this theory could be carried out to its logical conclusion, efficiency would no doubt result. As it is, it fosters abuses of the grossest and gravest kind, by perpetuating the evils of irresponsibility and the neglect of important duties, often highly remunerated, which are rarely discharged with thoroughness and conscientious zeal. If there is anything in the theory—and of course much may be said for it—then it should be as certain as that night follows day, that every individual Minister should be strictly held to be personally responsible for every failure in his department, and should, in gross cases, end his days in prison, or terminate his existence on the gallows. Of course the retribution and punishment which would be thus meted out to Ministers would be equally extended to the Civil servants of the State, and in such circumstances juries would certainly find a verdict in accordance with the evidence. Nowadays juries have been found to hold in certain notorious cases, where they have had no doubt of the guilt of the person charged with a breach of trust, that no doubt the man was guilty, but it would be unfair to punish one where a whole system and many connected with it were equally blameworthy. Further, when a Parliamentary chief of a great Government department knows his work and endeavours to do it thoroughly, he finds himself quietly opposed by the permanent officials. Should he persist, then certain important changes may result, which are too often rendered nugatory by a change of Ministry, and the instalment in his place of a know-nothing or an amiable idler. The second class of Parliamentary chiefs, those weaker brethren, hold by the theory that their reputations depend upon the co-operation and assistance of the permanent officials, and so they adopt the lotus-eater's policy of doing precisely as they are told. If the Civil Service system provided for the exhibition of individual capacity, zeal, and work—permitted men to

rise on their merits, and promoted self-respect in all by the institution of a provident pension system—it might be well for the country to consider the Parliamentary chief a mere figure-head or lay figure, and to leave the administration of the State in the hands of the paid officials, who would then represent the best brains the system could evolve by an actual test of individual merit. As it is, many officials do no real work whatever, and many more engineer their way to the top by intrigues of all kinds, which may be roughly described as the 'reorganisation of office' dodge, a method as scandalous in its results as it is costly to the taxpayer.

Things being so, it is not surprising that the national purse-strings are not controlled as they should be, and that waste and extravagance prevail almost everywhere. John Bull in this matter is very much like a successful professional man. He is enabled to secure an income more than adequate to meet his requirements and to cover his expenditure. Unfortunately for him, his wife is an extravagant manageress or a bad housekeeper, and so he finds, that no matter how large his income may be, the growth in the waste and extravagance of his household usually exceeds the growth in his income; whereas his neighbour and rival, with half the income, who is blessed with a practical wife and good housekeeper, is steadily accumulating a fortune. Nor is this all, for whereas the man with the largest income spends lavishly, his receptions are not nearly so attractive or excellent as those of his rival, who spends considerably less than half as much upon such matters. England to-day has a most extravagant housewife, whose long-continued iniquities cry aloud for judgment, and should lead to an immediate divorce. How this state of affairs has been brought about, and how it may be remedied, will become apparent as this article proceeds.

The nation is now convinced that the public departments of the State, and especially those which are known as the great spending departments—that is, the War Office and Admiralty—are so mismanaged as a whole as to produce a maximum of waste with the minimum of result. In seeking the true cause of this lamentable state of affairs we must go back to the days of William Lowndes, Secretary of the Treasury in the reigns of King William III., Queen Anne, and King George III. Lowndes is declared by the Earl of Chesterfield to have been the author of the saw 'Take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves.' The principle thus enunciated has done more than anything else to create the system of red tape which has gradually produced the lamentable

waste and enormous expenditure from which the nation at present suffers. Persons of small income, and tradesmen in business, have no doubt discovered that Lowndes's principle has in practice produced large profits or reasonable comfort with small means. The general recognition of the principle has, however, caused the average Englishman to lose the power of wisely handling the pounds when they amount to hundreds of thousands or millions sterling. Hence it is that at the present time the House of Commons presents the spectacle of a number of gentlemen devoting hundreds of hours of valuable time to the discussion of miserably small and relatively unimportant items in Committee of Supply. What can the intelligent observer think of members of Parliament, who will spend not one but several hours in discussing an item of 12*l.* for water supply to protect a public building, whilst evidence accumulates to prove that the House of Commons practically exercises no real control over the expenditure of millions by the great spending departments. The recent stranding of H.M.S. 'Sultan,' and the loss of that important war-ship, is a case in point. We have good reason to believe that the wreck of this vessel is initially due to the peddling economy which characterises many of the instructions issued by the Admiralty. Some wiseacre caused an instruction to be sent to the officers in charge of H.M.'s fleets in various parts of the world, to carry on torpedo practice in shallow waters. Why? Because the risk to the ships so engaged was regarded as a relatively indifferent matter compared with the loss of a torpedo, which might occur did the practice take place in deep water. This practical illustration of the penny-wise and pound-foolish policy, which red-tapeism produces, should cause a revulsion of feeling on the part of the people at large, who will then insist upon an entire reversal of the present system of administration, and the retirement of those whose presence in office as permanent officials must perpetuate it. A great war-ship nowadays often costs in round numbers half a million sterling, whilst the price of a torpedo may be put down at 300*l.*; yet the Admiralty wiseacres have become so hardened and shortsighted, that an important modern war-ship like the 'Sultan' is sacrificed to a policy which considers the risk of losing property valued at 300*l.* a more important matter than the preservation of one which has cost a thousand times as much.

The truth is that ordinary people, who can be very shrewd and capable when handling hundreds of pounds, grow nervous when they handle thousands, and become absolutely lost, so far as the power to exercise any control is concerned, when millions have to be dealt with.

Hence we see members of Parliament, in pursuance of the practice established by Lowndes, taking enormous credit to themselves for wasting their own and the nation's time in haggling over torpedoes, because it is fair to assume they are either incapable or frightened to tackle, in any effective and continuous way, the enormous sums annually sunk in the production of ships of war. The Right Hon. H. H. Fowler has recently shown, that the net result to the nation, so far as reduction of expenditure is concerned, from the discussions in Supply, as at present conducted, is so insignificant as to be ridiculous. Anyone who will take the trouble to investigate the causes which have produced this lamentable result must admit, as a matter of evidence, that the origin of this state of affairs is to be found in the absence of an opportunity and system which enables members of Parliament who are intelligent and conscientious to acquire a knowledge of the system upon which public expenditure is conducted, and so to place themselves in a position to criticise the estimates with real effect. We may then assume at the outset, that however sound Lowndes's principle may be in relatively small affairs, it becomes positively harmful when applied to those of a great nation like England. We may further assume as true, that at the present time Parliament is powerless to control John Bull's purse-strings, because it has neither the machinery nor the knowledge to enable it to undertake the work.

It will be in the remembrance of most people, that the scandals connected with the conduct of the financial business of the Admiralty began to attract attention some six years ago, when it was discovered that there was a deficiency of something like a million sterling in the vote of credit for naval purposes. This discovery led to the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, of which Mr. Goschen was the chairman. The revelations of this Committee caused a considerable shock to the public, who for the first time realised that there was no financial control or proper audit at the Admiralty. One result of this was the appointment of a departmental committee, and the issue of an Order in Council which provided the country with what the authorities described as a 'strengthened' Accountant-General of the Navy. The ridiculous character of these changes soon, however, became apparent, but notwithstanding this fact they continue in force at the present moment. For the benefit of sceptics, however, it may be well to specifically prove our assertion on this point. Speaking in the House of Commons, on July 28, 1885, the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord George Hamilton, said: 'The Accountant-General of the Navy is at present the only permanent

official charged with the duty of checking and controlling the expenditure of all the departments of the Admiralty.' Four days earlier the Accountant-General, Sir Gerald Fitzgerald, in the course of his evidence, stated: 'There is no permanent official who is responsible for the control of the expenditure, but each head of a department has the control over his own. I am not responsible.' This astounding conflict between the two first authorities on the subject in the Admiralty Office has ripened and deepened since, and the First Lord found it necessary to ask the Accountant-General of the Navy, in consequence of the evidence he gave before the Navy Committee of the House of Commons last year, whether he considered himself a Treasury or an Admiralty official? Later still, within the last three weeks, it has been shown in Parliament and the press, that the new Admiralty proposals for strengthening the Navy, as set forth in the speech of the First Lord of the Admiralty, in the replies of the Financial Secretary of the Admiralty, in the Navy Estimates, and lastly in Lord Randolph Churchill's return just issued, differ so widely, that between the figures given by Lord George Hamilton and Mr. Forwood there is a trifling difference of nine millions sterling. Men of business will not hesitate to conclude, from this bare recital of the facts, that the absence of financial control at the Admiralty is as crying an abuse to-day as it was six years ago, despite all that has happened since. The nation has no security for the economical expenditure of naval funds at the present time, and never obtains a clear business statement of naval expenditure.

We have digressed however, and must now proceed to consider what Parliament has done during these six years to assert its control over the great spending departments.

The scandal of the deficiency of one million in the vote of credit, followed by the report of Mr. Goschen's Committee thereon, excited much interest. This interest was focussed and brought to a head by the resignation of the Chancellorship of the Exchequer with the leadership of the House of Commons by Lord Randolph Churchill in December 1886. Lord Randolph felt that public opinion demanded tangible evidence that the administration of the War Office and Admiralty was so organised as to ensure that the funds asked for were judiciously applied. Investigation and reform were, however, resisted, and Lord Randolph took the bold and patriotic step of resigning his position in the Government, as an emphatic protest against the extravagance and inefficiency he believed to be rife. This action of Lord Randolph Churchill excited immense attention, and resulted in much unfair criticism and

comment from ill-informed quarters. It is of historical interest that it should be recorded that Lord Randolph's action in this matter was not only not due to any objection on his part to vote funds for army and navy purposes, but was brought about by a feeling, which he then had, and which fuller and more accurate knowledge has justified up to the hilt, that until extravagance and inefficiency are effectually prevented, no amount of money will provide England with an adequate fleet or with an army fully equipped and ready for action at any moment. We share Lord Randolph Churchill's view on this point, and are perfectly certain, that so long as some few men are allowed to perpetuate the evils of the old bad system at the War Office and Admiralty—upon which they have thrived for so many years at the country's expense—neither arms, ammunition, nor defence works, nor an efficient army and navy, will be forthcoming. We make bold to say, in this connection, that if the management of the finances of the War Office and Admiralty were handed over to a good, capable financier and trained administrator, if he were given a free hand for ten years, with adequate authority to enforce his system, then an efficient fleet and army would be provided without difficulty or delay, and the expenditure upon the military and naval services might easily be reduced by some five millions per annum. This five millions represents the waste of the present, based upon the abuses and evils of the past. Lord Randolph Churchill has rendered good service to his day and generation in several directions, but in none has he deserved the national gratitude more, than by throwing aside all personal ambitions, emoluments and advantages, to enable him to devote his whole strength and sustained endeavour to destroy the giants of Castle Squander. Every man of business must know that it is not infrequently a misfortune to have too large a capital in an undertaking, and that efficiency and prosperity are synonymous terms where results have to be secured. This holds good in the case of the great spending departments of the country, and until we secure efficiency of administration, no sum of money, though it might amount to any number of millions, will give the country adequate defence works, or war-ships, or, indeed, anything, except that which the indomitable spirit of England's sons may be able to provide at the supreme moment of attack.

We have expressed our view strongly, because a lengthened study of this question, and a full knowledge of the internal and external circumstances which control the Admiralty and War Office, convince us that a clean sweep must be made, once for all, in various directions, if the nation is ever to come by its own again. The greatness of the personal sacrifice in Lord Randolph Churchill's case was justified by the

peril to the nation which the then and present unreformed system involves. His patriotism and sincerity in this matter have not been recognised as yet by the people, but we make bold to say that, when all the facts connected with his resignation and subsequent proceedings are known, he will, if he lives, deservedly become one of the most popular and trusted of English statesmen.

Let us now consider what Parliament has done since Lord Randolph's resignation and other circumstances awoke it in some measure to the fact that it had practically no control over the great spending departments. On the assembling of Parliament, in February 1887, pledges were given by the Government, that the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War should issue a memorandum explanatory of the estimates before submitting them to the House of Commons. It was further promised to refer the Army and Navy Estimates to a Select Committee of nineteen, with power to send for persons, papers, and records. This Committee was appointed on June 6, and we shall give an account of its work later. In the next session of Parliament, 1888, contrary to precedent, and to the no small detriment of the public interests, the Army Estimates were referred to one Select Committee and the Navy Estimates to another. This error was brought about by two causes. The permanent officials knew perfectly well that if one Committee only continued to sit session after session, every question involved must be thrashed out and brought to light, owing to the fulness of knowledge which the members must ultimately acquire. It would not be possible with one Committee, as had been the case from time immemorial, to so mix matters as to enable the officials ever to say, 'At this stage, the business having passed from the Admiralty to the War Office,' or *vice versa*, 'this Committee has no further jurisdiction.' Every matter would be within the jurisdiction of such a Committee, and the fullest light must therefore be thrown upon every corner of both and each of the departments. The most recent example of the old bad system of shunt is furnished by the return of naval expenditure, No. 444, of 1888, which purports to give the actual naval expenditure, including that incurred on armaments, fittings, &c., and indeed everything. A reference to this return will show, that it is not by any means a full statement of naval expenditure, and that the expenditure upon armaments, because it was formerly included in the Army votes, is not given at all. This concealment and suppression of the real facts are the key-notes of the present system, and neither Parliament nor any person, however capable, can arrive at the true facts, because the accounts are still rendered in such a form as to prevent the discovery of the actual

position of affairs during any of the periods to which they relate. In these circumstances it is impossible to make any one individual directly responsible for any single error or abuse, and as the continuous sitting of a Select Committee on the Army and Navy Estimates would have destroyed this system, the permanent officials were stated to be persistently opposed to its continuance. Another cause was the feeling, on the part of certain members of the Committee, that they could not, without serious inconvenience, give the necessary time to master the situation by closely examining the estimates for both the Army and Navy, and although they had put their hands to the plough, they ran away after a year's experience of the work. Hence two Select Committees, in lieu of one, were appointed last session. For reasons which we will explain directly, when Parliament reassembled in February of the present year it soon became apparent that this Session there were to be no Committees of any kind whose duty it would be to examine the Army and Navy Estimates. No reason has been publicly given, but the fact is a lamentable one, although, in our opinion, it is better to tell the country that Parliament is tired of doing its duty in this matter, rather than to have two relatively weak Select Committees, instead of one united and strong body, which knows its work and insists upon doing it. It cannot be satisfactory, from any point of view, however, that in the very year when the Government of the day proposes to spend thirty and a half millions upon new war-ships and armaments, the House of Commons should voluntarily forego the control it has exercised of late years through the Select Committees referred to.

We must now briefly review the work of the Army and Navy Committee appointed in 1887. Lord Randolph Churchill was elected chairman, and the evidence soon forthcoming attracted and fixed public attention. It is interesting in this connection to record, that at the commencement of the agitation against the wasteful extravagance of the Admiralty in 1884-85, some of the most representative of the political leaders on both sides of the House held this view :—they declared it to be their experience that the system at the War Office was as near perfection as any reasonable man could expect, and that it was quite unnecessary to appoint a Finance Lord of the Admiralty, because a modification of that system on the model of the War Office would secure efficiency of administration at the Admiralty. Lord Randolph's Committee very soon exploded this view, although it is just to say that the War Office possesses some most able permanent officials.

In two brief months the Committee elicited that the following

extraordinary facts were true of this model Government Department and the matters over which it exercises jurisdiction:—(1) that though the Army Estimates for the current year showed a decrease of half a million, there had been no decrease; (2) that it would be impossible for any but an expert to discover that since 1870 the increase in the estimates had amounted to nearly nine millions sterling; (3) that it cost 5,000*l.* a year to superintend what it cost 250*l.* to do; (4) that the cost of the English War Office was 255,000*l.* a year, whilst the corresponding staff in Germany only cost 160,000*l.*, although the British army numbered 150,000 men against the two millions of the German army; (5) that the expenditure on administration of the army had increased since 1871–1872 by 86,000*l.*, the increase in the cost of the War Office since 1880 having amounted to no less than 38,000*l.*; (6) the official head of all the Government manufacturing establishments at Woolwich, Enfield, Birmingham, and Waltham, which were absolutely under his control, admitted he had never been in any manufacturing department himself before his appointment; (7) with a net army expenditure of only seven millions less than that of the German Empire, England had not ready to hand a single army corps, whilst Germany had nineteen; (8) the effective expenditure on the German army was nineteen millions and a half, and that on the English army was 14,600,000*l.* For her nineteen millions Germany gets nineteen army corps of 37,000 men each; and for her fourteen millions and a half England would scarcely be able to put one corps of 30,000 men in the field; (10) 30,000*l.* was annually spent in keeping and producing accounts connected with the arsenal and other manufacturing establishments, but these accounts had never been submitted to the Comptroller and Auditor-general for audit; they did not agree with the estimates or appropriation accounts and were for all practical purposes useless; (11) the money voted to the War Office for supplying naval ordnance had often been expended on other matters, and there was a deficiency in the supply of guns, ammunition, &c., of at least 1,500,000*l.*; (12) the vocabulary of prices on which the contracts of the War Office were based was so prepared as to make the figures worthless, except so far as they have enabled contractors to charge exorbitant prices for many articles included in it which they have supplied.

All this and much more was brought to light in a few weeks' time, and much consternation and disgust resulted. Of course reorganisations have since been reported to Parliament generally entailing the promotion of certain officials, and an increase of their pay. But a recent step on the part of the War Office goes far to prove that the old bad

system is about to reassert itself in the Ordnance Department, if it has not done so already, and probably elsewhere besides. The Army and Navy Committee made several reports to Parliament, each accompanied by many important documents, which have never received the attention they merit.

In the following year (1888) the effect of referring the Army Estimates to one Select Committee and the Navy Estimates to another was soon felt. The public interest and the interest of individual members of the Committees began to flag, and in the result neither committee did effective work in the cause of economy. The failure of the Navy Estimates Committee was almost ludicrous, and the intolerance, not to say insolence, of some of the witnesses when giving evidence was remarkable, and made those who witnessed it on one notable occasion wonder that members of Parliament would submit to such treatment from anyone, much less from servants of the State. One useful experience has resulted. It is an absolute mistake to appoint anyone as chairman of a Select Committee of this character who is not absolutely independent of official influences and who does not bring to bear upon the questions at issue enthusiasm and zeal. The work of this Committee was so arranged that they never really came to the most important votes, even vote 8 being dealt with imperfectly, and vote 9, the Ordnance vote, which demanded the closest scrutiny, owing to the notorious state of muddle into which the armaments of the Navy had been allowed to drift, and vote 13, under which 212,512*l.* was to be spent upon Admiralty salaries, including 52,064*l.* for the Accountant-General's department, was never inquired into at all. This result was in marked contrast to the proceedings of the Army and Navy Estimates Committee of the previous session, and was due to the inexcusable waste of time at the earlier stages of the inquiry, in which the chairman permitted witnesses to indulge to the fullest extent. The proceedings, so far as they went, revealed a great conflict of authority in the Controller's and Constructor's department of the Navy, and proved, that if anything went wrong no one could be held personally responsible for the efficiency of the ships afloat, for the design or construction of ships, for the keeping ships' machinery in efficient working order, or for providing and maintaining their guns and ammunition. Things were proved to be in such a muddle at the Admiralty, that in case of a mistake it is possible for each and every official to say: 'Whoever else may be responsible for it, I, at least, am free from blame.'

We dealt at length with vote 9 of the Navy Estimates in 'The

Great Gun Muddle' article published in February,¹ and need not further supplement the Committee's failure on that point.

So far as vote 13 is concerned it is a plain duty to endeavour to arouse public indignation by throwing some light upon the enormity of a system which permits and fosters abuses so scandalous as to be almost past belief. Mr. Burt's return showing 'the retirements and transfers' and so-called 'reductions,' with the fresh appointments, 'in the department of the Accountant-General of the Navy,' when analysed, gives the following facts:—There have been three principal reorganisations—(1) In 1869-70, when a large number of clerks were either retired or removed to other offices, by which 9,000*l.* a year was added to the pension list, and fresh appointments were made costing 8,000*l.* a year, whilst the pay of the clerical staff was largely increased. On November 29, 1879, an Order in Council was obtained which authorised the Admiralty, for the first time, to make such changes in the establishment as my Lords from time to time might deem necessary. This resulted in reorganisation (2), when sixty-five officials and clerks, many of them under fifty years of age, were pensioned, several receiving bonuses, at a cost of 20,097*l.* a year in pensions, and 52,199*l.* in bonuses, for which outlay the public received no return whatever. The cost was further increased by numerous promotions at advanced rates of pay, and by an increase of the salaries of the lower division clerks in lieu of those pensioned; so that the actual number employed, despite the sixty-five retirements, was only reduced from 256 to 246. The authorities took credit to themselves for reductions of salaries from 71,456*l.* to 55,924*l.*, a saving of 15,523*l.* per annum, although there was really an increase of 4,574*l.* in the annual charge in addition to a capital payment of 52,199*l.* for bonuses. Five years later another reorganisation (3) took place, when the salaries were again largely augmented, the pension vote being increased by 1,518*l.* a year. The authorities, however, declared that the establishment had been reduced in numbers from 250 to 222, and the annual cost from 57,745*l.* (to which it had again risen, in consequence of the increase of salaries during the five years) to 53,250*l.* The real facts were, however, that the staff was in reality increased to 263, and the salaries to 63,651*l.*, because 41 clerks, with salaries amounting to 9,401*l.* a year, were transferred to other departments at the Admiralty which did not require their services, and would have been glad to have got rid of them. This was done, no doubt, to enable certain officials to occupy the new appointments then made at larger salaries, as the scheme provided the Accountant-

¹ Vide previous article, *Universal Review* for February, p. 177 *et seq.*

General with five assistants—viz. one Deputy Accountant-General at 1,200*l.* a year, two Assistant Accountants-General and one Acting-Assistant Accountant-General at 1,000*l.* a year each, and one Inspector of Yards' Accounts at 700*l.* to 800*l.* a year. We have no space to do more than recite the bare facts here, but the practical effect upon the taxpayers' pockets may be realised, by reducing the bonuses and pensions under the reorganisations of 1879 and 1885 to their present redeemable value, which exceeds 300,000*l.*, for which a modern steel-armoured ship of the 'Conqueror' type might have been added to the navy. It must further be remembered, that the 'strengthened' Accountant-General and his department are the financial experts who have presumably supplied Parliament and the country with the many and contradictory sets of figures relating to the new Naval programme which have so mystified the nation during the past few weeks.

We have surely said enough to show that the present state of affairs must be reformed by the introduction of radical changes in the methods of checking expenditure adopted by the House of Commons. These changes must be so devised as to react through all the departments of the State, and so to perpetuate the enforcement of effective financial control throughout the Civil Service, and especially in the great spending departments. Impatient critics may reply, 'Parliament has too much to do already, and the subject, though important, is one of departmental rather than imperial interest.' The best reply to such criticism is a brief statement of the figures, to which we maintain Parliament must direct its immediate attention. According to a Treasury minute of September 1886, the Army and Navy Estimates amounted in 1847-48 to 17,155,000*l.*, and these estimates had increased in 1886-87 to 31,226,000*l.*, an increase of about 90 per cent. as compared with forty years ago. Deducting the charges for the National Debt (26,615,000*l.*) from the total expenditure of 1886-87, and the national outgoings stand at the sum of 51,750,000*l.*, of which 32,000,000*l.*, in round numbers, represents naval and military expenditure. In other words, the expenditure upon the Army and Navy at the present time amounts to upwards of three-fifths of the whole of the national expenditure, for effective purposes, a fact which must go far to convince everybody that Parliamentary control must be applied to this item of the national accounts, or the taxpayer will be soon overburdened, if he is not ruined, by this ever-increasing and as yet uncontrolled charge for purposes of defence. The present deadlock is due, as we have already hinted, to the ignorance of the former and present members of Parliament, not from any fault of their own, but because they have no real

opportunity for gaining an insight into the management of the great spending departments, as matters stand at present. Even the few members who succeed to office usually find it impossible, however earnest they may be in their work, to acquire a practical insight into affairs, without which they necessarily become an easy prey to the permanent officials. As we have hinted already, the Parliamentary chief is very much in the hands of his subordinates. If he shows too much zeal, they overwhelm him with details, as in the memorable case where a Secretary of State for War was so annoyed at the official answers put into his mouth, that he insisted upon all questions being brought to him in the first instance, that he might settle the answers on the facts. The result was, that when he arrived at his office one morning he found it covered with papers of all descriptions, and when he inquired the meaning of this, he was told that they were absolutely necessary to enable him to deal with the questions of the day. After struggling valiantly for a short time, the officials had their own way, and things reverted to the old system of misleading evasion which still prevails. If a determined man takes a great department in hand and insists upon reforms, one of two things probably happens:—a change of Government comes at the critical moment, and all his work is so rendered ineffective, if not useless; or the officials land him in a *cul de sac* by urging him on until he makes some rash and erroneous statement, which discredits him in the eyes of the outside world, and he is so brought to see the soundness of the view of the lotus-eaters of office, and to say in effect, 'The permanent officials have you at their mercy. They can make or mar the reputation of any Parliamentary chief, and he is therefore a wise man who takes things easily and follows their lead in everything.'

Ignorance, in short, is at the root of all the evils arising from the extravagant and shameful system existing at the Admiralty, especially at the present time. The second and almost as potent a force which makes for inefficiency arises from the fact, that the best men in the Civil Service are discouraged and disheartened by the continual successes attending the intrigues of the least worthy and most inefficient members of that body. This arises from the absence of effective control and the practical relinquishment by the State of the power to terminate their engagement with any official for reasonable cause shown. Let us try and find a remedy for both evils.

First, what should Parliament do to enable every member who wishes to educate himself to a knowledge of the administration of the great spending departments of the State, whilst he aids in securing

efficient financial control throughout the public service? We have shown that the defects so prominently brought to notice are primarily due to the following causes. 1. The apathy of Parliament. 2. The ineptitude and vagueness of Ministerial responsibility. 3. The division of opinion among experts, that is, among the permanent officials whose rivalries cause this result. 4. The autocracy of departmentalism, due to the absence of effective Parliamentary control. Parliament has shown increased zeal since it was rudely awakened to a sense of its shortcomings in shirking the responsibility of seeing that the resources of the country are properly developed for its defence. Debates upon Army and Navy Estimates, discussions in Supply, questions and motions of various kinds there have been in abundance, but no systematic examination of proposals has been possible. This want might be partly supplied by the appointment of Select Committees such as those we have referred to; but if this system is to be continued, it is indispensable that the causes which interfered with the efficient discharge of their duties in 1888 should not be permitted to recur. In any case the need would only be partially met by these Committees, and we must therefore search further for a remedy.

Hitherto Parliament has looked to the Treasury to regulate the Estimates, but it is obvious that under its present organisation the Treasury control is purely illusory, because it has no power to transfer its functions to the departmental officials. Hence, unless Parliament is prepared to deal with the subject itself, it is clear that no actual control over proposed Estimates can exist in any form or shape. The real solution of the difficulty will therefore be found in the creation of an Intelligence Department to be associated with the House itself, which would be charged with examining and reporting upon all Estimates *before* they are considered.

Parliament has studiously guarded itself in the matter of public accounts and expenditure, and invariably appoints a Public Accounts Committee to scrutinise them. The value of this Committee would be greatly diminished, were it not for the fact that it is assisted by the Controller and Auditor-General, an officer who is practically the head of the present Parliamentary department whose function it is to closely investigate expenditure *after* it has been incurred.

No one will deny the value of the scrutiny of the Public Accounts Committee as a check upon outlay for what has been done or supplied; in fact, it places a power in the hands of the Accounts Committee which it could not otherwise possess. If, however, Parliamentary control over

expenditure is to be real, rather than theoretical, it must also take the form of an investigation of proposals *before* the *expenditure* takes place—that is, before it is sanctioned by the House of Commons. What therefore is required is to nominate annually a Public Estimates Committee, and to appoint an officer of Parliament who would render it similar assistance in regard to Estimates to that which is given by the Controller and Auditor-General in regard to the Accounts.

No doubt these Parliamentary investigations are distasteful in official quarters, nevertheless it would be a disastrously retrograde step if Parliament consented to give up the exercise of its undoubted right (which it has recently acted upon with good effect) of investigating the uses to be made of the funds it provides.

Hence the House of Commons should immediately institute an intelligence department, presided over by the most capable and experienced administrator to be found. The duty devolving upon such a committee and department would be, to continuously watch the expenditure of the various votes, to keep constant touch with each department, and especially with the great spending departments; and powers must be given to call for papers and particulars concerning any item about which inquiry seemed desirable. Its main purpose would, in short, be to keep the eyes of Parliament continuously fixed upon the disbursement of the taxpayers' money, to be voted for national purposes. This Estimates Committee on public expenditure must include the Parliamentary chiefs of the different departments, who would be *ex officio* members of it, in addition to independent members of the House of Commons, who might be interested in or elected to do the work from time to time. If this proposal were acted upon, Estimates would soon be prepared and submitted in an intelligent form, and every item would be capable of identification and criticism.

The bureaucratic control of permanent officials in various departments would thus be effectually neutralised, because Parliament, as the representative of the people and of the taxpayers, would at length find itself in possession of accurate and precise information, accompanied by a continuous knowledge of what has happened in the past, and what relation the votes and estimates of the current year bear to items, estimates and votes dealt with previously.

The institution of such an intelligence department, presided over by a man of experience and capacity, would at once enable members of Parliament to acquire an insight into the departmental system, and to

educate themselves to take high office in the Government, under circumstances of independence and authority quite unattainable at the present time. In this way it would for ever remove the present ineptitude and vagueness of Ministerial responsibility, as every Parliamentary chief would then be able to stand firmly on his feet, because his knowledge and training would enable him to instruct the permanent officials, and to enforce sound principles of administration. Besides, he would be technically acquainted with the details of any office over which he might be called upon to preside. No doubt the moral effect upon members of Parliament, as well as upon Parliamentary and permanent heads of departments, would be enormous, and the saving to the country, which must result, would probably astonish the nation. Under such a system the efficiency of the public services ought to compare favourably with that of the best organised undertaking in the world. In putting forward these proposals, we wish it to be distinctly understood, that ours is not a theoretical scheme, but in the highest degree practical. We are prepared to show, and to prove, that it can be immediately introduced without difficulty or great cost. We are convinced the results this Parliamentary Intelligence Department and Estimates Committee would secure would astonish everybody, whilst it must soon win for itself the favour of all concerned.

So much for the work which Parliament can do to make itself master in matters affecting public expenditure. There remains the other question of how to secure the utmost efficiency in the public service by ensuring that everybody engaged shall do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, whilst each individual is afforded the fullest opportunity to display his talents and to secure for himself the full measure of promotion he may deserve. At the present time, parents often put their children into the Civil Service because it is safe. In other words, the pension system and present practice provide, that whether a clerk is idle or industrious; efficient or inefficient, neglectful or attentive, reliable or the reverse, the terms of his engagement ensure a moderate though certain growth in his salary, with a pension at the end of his term, providing he spends the irreducible minimum of his time in the office of the department to which he may become attached. A late Civil servant, who now occupies an important public position, assured us recently that he left Government employment because he found the system so demoralising to the man. In his office, provided the clerk did the official day's work, which could be easily accomplished in an hour, as a rule, he was free to do as he liked. His manhood revolted against taking the Government pay under these circumstances, and as any display of zeal on his part was usually severely

resented, he sent in his resignation in self-defence. It has been reported, on good authority, that within the last few years, in one of the great departments, which shall be nameless, it transpired, that in a certain room, occupied by four clerks, the daily programme was as follows :— One gentleman instructed himself in the violin, a second used it as a studio and devoted himself to art ; the third, having a taste for cookery, prepared luncheon for the others, and then took his leave ; whilst the fourth absented himself from the office, as much as possible, because the others would not allow him to work, and he resented their proceedings.

It is unnecessary for us to go into the question of the enormous non-effective expenditure of this country to-day owing to the pension system. We are more concerned to find a remedy for the evils attaching to the state of affairs just illustrated. This may easily be found by introducing the same system into public offices which prevails in business establishments. All unnecessary detail is dispensed with, and it is in this direction that Mr. Frederick Winney, the late President of the Institute of Accountants, has shown where an enormous saving in time, combined with an immense increase in efficiency and in results, may be secured. A fair day's work must be insisted upon for a fair day's pay, such pay being large enough to justify the adoption of the pension system now generally established in connection with banks and other private businesses. This system provides, that every member of the staff shall contribute a certain proportion of his earnings to the pension fund, such contributions being supplemented by a grant from his employer. The regulations provide for every contingency, including dismissal or retirement from the service, and they are so drawn as to secure complete freedom of contract, and an adequate security to both sides. Promotion is governed by merit and acquirements alone.

Under such a system those employed generally develop into men, as opposed to certain lamentable specimens of humanity which sometimes result from the enervating influence of the safe system now prevalent in Government offices. The ultimate saving to the State would be enormous, whilst the gain to the individual, both intellectually, physically, and pecuniarily, cannot be doubted. Indeed, we have reason for believing, that the best and most capable of the younger members of the present Civil Service would welcome the opportunity of serving the Government under such a system as is here suggested, in preference to the present one, which they find always irksome, often unfair, and generally demoralising to the majority of those working under it.

HENRY C. BURDETT.

The Date and Occasion of 'The Tempest'

IN an essay on the Politics and Religion of Shakespeare, published in *Macmillan's Magazine* for January last, Mr. Goldwin Smith commits himself to a view of the date and purpose of 'The Tempest' which will be far from commanding the general assent which he seems to expect. 'Who Ferdinand and Miranda were,' he says, 'is not doubtful. It appears from the manuscript of *Vertue* that "The Tempest" was acted by John Heminge and the rest of the King's company before Prince Charles, the Lady Elizabeth, and the Prince Palatine Elector, at the beginning of the year 1613. Frederick had come over to receive his bride, the Princess, who was the darling of all Protestant hearts. Ferdinand, then, was Frederick, and Miranda, Elizabeth.'

Mr. Goldwin Smith's judgments on Shakespeare are probably the result of independent study, and he may not greatly care to acquaint himself with the course of Shakespearian criticism. He would otherwise have been aware that the view of the purpose of the drama thus propounded as self-evident is supported by only two considerable authorities, Tieck and Meissner; and that the date of 1613, evidently essential to its acceptance, is absolutely rejected by every recent editor and commentator. The editors of last generation may have been largely influenced by the alleged discovery of a notice of the performance of the play in 1611. But, even since this has been admitted to be a fabrication, criticism is no less unanimous in assigning 1610 or 1611 as the date. Such is the opinion of Halliwell, Lloyd, Dowden, Grant

White, Stokes, Furnivall, Fleay, and Hudson. It is obvious that a piece composed two or three years before the Princess Elizabeth's nuptials can have had no relation to them; that she cannot, in this case, be Miranda, or Frederick Ferdinand; that, if this be so, the true interpretation of the drama must be quite different from Mr. Goldwin Smith's, and that the view which he almost takes for granted is, in the present state of opinion, certain of unanimous rejection.

Mr. Goldwin Smith, nevertheless, is to our thinking perfectly right; but proof must be found in an elaborate investigation of the drama. In the following remarks, the substance of which was stated verbally to the New Shakespere Society in January 1887,¹ we hope to show—

1. That 'The Tempest' was written for performance before a private audience, and on occasion of a marriage.
2. That the particular audience and the particular marriage are known from documentary evidence, and further revealed by evident allusions to the personality of the bridegroom, and to the recent death of Prince Henry, and by the introduction of King James himself into the piece.
3. That there is additional internal evidence for the date 1613, and no evidence for any other date. Our contention is substantially the same as that of Tieck and Meissner, who have, however, rather indicated the line of argument than elaborated the argument itself.

It may in the first place be taken as now universally admitted that 'The Tempest' is one of Shakespeare's very latest plays. The theory of Hunter, assigning the date to 1598, and that of Elze, fixing it at 1604, not only have nothing solid to rest upon, but are absolutely negatived by internal evidence. Without wishing to carry metrical tests to an extreme, it is incontestable that the versification of Shakespeare's later dramas differs in a marked manner from that of the earlier, and that the versification of 'The Tempest' stamps it as a late play. Nor does any play bear more obvious tokens of maturity in serene wisdom, intellectual force, and mastery of dramatic art. The date being thus approximately established on internal testimony, it would be something more than a wonder if the mention of the 'still-vexed Bermoothes' were a pure accident without reference to the storm and shipwreck that made the Bermudas known to the English public through the medium of Silvester Jourdan's pamphlet, published in October 1610. Shakespeare,

¹ See the report of Mr. Moulton's remarkable paper on 'The Tempest,' and the ensuing discussion, in the *Academy* for January 22, 1887.

indeed, could derive little of his local colouring from Jourdan, as the necessities of his plot compelled him to transfer the Atlantic island to the Mediterranean. It is nevertheless impossible to doubt that Jourdan's narrative must have been familiar to him. The numerous parallels produced by Malone leave no room for question. The error of this eminent critic is not in the identification of Shakespeare's storm with the Bermuda tempest, but in the gratuitous assumption that because the narrative on which the play was founded was published in October 1610, *therefore* the play must have been written immediately afterwards. We have, on the contrary, no right to assume that the piece was written before the first notice we have of its representation, which, as already stated, took place at the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth to the Elector Palatine.

The proofs that 'The Tempest' was actually written for private representation on this occasion are of the strongest. Two circumstances especially suggest that it was not intended for an ordinary audience.

1. It is much below the ordinary length of a Shakespearian drama. The average is three thousand lines; 'The Tempest' has only about two thousand. For this, on the supposition of its having been written for representation at Court at a period of general festivity, there are two excellent and indeed imperative reasons. The time of the monarch and his guests must not be unduly encroached upon; and the piece must not be on too large a scale to be written, rehearsed, and put upon the stage with great expedition. We shall see that, on our theory, the entire preparation of 'The Tempest' could at most have occupied little more than two months; so that there would be the strongest motive to make the play as brief as consistent with the due exposition of the subject.

2. For the same and kindred reasons it would be an object to have as few changes of scene as possible. 'The Tempest' is unique among Shakespeare's plays in this respect. After the brief representation of the deck of the storm-tossed vessel with which the play opens, there is practically but one scene; for though the action occasionally shifts from the space before Prospero's cell to some other part of the island, everything is avoided which might necessitate a change of decoration.¹ Neither is there any change of costume except Prospero's assumption of his ducal

¹ Though the scenic resources of Shakespeare's age were limited, they were sufficient to be troublesome on a private stage. 'Tombs, rocks, hell-mouths, steeples, beacons, and trees are found in lists of properties.'—*Lloyd*.

robes in the last act, which takes place on the stage. In keeping with this general restraint is the compression of the action, which, instead of stretching over a long period as usual with Shakespeare, is, as we are frequently reminded, accomplished within three hours, or about the time which the actual representation of the drama would occupy.

The strongest argument, however, is the introduction of two masques such as were in Shakespeare's age usually presented to sovereigns on occasions of ceremony. The machinery of the masque in Act 3, Scene 3, is much more elaborate than would have been requisite if the scene had not been introduced for its own sake. Still more significant is the nuptial masque of Juno, Ceres, and Iris in the fourth act, which, when the real purpose of the play is overlooked, appears such a mere excrescence that it has been supposed to be an interpolation. The untenableness of this notion appears from two simple considerations. In the first place, if the masque goes, the fourth act almost disappears along with it; it is in any case remarkably short, and can only be made of due proportionate length by the dance which ensues upon the masque. In the second place, the noblest passage in the play is inextricably associated with the masque and stands or falls with it. It is common to quote

Like the baseless fabric of a vision.

This is incorrect; Shakespeare wrote '*this* vision,' meaning the interlude which has just been exhibited, to which a few lines further on he again refers as 'this insubstantial pageant.' Whoever wrote this speech wrote, or at least designed, the masque also. If, as some maintain, the pageant was interpolated by Francis Beaumont¹ upon the revival of the piece, Beaumont must have penned one of the most inspired passages in literature, and Shakespeare must have written a fourth act of disproportionate brevity. Neither of these propositions will find easy credit; but if they are not true, Shakespeare must have had some very cogent motive for introducing this apparently aimless pageantry into the very heart of his drama. This could be nothing else than the fact that, in one point of view, 'The Tempest' is a spectacular play for the entertainment of princes and courtiers upon a great occasion; and that from another, the seeming impertinence enabled him to stamp his piece as a hymeneal drama. To

¹ It is perfectly possible—though we see no especial reason for the supposition—that Beaumont or someone else may have written the interlude under Shakespeare's direction. All we need insist upon is that it belongs to the scheme of the play, and was planned and prescribed by the play's author.

condense our argument to a point, this nuptial interlude is either a mere idle excrescence or pregnant with significance. The former it cannot be, for if it is removed the fourth act tumbles to pieces, and the finest passage in the drama goes along with it. If, on the other hand, it has a significance, this must relate to something in the situation of the spectators, who must have been aware of some circumstance justifying its introduction, and this could be nothing else than a marriage deeply interesting to some persons among the audience.

This much might have been inferred if the occasion of the first recorded performance of the play had been unknown ; when, however, we learn from Vertue's MS. what it was, and who the audience were, the purpose of the drama becomes perfectly clear. It is not credible that so many marks of a play intended for Court representation—brevity, unity of time and place, a brilliant spectacle apparently unconnected with the plot, and to which nevertheless everything is made to lead up—should combine in a mere revival of a play written for the ordinary stage. Much less can the piece be a revival of one which had already done duty as a hymeneal drama, for Shakespeare never produced anything unfitting the occasion ; and it is safe to affirm that before the espousals of Frederick and Elizabeth no marriage had taken place in his time to which 'The Tempest' could be in the least degree appropriate. Everything bespeaks a royal marriage, and everything corresponds with the royal marriage of 1613. The foreign prince come from beyond sea, the island princess who has never left her home, the wise father who brings about the auspicious consummation by his policy—all found their counterparts among the splendid company that watched the performance on that February night. The perception of the absolute appropriateness of the piece to the occasion must have heightened their enjoyment to a degree which, even with our vastly enhanced reverence for the genius of Shakespeare, we cannot reproduce. Every point would be new and bright, every allusion would be taken as soon as made. What a smile, for instance, must have gone round at Gonzalo's speech :—

Would they believe me
If I should say I saw such islanders ?

But that assembly numbered shadows as well as men. 'The Tempest' would hardly have existed in its present form, and certainly would have been far from exemplifying Shakespeare's courtly tact and tender humanity, but for the gloom thrown upon the marriage festivities by the recent death of the King's eldest son. Some attention to dates

will here be requisite. The first apparent allusion to the marriage treaty in the State Papers is in December 1611, when Frederick is named among possible candidates for the Princess's hand. On August 3, 1612, the arrival of an envoy from him is mentioned, 'who has gone post haste to the King.' But another candidate is in the field. On October 9 Sir Dudley Carleton is informed that 'the Savoy match is nearly concluded. All approve it except the Churchmen.' It probably had the support of the Queen, who was secretly a Roman Catholic. On October 22, however, the Palatine arrives in person, and is presented by the King with a ring worth eighteen hundred pounds. His suit must have prospered immediately: for 'the Prince had arranged to conduct his sister to Germany' before his sudden and startling death on November 6 ensuing. The situation was most embarrassing for the Palatine, most grievous for the Court. Death and Life were joint inmates of the palace, where the Prince's body lay for a month ere the arrangements for the public funeral could be completed. Yet the bridegroom was in England, and the marriage could not be long delayed.

The funeral baked meats
Must coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

On December 2 the Palatine came back to visit his mistress, but the marriage must have been regarded as settled somewhat earlier, for on December 10 we hear of a wedding present of 20,000*l.* from Scotland. On December 27 the pair were solemnly affianced. On January 6 Sir Thomas Lake writes, 'The black is wearing out, and the marriage pomps preparing.' Among these, as we have seen, was the preparation of 'The Tempest,' which may have been commissioned about the end of November. Shakespeare thus found himself in a position as trying as ever tested the dexterity of a courtier or the humanity of a man. How to reconcile the demands of sorrow and joy on this unparalleled occasion? To ignore the late affliction would be heartless, and an insult to the King, but how to recognise it without darkening the nuptial joy, and suggesting omens as sinister as Marie Antoinette's tapestry? In the entire range of Shakespeare's art there is nothing more exquisite than the skill with which he has solved this problem. The recent calamity is not unrecognised; on the contrary, the supposed death of the drowned Prince is a most vital incident, kept continually in view. But, by a consummate stroke of genius, the woe is taken away from Prospero, the representative of James, and transferred to the house of his enemy. The lost prince is duly mourned, but not by his real father. James is reminded of his bereavement, but it is not

obtruded upon him. The sense of loss mingles, a fine and almost imperceptible element, with the general cheerfulness. In the end the hitherto sonless Prospero gains a son, as the bereaved James is gaining one in the Palatine ; while, a compliment within a compliment, delicate allusion is made to the promise of Prince Charles. If this be refined flattery, it is also refined humanity. To ignore it is to miss the key to the interpretation of the play. We should also lose the best evidence we possess of the speedy working of Shakespeare's imagination ; how, in quite another sense than Johnson's, 'panting Time toiled after him in vain.' The supposed death of Ferdinand is so vital a portion of the plot that the play cannot have been undertaken without it. We have seen, however, that the incident which suggested it did not occur until November 6 preceding the marriage, which was solemnised on February 14. The representation must have preceded the wedding, otherwise Prospero's exhortation at the beginning of the fourth act to pre-nuptial chastity would have lost all force. This marvellous work must accordingly have been planned, written, and put upon the stage within less than three months. Nothing can give a higher idea of the activity of Shakespeare's genius ; while at the same time we discern cogent reasons for the comparative brevity of the play.

If Frederick and Elizabeth are Ferdinand and Miranda, it follows, as long ago pointed out by Tieck, that Prospero is James. The conclusion may appear strange and unwelcome ; it met no support when propounded by the present writer to the New Shakspeare Society. The current conception of James is one of a grotesque preposterous figure, more like a bat flown forth after the setting of 'the bright occidental star' than the sun to whose arising on that occasion his accession is compared by the translators of our Bible. Even were this estimate well founded, to have passed the sovereign by without notice in a piece written for the nuptials of the sovereign's daughter would have been an impoliteness which Shakespeare would never have perpetrated. But it is exceedingly unjust. It was James's misfortune that his defects were mostly of an unkingly sort, and such as easily lend themselves to ridicule. Shakespeare's own words are fulfilled in him :—

All give to dust that is a little gilt
More laud than gilt o'er-dusted.

'Those,' says Mark Pattison, 'whose impressions of character have been chiefly derived from modern histories, will find that as they become better acquainted with contemporary memoirs their estimate of James's

abilities will be raised.' 'We are ready to take a long stride beyond Mr. Pattison's eulogy,' comments the *Quarterly* reviewer, and proceeds to assign excellent reasons, concluding, 'That ungainly figure was the mask of a very considerable personality. Behind those rough and lazy features worked a big and versatile brain, and a most observant and discriminating intellect. One has to take into account the irony of Nature toward him, the pedantic externals of his manners and character.' That is the point. With all his talents James certainly was a pedant, and gave to all about him the impression that he was fitter for books than for business. And it is just this infirmity at which Shakespeare glances, in lines which it is difficult to believe were not expressly intended for the King's admonition:—

For the liberal arts
Without a parallel : those being all my study,
The government I cast upon my brother,
And to my state grew stranger, being transported
And rapt in secret studies.

This and much else to the same effect Prospero recounts without apparent suspicion how strongly it tells against himself, a circumstance fatal to M. Émile Montégut's specious theory that Shakespeare idealised himself in Prospero. The character is full of dramatic irony. Prospero is wise and good indeed, but not so much of either as he thinks himself. He betrays fretfulness, irritability, and self-importance, reminding us of the limitations of the highest humanity, and contrasting sharply with his preternatural power. But these traits do not lie upon the surface, and upon a broad view of the character it is impossible to conceive one more completely embodying James's ideal of himself, or more dexterously and at the same time truthfully bringing the really strong sides of his personality into view. A wise, humane, pacific prince, gaining his ends not by violence but by policy ; devoted to far-off purposes which none but himself can realise, much less fathom ; independent of counsellors, safely contemptuous of foes, and controlling all about him by his superior wisdom ; keeping in the background till the decisive hour has struck, and then interfering effectually ; devoted to lawful knowledge, but the sworn enemy of black magic—such was James in James's eyes and such is Prospero.

Except in the particular of supernatural power, the portrait here presented bears the strongest resemblance to another of Shakespeare's characters, whose affinity to James has been already remarked by

Chalmers, and there is every reason to believe that James was not in 'The Tempest' idealised for the first time. In 'Measure for Measure' we have the same controlling and supervising agent, with the same ironic touch of affected mystery and self-consciousness; and, as in 'The Tempest,' the intention of the poet is revealed by the circumstances of the time. The plot of the play is mainly taken from Whetstone's 'Promus and Cassandra,' itself founded on a novel of Cinthio's; but neither in Whetstone nor in his original is there the least hint of Shakespeare's central incident, the disguise of the Duke. What suggested this incident? The peculiar situation of the King. According to unanimous opinion, and the internal evidence of several passages, 'Measure for Measure' was written no long time after the accession of James, and the accession of James was immediately followed by a furious outbreak of pestilence. The coronation took place in July 1603, 'in the midst of a raging plague' which drove the Court from London, and James did not re-enter the capital till March following. The assembling of Parliament, which had been fixed for September, was necessarily postponed, and, of course, the theatres were closed. Yet the machinery of government worked as usual; the King, absent in body, was present in spirit; and the season of apparent interregnum was that of one of his most characteristic measures, the conference at Hampton Court. That the drama contains some apologies for unpopular features in James's deportment is generally admitted; what more natural than that advantage should be taken of the joyful reopening of the theatres to extenuate and embellish his absence from the capital, and represent him in the character he so much affected of the wise ruler invisibly guiding events to their desired consummation by his superiority of intellect? We are convinced that the coincidence is no accident, and that the more the characters of the Duke and Prospero are studied together, the more apparent it will become that they were drawn from the same model.

Some additional evidence in favour of the date of 1613 should not be omitted, though we may not be disposed to lay great stress upon it. The autumn and winter of 1612 were unusually tempestuous: there were in particular tremendous storms on October 22 and November 4, the latter of which was especially remarked from its occurring only two days before the death of Prince Henry. More weight is due to the curious atmosphere of discovery and colonisation which invests 'The Tempest'—rather to be felt than proved, but admirably perceived and expressed by Mr. Watkiss Lloyd:—

The wonders of new lands, new races: the exaggerations of travellers, and

their truths more strange than exaggeration : new natural phenomena, and superstitious suggestions of them : the perils of the sea and shipwrecks, the effect of such fatalities in awakening remorse for ill deeds, not unremembered because easily committed : the quarrels and mutinies of colonists for grudges new and old, the contests for authority of the leaders, and the greedy misdirection of industry while even subsistence is precarious : the theories of government for plantations, the imaginary and the actual characteristics of man in the state of nature : the complications with the indigenæ : the resort, penally or otherwise, to compelled labour : the reappearance on new soil of the vices of the older world : the contrast of moral and intellectual qualities between the civilised and the savage, and the gradual apprehension of the wondrous stranger by the savage, with all the requirements of activity, promptitude, and vigour demanded for the efficient and successful administration of a settlement—all these topics, problems, and conjunctures came up in the plantation of Virginia by James I. ; and familiarity with their collateral dependence would heighten the sensibility of the audience to every scene of a play which presented them in contrasted guise, but in a manner that only the more distinctly brought them home to their cardinal bearings in the philosophy of society—of man.

As true as well expressed, but requiring a later date for 'The Tempest' than Mr. Lloyd assigns. The first American settlement was only made in May 1607, and by only 105 colonists. The Virginia company was not incorporated till 1609 ; but little news from the more numerous emigrants sent out by it had reached England by 1610, and it is not until 1612 that 'R. J.' can write, 'Our colony consisteth now of seven hundred men.' In this year, however, several accounts of Virginia appeared, not always of the most encouraging nature. On July 9, 1612, Chamberlain tells Carleton : 'The Virginia plantation likely to come to nothing, through the idleness of the English. Ten men, sent to fish for their relief, have slipped off to England, and fill the town with ill reports about it.'

Had I plantation of this isle, my lord. . . .
He'd sow it with nettle seed.

We may therefore, if we like, revert to the old belief that in 'The Tempest' Shakespeare took a formal leave of the stage, that his magic staff was broken along with Prospero's, and that the wondrous book drowned 'deeper than did ever plummet sound,' was no other than his own. A worthier consummation of the great magician's career cannot be desired ; and though 'Henry the Eighth' was probably later than 'The Tempest,' being described as a new play in June 1613, Fletcher's share in it is so considerable that it hardly counts. One of Shakespeare's greatest plays, however, *may* have been later still. 'Coriolanus,' to our apprehension, manifestly reflects the feelings of a

conservative observer of the contests between James and his refractory Parliaments. Two such conflicts occurred in Shakespeare's time, in 1610 and 1614. The former date would at first sight seem the more probable. But a minute circumstance observed by Mr. Halliwell suggests, though it does not quite prove, that Shakespeare read North's 'Plutarch' for this drama in the edition of 1612; and it is worthy of remark that he is known to have been in London in November 1614, just at the time when a new play would begin to be rehearsed in preparation for the Christmas holidays. The dissolution of Parliament had taken place in June.

More important, however, than the question of date is the question of interpretation. If the composition of any of Shakespeare's dramas was prompted by an impulse from without, the knowledge of the cause is essential to the understanding of the effect. In the present instance, if the final cause of the existence of 'The Tempest' were, indeed, the celebration of a royal wedding, much that was obscure becomes plain, much that seemed plain appears in a new light. All parties concerned rise in our estimation. We obtain more light than ever on the ready affluence of Shakespeare's imagination and the swift magic of his mind's inner workings. We discover in him not merely the inspiration of the bard, but the tact and dexterity of the courtier, and see him moreover in his proper place as the national poet, chosen to celebrate a public event of the first importance. James rises in our opinion inasmuch as, having to choose a chief poet, he chose so well; and Frederick and Elizabeth acquire a surer title to immortality as the unconscious originators of Ferdinand and Miranda than war and policy were destined to bestow upon the unlucky pair who lost an electorate in seeking a crown. Nor is the marvel of Shakespeare's creations diminished by the actual existence of their faint prototypes; nor are the serene wisdom and moral grandeur of the play less admirable because it does not exist for their sake, but for the sake of a young couple, as even better things have existed and will exist.

R. GARNETT.

Henrik Ibsen

ONE of the most truly notable books published in England for some time past appeared as the September issue of the 'Camelot' series. All or most of the publications of that series have been, in their way, useful and interesting; but it is after all saying little to say that the volume entitled 'The Pillars of Society, and other Plays, by Henrik Ibsen,' is of quite different and quite superior value to any of the mere reprints—Swift or Lowell, Shelley or Carlyle—for which a very proper gratitude is due to editor and publisher. The book, quietly as it comes before us, is no less than a literary event, for it introduces to English readers almost for the first time, and for the first time adequately, a writer of immense genius, who is to-day the chief power among the Scandinavian races—'the chief figure of European significance,' says Mr. Havelock Ellis, the editor of the volume, 'that has appeared in the Teutonic world of art since Goethe.'

Henrik Ibsen was born at Skien, a small town on one of the southern fjords of Norway, on March 20, 1828. His father was a small merchant, and at the age of sixteen Ibsen was apprenticed to an apothecary at Grimstad, in the south of Arendal, a position he quitted after six years in order to carry on his medical studies at the University of Christiania. Here he had as fellow-students several of his future comrades in letters—Björnstjerne Björnson among others—and it was not long before medicine was definitely abandoned for literature. While still at Grimstad, Ibsen had written a classical drama, 'Catilina,' sub-

sequently revised and published among his more mature works, and for some time he made futile endeavours to gain a living by his pen. It was in the autumn of 1851 that the first important event of his life occurred. This was the appointment as director of the National Theatre which had recently been established by Ole Bull at Bergen. This position he relinquished in 1857, to assume the directorship of the Norwegian Theatre at Christiania. In 1852 Ibsen had paid a fruitful visit to Denmark and to Germany, and during the period of his practical connection with the stage he had not only gained that intimate acquaintance with theatrical requirements without which no poet can ever become a playwright, but he had exercised himself in what was perhaps little more than journeyman-work for the boards of his theatre—journeyman-work which was still further training him for his great dramatic achievements of the future. About the time of his removal to Christiania, to assume the post vacated by his friend Björnson, Ibsen married Susanna Thoresen, the daughter of a clergyman of Bergen. In 1864 he left Norway and went to live at Rome, which he quitted in 1868 for Dresden. He has since lived at Munich, Ischia, Monaco, and other places, never, I believe, revisiting his native country till three years since. The exile was voluntary, but it was doubtless Ibsen's fate to know himself a prophet without honour in his own country and among his own kin.

Ibsen's dramatic career has been curiously regular in its course and development; so that a chronological list of his works presents an orderly view of the various styles which divide it into groups. First come the historical plays, interesting and effective in their way, but of comparatively little moment in a consideration of Ibsen's position as a writer. These are: 'Catilina,' 1850; 'Fru Inger til Östraat' (Dame Inger of Östraat), 1855; 'Gildet paa Solhaug' (The Feast at Solhaug), 1855; 'Hærmændene paa Helgeland' (The Warriors at Helgeland), 1858; 'Kongs-emnerne' (The Pretenders), 1864; 'Kaiser og Galilæer' (Emperor and Galilean), begun in Norway, but not finished till 1873. The second group consists of three dramatic poems, 'Kjærlighedens Komædie' (Love's Comedy), 1862; 'Brand,' 1866; and 'Peer Gynt,' 1867. It is in these fantastic romances in verse, full of wild imagination, and more characteristically northern than any other of his works, that we see Ibsen the poet. Their special kind of poetry—a homely strangeness, a pathos which comes out of near and remote elements, a humour which is grotesque and, like all really poetical humour, only just over the edge of tragedy—is a plant which could grow

only on Scandinavian soil. Some passages of Miss Schreiner's wonderful romance, 'The Story of an African Farm,' could alone, it seems to me, of anything in English give some idea of the nature of this style. Perhaps in the future, as Mr. Ellis hints, 'Brand' and 'Peer Gynt' will come to be regarded as the greatest of Ibsen's works. At present, certainly, it is by his social dramas that Ibsen is best known; it is by these that he has gained his European reputation; it is by these, we are told, that he wishes to be remembered. They are his latest work, the deliberate work of his maturity; they are what we might call his 'message.' It is of these, then, that I shall speak here, and I shall confine myself as much as possible to the plays now accessible to the English reader. The social dramas are seven in number: 'De Unges Forbund' (The Young Men's League), 1869; 'Samfundets Støtter' (The Pillars of Society), 1877; 'Et Dukkehjem' (A Doll's House), 1879; 'Gengangere' (Ghosts), 1881; 'En Folkefiende' (An Enemy of Society), 1882; 'Vildanden' (The Wild Duck), 1884; and 'Rosmersholm,' 1886. The plays which Mr. Ellis gives in his volume are 'The Pillars of Society,' 'Ghosts,' and 'An Enemy of the People.' Besides these (which are admirably translated—the first by Mr. William Archer, who has also revised Miss Lord's translation of 'Ghosts,' and the third by Mrs. Eleanor Marx Aveling) there is a version, somewhat less successful, of 'A Doll's House,' published by Miss Lord in 1882 under the title of 'Nora.'

The art of Ibsen in his social dramas is of that essentially modern kind which is not content with holding the mirror up to nature, but desires to drive in certain reformatory ideas over and above the impression conveyed by an impartial reflection of life. Indeed, art such as Ibsen's is never impartial, and yet, if it be art at all, it is precisely in its reflection of life that almost the whole of its value lies. Ibsen is passionately in earnest; he hates the false and loves the true more warmly than a mere artist finds it needful to do; and it is with a deliberate purpose that he takes up his pen. But the power of his work—the justification, and the only artistic justification, of such a line of work—is in this, that his purpose thrusts him of itself into the very midst of humanity, forces him to know men and women as they are, to describe them as they are, and thus to base his art on the only unshifting basis. The very passion which moves him serves to sharpen the outline of the characters who move, types yet never abstractions—rather living men and women who reflect ideas—across the stage on which they appear so much at home. Ibsen's grip on his subject-matter is prodigious, and his

subject-matter is modern life—life and the abuses of life. To read one of his plays is to pass an hour in a centre of existence—in a great city, where the crowds have their passions and agitations, or, better still, in some small place, a selected corner out of all this bustle, in which the action, more circumscribed, can be concentrated, and thus strike home with a deeper intensity. The action of one of the greatest of his dramas, 'Ghosts,' takes place in a country house by one of the western fjords during the hours of a single day from noon to sunset ; but in its scope it embraces humanity, and speaks to universal nature. Here again the 'purpose' with which he writes justifies itself : it is because he has a purpose—because, that is, he is a thinker who goes right down to Nature, who weighs, and finds wanting, a society which does not grow out of that one true soil—that his art becomes universal : his purpose is the life-blood of his art.

Ibsen's 'purpose,' in these social dramas, is nothing narrow or fanatic ; it cannot be too distinctly said that he is not a vendor of nostrums, philanthropic or other, nor that terrible being, a man of one idea. His satire plays freely on every angle of that great mass of conventions which we call society ; it is now political, as in 'The Young Men's League,' now purely social, as in 'The Pillars of Society ;' he can even seem to satirise himself, as in 'The Wild Duck.' His fundamental demand is for individual liberty ; he would have men live according to nature, and he can conceive of a reasonable society only as an organisation founded on the truth of things, and bound together by sincerity. 'To revolutionise people's minds,' as he himself has said, 'that is the one thing that avails.' Thus his plays are no party-pamphlets, but a gospel of real light : they illuminate, they do not merely argue. Nor is Ibsen an idealist in the contemptuous sense which people often give to the word—an unpractical visionary. He is directly and steadily practical, full of common sense, shrewdness, attention to fact, to detail. He can found a play on a sanitary question ; nothing is trivial, common, uninteresting to him. And he has the courage of his convictions—abundance of courage, or he would never have written 'Ghosts.' What his pet ideas may be in political matters, in what is properly called party politics, the only kind of politics which the ordinary mind seems able to conceive, I neither know nor care to know. I am not aware, even after reading 'A Doll's House,' in which the woman question is treated with so firm a grasp, so broad a comprehension, if he is of opinion, like Miss Cobbe, that female suffrage is the paradise of woman's progress. But I do know that for sane and suggestive treatment of

social questions ; for clear light upon difficult ways, straight speech on shrouded topics ; for satire which is cruel and healing as the burning iron that cauterises a wound ; for earnestness that is never without judgment, sincerity that is never without tact ; for the qualities that make a social drama helpful and illuminating, the work of Ibsen is pre-eminent, and in these days unique.

But Ibsen is not only a great thinker, he is a great artist. Nothing shows us better than Ibsen's social dramas the true meaning of the word realism—a word which has unhappily come to be associated with pictures of life which are necessarily sordid, frequently unclean. The connection between the realistic and the abominable is a question I have never been able to fathom. Realism is a picture of life as it really is, and in life as it really is the element of grossness is only one of many elements. Ibsen's realism stifles nothing ; it is daring to discuss matters over which society draws a veil, but it is never gross, never unhealthy, it 'sees life steadily, and sees it whole.' Ibsen paints ordinary life ; his people are (if I may speak in terms of another nationality) the people one meets in the City, one's lawyer, one's banker, the men one hears discussing stocks and shares, business people ; or, again, the officials of a country town, the clergyman, the ladies who work for charitable institutions, the doctor, the newspaper editor, the printer. All these people meet, talk over their own affairs, speak of their business, go to and fro, just as if they were really living their parts. Every character, down to the merest 'walking gentleman,' is carefully finished ; we get from all the same impression of reality. It is life, and yet life from a point of view which is not the point of view of the crowd. Everywhere there is a deep undercurrent of irony, and irony is the judgment of an outside observer, who is not in the throng. So cutting is the irony, that Ibsen's plays would be terrible reading for the Rörunds and Helmers and Bernicks of society if one could only hope in them so much inner light as would suffice to show them themselves. That is what I am a little doubtful about ; however, Ibsen's irony, though cutting, is so moderate, so singularly free from the exaggeration of caricature, that I have good hope it may be so. And, indeed, conventional people everywhere hate Ibsen—because they fear him ; he shocks them—because he tells the inconvenient truth. A caricaturist is never feared, but in Ibsen you never lose the lesson in the laugh. His style is precision itself ; in the dialogue there is scarcely a metaphor. Energy, conciseness, and exactitude are the qualities by which his style rises through its simplicity to the finest literary art. The secret of this style lies in the precision with which every word is

chosen and placed ; exactly the right word is always used, and no more. Ibsen's dialogue is our everyday talk pruned of its waste—not pruned so as to lose any of the sap of life, for his art shows itself nowhere keener than in a cunning use of broken sentences, interjections and interruptions, apparent trivialities and casualties. Nowhere does there seem to be any sacrifice of nature for literary effect ; there is no word-brilliance, no display ; and here, as always, the restraint of the true artist is justified by the finer art of the result.

In the construction of his plays, as in the management of his dialogue, Ibsen works by simplicity, rapidity, and concision. The plot is always elaborately woven, with a care which is directed to the clear presentment of a sometimes rather complex network of action. There is often an underplot, worked into the very stuff of the main action, and contributing to its development. But in the final result all is clear and undistracted ; the impression is single. In 'The Young Men's League' the action centres in a political pretender, Stensgaard ; he rises and falls, through the course of the vivacious comedy, steadily pushing his way onward toward the prize that will one day crown his determined seeking of it. Here, as elsewhere, Ibsen expresses his distrust of 'compact majorities ;' his profound distrust of a sounding progress which does not begin from within. In 'The Pillars of Society,' the sweep of the satire, like the course of the action, is more extensive. It falls on the conventions, small and great, which are the 'pillars' of a rotten society, touching now here, now there—the tattle of the ladies at their sewing-meeting, the barbarous inhumanity of the shipowner who sends out unworthy ships, finally and most forcibly the foundation of lies, domestic and social, on which the apparent success of Consul Bernick has been built. The play is not all gloom, for it traces the moral regeneration of a man who is manly enough to rise through confession to a spiritual victory—a regeneration brought about through the agency of a woman : in Ibsen, as in Shakespeare, in Scott, in George Meredith, the heroes are women.

'A Doll's House'—with 'Ghosts' the finest and most impressive of Ibsen's social dramas, and certainly altogether the most charming, quite the most perfect—is an utterance on the marriage question. The portrait of Nora is the most wonderful piece of character-drawing that Ibsen has ever done, and Nora herself is the most charming creature conceivable. In the three days in which the action passes she develops from a child to a woman ; a series of events—whose rapid

and inevitable march, the encroaching of the fate that lies in our deeds and us, almost suspends the breath in the sympathy of pity and terror—brings her face to face with immense issues: for the first time she sees things in their true light, for the first time she speaks seriously with her husband, and the step she takes is taken with clear conviction and in full seriousness. Her story is a protest against that fatally false view of woman which turns marriage, only too often, into a bargain between a beautiful slave and a kind slave-owner. In Helmer we see the man who builds a 'doll's house' for his wife, worshipping her as his idol, if you will, but with a chivalry which is but the softer side of contempt. He is the normal man, and Nora is the normal woman trained in exquisite ignorance of life, in delicate seclusion from facts, to become the dearest possession, but a possession, a property, of that superior being the normal man. When at last her awakening comes she cries to her husband, with a strange shiver of recollection: 'Torvald, in that moment it became clear to me that I had been living here all these years with a strange man, and had borne him three children.' The consciousness overwhelms her that the marriage is no marriage, that she is no fit wife for her husband, nor he a fit husband for her, that she is not fit to be the mother of her children. And she leaves him, only to return, if that should ever be, when their living together will be a true marriage.

'Ghosts,' with which I compared 'A Doll's House' for its concentrated power, has none of the charm, none of the variety, of that play. Its subject is the most sombre of all that Ibsen has essayed, and, like 'A Doll's House,' it has roused a violent opposition. It is a tragedy which encroaches as far as art can well go in the direction of physical horror, and the prolonged anguish of its action is unrelieved by even a momentary ray of really cheerful light. The play shows, in its few intense hours of crisis, the working of the relentless law of heredity. It is the final triumph of nature over conventionality, and Ibsen has not spared the morality of conventional suppression one drop of the bitter cup. The play is certainly very painful reading, but the painfulness is justified, from the moral point of view by the 'purpose,' from the artistic point of view by the unquestionable power of it. I know nothing in any play so complete in its mastery over the springs of horror and sympathetic suffering as the last scene, the expected and dreaded climax—the final flowering of the latent germ of madness in the innocent Oswald. The horror of 'The Cenci' is less dreadful than this.

When 'Ghosts' came out, it was of course honoured with the epithet of immorality. In 'An Enemy of Society,' a play which appeared in the following year, it is supposed that Ibsen alludes to his own position among his countrymen in the representation of Dr. Stockmann, the soberly heroic doctor who dares and loses all but the consciousness of duty in a fight against unconquerable¹ prejudice. The position in which Ibsen places his hero is dramatically excellent, and the complications give the finest opportunities for social satire and that truthful exhibition of social abuses which is more deadly to them than any satire. The whole action is full of life and bustle ; one scene, the scene of the public meeting, must have immense effect on the stage : never has the whole aspect, the whole movement, of such a thing been so truthfully and so brilliantly put on the boards. Here, as so often elsewhere, the demand of Ibsen is for the liberty of the individual, the 'revolutionising of people's minds.' In 'The Wild Duck,' a play of inferior quality, the satire seems to turn round upon the satirist : its exposure of the unballasted idealist does but show how 'steadily' Ibsen sees life, and how he 'sees it whole.' 'Rosmersholm,' the latest and not the least of Ibsen's plays, is, unlike the others, primarily a drama of passion. It has something of the individual intensity of Browning, and like one of Browning's finest works it might have been called 'A Soul's Tragedy.' For a moment society is forgotten in the contemplation of a human soul.

Ibsen's art, to return to our starting-point, is the art of a renovator, a satirist ; 'his work throughout,' as Mr. Ellis well says in the powerful and thoughtful introduction to which I have before referred, 'is the expression of a great soul crushed by the weight of an antagonistic social environment into utterance that has caused him to be regarded as the most revolutionary of modern writers.' Such a writer is not to be weighed as we weigh the impersonal literary artist to whom all nature is a mere sketching-ground, and men and women but models. He demands of us other standards, and we must, if we would do him justice, view him as he would have himself regarded. This is what I have tried to do in the foregoing pages.

ARTHUR SYMONS.

The World in April

THE past month has been chiefly notable in England for the death of a statesman whose life was chiefly associated with the greatest economic reform of modern times, the Repeal of the Corn Laws. There is but little to add here to the general expression of sorrow which the news of Mr. Bright's death has called forth from all classes and all political parties of the English people. His was essentially a character and a career which both friends and opponents would unite to admire, so manifestly simple, upright, and courageous was his life from start to finish. And with his death there seems for the moment to have passed away from English politics, not only the wise counsellor and the most eloquent of our orators, but the most incorruptibly honest of our politicians. No man of equal rank has in this modern day shown himself so superior to the temptations of ambition and the promptings of personal interest. He gave England much and asked from her nothing,—not even that grave in the Abbey which she would fain have given him. But much has been said as to the personal affection with which he inspired his colleagues, and full justice has been done, both in this Review and elsewhere, to the political work which he accomplished; but it is perhaps worth while to remark that the chief cause to which John Bright owed his unique place in the popular estimation was neither his personal amiability nor his political work, but simply his embodying to the utmost degree those English qualities which made the nation great in the past, and which will perhaps have to save it in the future. He was not only clear-seeing and prudent: he was also dogged, obstinate, and brave. There was in him none of the modern ostentatious desire of impartiality and tolerance, and those who were the enemies of what he thought right received in Mr. Bright's speeches no mealy-mouthed or dubious condemnation. Amongst statesmen, therefore, he appealed to the popular imagination in somewhat the same fashion as a strong good-humoured dragoon of fiction. Like him he was trusted to ride straight, and was not expected to show great subtlety of reasoning, or enter too deeply into the causes of his quarrels. A great, broad-shouldered, genial Englishman—that was how most people thought of him.

The two most important events which have occurred on the Continent during the last month have been the abdication of the King of Servia in favour of his son, a lad of fourteen, and the prosecution and flight of General Boulanger. Of the consequences of the first event it is too soon as yet to speak; the influence of Queen Nathalie will once more be felt in the Servian policy, and but few words of regret need be wasted over the disappearance of King Milan from the political scene. It is worth noting, however, that the cause for which the King has abdicated, as far as it is at present known, is one hitherto unknown in the production of such a result. Apparently the King thought he could enjoy himself better, and have more time and opportunity for his private and rather peculiar gratifications, if he were disembarrassed of his crown. And so, having previously got rid of his wife, by proceedings more heroic than reputable, he proceeded to divest himself of his remaining encumbrance. And now, light-hearted and content, he wanders through the European world, and will find, let us hope, sufficient distractions in Paris, London, and Vienna to console him for his loss of dignity and his abdication of duty.

But the *brav' général* has not abdicated, he has only withdrawn to Brussels; and thence, like a small boy in the branches of a tree, he makes faces at the French Senate and Chamber, and dares them to come and hit him, and tells them just to wait till he comes down, and then won't he just let them see! It should be no matter for jesting, but it is in truth difficult at the present moment to take either the French nation or the *brav' général* very seriously. The results of their action may be serious enough no doubt, but the actions themselves are scarcely less than ludicrous. The fright of the Ministry, the impotent prosecution of the Patriotic League, the personalities, gesticulations, and threats which make the Chamber more like a gathering of angry fish-fags than an assembly of serious politicians; the recall of the Duc d'Aumale, the plots and counter-plots of the Monarchists, the Republicans, and the Radicals, the absolute lack of a coherent political programme either in the Boulangists or their opponents; and the effort to plaster all this unrest, discontent, and confusion with a big International Exhibition and a bigger Eiffel Tower—what is all this deserving of but ridicule? It is a farce before a tragedy; but it is nearly played out now, and no one can say how soon the curtain will not be rung down and the serious interest begin in earnest.

To accept the French point of view for a moment, the completion of the tallest building in the world deserves a word of recognition. Let us

blow the trumpets, therefore, for M. Eiffel, who has built an obelisk 984 feet high, and frescoed it with lifts, ladders, and lager beer saloons, and stuck a great, grand silk tricolor on the top of it, and stands there in the sight of all the nations, ready to take your three francs for the first, five francs for the second, and ten francs for the ascension of the third storey. Happy man! He has not only amused himself with the biggest rattle that the world has ever known, but has even found a Government to pay his expenses, and call all the peoples of the earth together to come and look at his plaything and pay him for the same. Happy Paris too, to be the possessor of such metallic fantasy, which will not tumble upon its head, sanguine folks say, for at least fifty years, unless something should happen to disturb its equilibrium. By that time, no doubt, the lager beer saloons will be deserted; perhaps even Paris herself, at the rate she is going nowadays, will have moved on into the empyrean. Meanwhile a brisk trade is being driven in portraits of M. Eiffel and in little bronze and paper replicas of his tower, and beneath the legs of this new colossus of Paris the Great Exhibition grows day by day nearer to completion.



But even the length of the Eiffel Tower is passed by the length of Sir Charles Russell's speech in the Parnell Commission, which has been flowing on and on, tediously, eloquently, emphatically, scornfully, mournfully, ironically, and doggedly, since the Court resumed its sittings. How unwise it was of Sir James Hannen to give the great counsel time to recuperate before commencing his speech, that learned judge is by this time probably fully convinced. Armed with reports, histories, newspapers, and State records, and primed with volumes of shorthand notes, Sir Charles Russell has presented himself during the past week, to the dismay of the judges and the amusement of the English people, in the shape of a huge destructive engine, primed to the brim with every description of legal explosive, and insisting on discharging himself, to the fullest extent, of his accumulated ironies, arguments, and evidences; and the gusto with which he has performed this task has been simply immeasurable. We do not intend, of course, to comment upon the nature of the evidence which Sir Charles Russell is beginning to foreshadow; but after the tragedy which marked the closing scene of the *Times'* evidence, it is perhaps permissible to find something comic in this pounding of ancient and modern Irish history into the unwilling ears of the three judges, who every now and then utter little ineffectual

groans of protest, while even the unmoved Mr. Parnell himself is reported to have 'smiled slightly.'



The chief event in financial circles has been the failure in Paris of the Comptoir d'Escompte—a failure which was almost national in its magnitude, and which caused an enormous amount of distress, although its consequences were not so disastrous as at first seemed likely. The failure was brought about in the main by the frantic speculation in the copper market, or rather of what is known as the copper-ring. The Rio Tinto shares, after having been forced up by the proceedings of this syndicate to four or five times their value, have now fallen to a quarter of their late price, and will very probably go lower still. But we should hardly mention this financial matter in our summary were it not that the collapse of the copper-ring in France points a moral which we cannot in England afford at the present time to ignore. All the tendency amongst the English speculators just now is towards this species of speculation; the Salt Syndicate, the Coal Syndicate are already on the point of accomplishment, and the object of each is in no sense different from the object of the Rio Tinto speculation, namely, to force the customer to give more than its value for the article he wants by rendering him unable to get it elsewhere. It is the employment of capital in the most unauthorised, immoral, and damnable way. It is the Corn Laws over again, with the difference that the tax is to be paid into the pockets of half a dozen—or half a hundred, what matters it?—greedy gamblers, who have inverted the old utilitarian theory, and are trying to prove to the many that they exist for the advantage of the few, and that what sound business men aim at is the greatest *un*-happiness of the greatest number. There is every reason why, if this principle be once permitted to gain ground in English commerce, there should be acted over again in London those awful scenes of triumphant rascaldom which have made the 'corners' of New York and Chicago a scandal to the civilised world. There is every reason why 'smart' should come to carry with it in London the same meaning that it does in America, and imply at once the praise of admiration and the recognition of dishonesty. Our old business men were not taught after these methods, and let us hope that the business men of to-day will still care, despite their race for wealth, to preserve some few rags of honour: will set their faces once and for all against these attempts to boycott, not one man, but a whole nation, of the requisites of life.

Letters have at last arrived from Mr. Stanley, telling us of his comparative safety, his meeting with Emin Pasha, the fearful hardships encountered by himself and the advance guard of the expedition in their march through the primeval forest, and there for the present the story ends ; for the explorer says nothing definite as to his future plans, and indeed the letters are written throughout in the most guarded and reticent manner. That he has succeeded in achieving a feat of almost unparalleled difficulty and hardihood is beyond question, but whether the great sacrifice of toil and life will gain any adequate recompense is in the highest degree doubtful. The relief of Emin Pasha, which was the ostensible object of the expedition, has already become a secondary consideration, for as far as can be seen from these letters, Emin Pasha does not want to be relieved at all, and if he does join his forces with those of Stanley, it will only be on the urgent persuasion of the latter, and to accomplish some end which is as yet unknown to us. I may be permitted, perhaps, to express here one word of regret for the loss of Mr. James Jamieson—a good friend, a good fellow, and a fine sportsman—who perished of fever shortly after Major Barttelot's murder, and who, I have reason to believe, rendered most faithful service to Mr. Stanley in the early part of this expedition, although his name is seldom mentioned in the letters sent home from time to time by his chief. Indeed, a certain lack of generosity towards his subordinates is distinctly characteristic of all Mr. Stanley's despatches, and is apt to render them somewhat unpleasant reading.

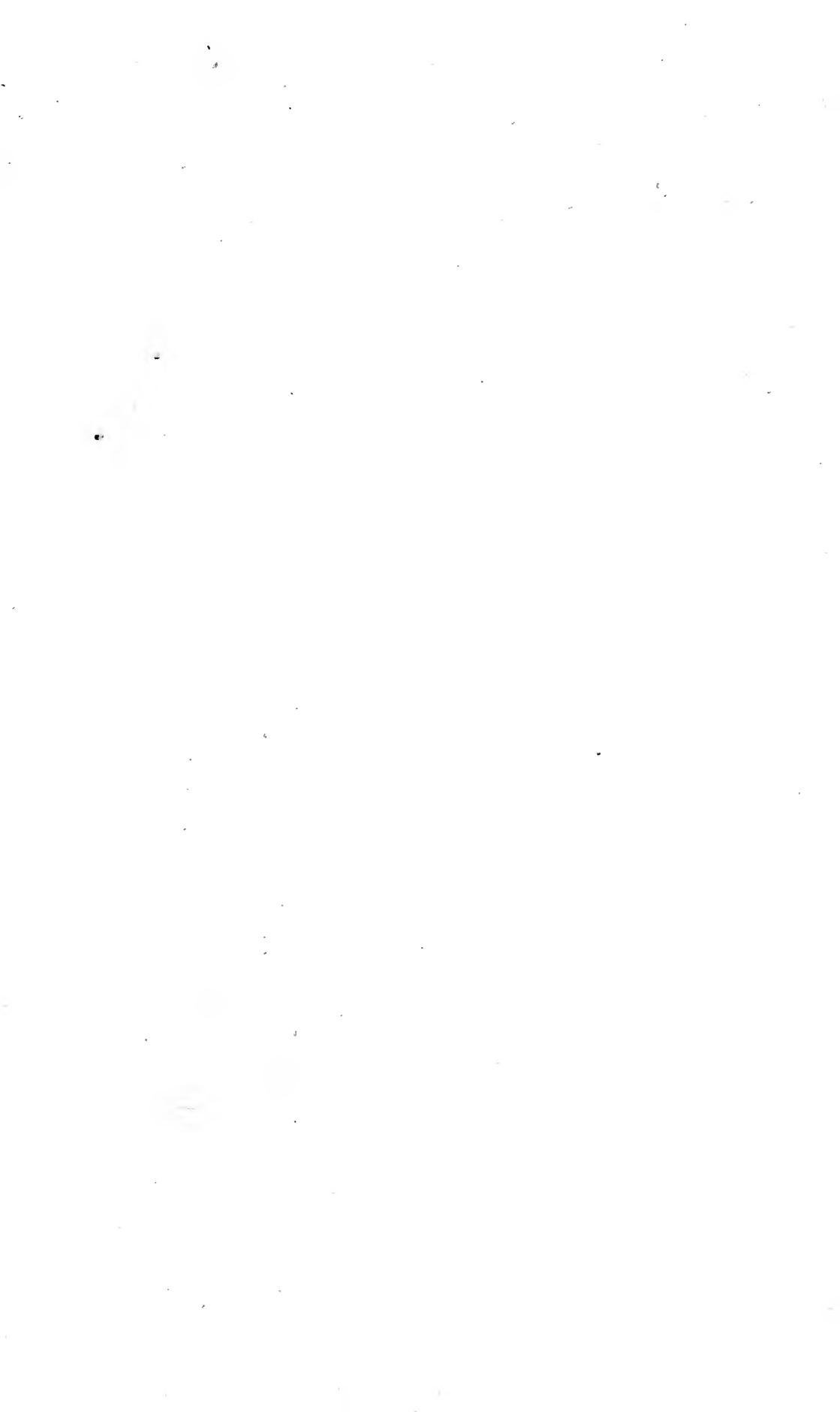


The theatrical record of the past month has been singularly barren, and with the exception of the reappearance in London of Mr. and Mrs. Kendal in 'The Weaker Sex,' and the impersonation of Falstaff by Mr. Beerbohm Tree, there is practically nothing to record. Neither production calls for lengthened notice. 'The Weaker Sex' is a poor play, adapted from a French source, and having for its motive the love of a mother and daughter for the same man. It gives a good opportunity for Mrs. Kendal to show the pathetic range of her art, and beyond that there is little to be said for it. Mr. Kendal is not well suited in the character of the hero, and his rendering of the play, in which he sacrifices both the women he loves in order not to sacrifice either, though meant to be pathetic, only just escapes being intensely ludicrous. The most interesting part of the piece was the performance of one of the minor characters by Miss Olga Brandon. This girl

played the part of the daughter of a modern Mrs. Jellyby, and apparently had taken her conception of the character from Dickens. In any case, the character as here acted would have stood well for an impersonation of Caddy Jellyby. There was all the sullen discontent and smouldering resentment against her mother's philanthropy which are so splendidly brought out in 'Bleak House'; and whether Mr. Pinero, who wrote the play, gave the actress the hint, or whether the actress's native wit alone inspired her, the result was extremely creditable and interesting.

Mr. Beerbohm Tree's Falstaff seems to me to be as good, indeed better, than one could easily expect from an artist who is both physically and mentally unfitted for the part, for in truth this is an actor who has not one whit of broad farce in his disposition, and everything that he has previously done tends to show that the essence of his art is of either the pathetic or tragic character. When comedy of any kind suits him it is ironic, as in 'The Ballad-monger,' but his real vocation is for high-class melodrama. His Macari in 'Called Back' was probably his best creation; and in his Falstaff what we miss most is lightness of touch. The character is most intelligently acted; there is no geniality therein, and the play becomes tedious for that very reason. No doubt the tedium is increased by the extremely indifferent support which is, with the present cast, given to the chief character. The Merry Wives themselves are, to speak frankly, neither young nor attractive, and though they try hard to atone for these deficiencies by being extremely bouncing and noisy, the result is far from amusing. Indeed the sort of mincing liveliness with which Miss Rose Leclercq jigs about the stage is maddeningly irritating, and the Dr. Caius of Mr. Kemble is scarcely less ineffective owing to the actor's entire inability to combine a foreign pronunciation with the most aggressively English manner. The Ford of Mr. Macklin is destroyed by the actor's strength of lungs, to which he gives the fullest play throughout the piece. Indeed in the great scenes with the clothes' basket this actor's declamation becomes unbearable in its insistence, and he rages and bellows about the stage from entrance to exit. So, though the attempt of Mr. Tree is an interesting one, we cannot regard the 'Merry Wives of Windsor' as an artistic success, nor is the play one which is sufficiently in tune with either the humour or the sensitiveness of the present day to make its reproduction specially desirable.

THE EDITOR.



P
LE
U

477272

Universal Review.
v.3(1889, Jan-Apr.)

DATE.

Aug. 18, 1948

NAME OF BORROWER.

Mending

MH/FE

University of Toronto
Library

DO NOT
REMOVE
THE
CARD
FROM
THIS
POCKET



