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**Transcriber's Note:**

On P. 462 and 512 of the text version, words within tilde (~) marks are transliterations from the Greek in the original. The html version includes the Greek script.

## BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

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### CONTENTS.

<a href="#">THE CAXTONS. PART VII.</a>	387
<a href="#">POLITICAL ECONOMY, BY J. S. MILL,</a>	407
<a href="#">LIFE IN THE "FAR WEST." PART V.</a>	429
<a href="#">A LEGEND FROM ANTWERP,</a>	444
<a href="#">A FEW WORDS ABOUT NOVELS.—A DIALOGUE, IN A LETTER TO EUSEBIUS,</a>	459
<a href="#">CONTINENTAL REVOLUTIONS—IRISH REBELLION—ENGLISH DISTRESS,</a>	475
<a href="#">BYRON'S ADDRESS TO THE OCEAN,</a>	499

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**THE CAXTONS.—PART VII.**
**CHAPTER XXVI.**

Saith Dr Luther, "When I saw Dr Gode begin to tell his puddings hanging in the chimney, I told him he would not live long!"

I wish I had copied that passage from "The Table Talk" in large round hand, and set it before my father at breakfast, the morn preceding that fatal eve in which Uncle Jack persuaded him to tell his puddings.

Yet, now I think of it, Uncle Jack hung the puddings in the chimney,—but he did not persuade my father to tell them.

Beyond a vague surmise that half the suspended "tomacula" would furnish a breakfast to Uncle Jack, and that the youthful appetite of Pisistratus would despatch the rest, my father did not give a thought to the nutritious properties of the puddings,—in other words, to the two thousand pounds which, thanks to Mr Tibbets, dangled down the chimney. So far as the great work was concerned, my father only cared for its publication, not its profits. I will not say that he might not hunger for praise, but I am quite sure that he did not care a button for pudding. Nevertheless, it was an infaust and sinister augury for Augustine Caxton, the very appearance, the very suspension and danglement of any puddings whatsoever, right over his ingle-nook, when those puddings were made by the sleek hands of Uncle Jack! None of the puddings which he, poor man, had all his life been stringing, whether from his own chimneys, or the chimneys of other people, had turned out to be real puddings,—they had always been the *eidola*, the *erscheinungen*, the phantoms and semblances of puddings. I question if Uncle Jack knew much about Democritus of Abdera. But he was certainly tainted with the philosophy of that fanciful sage. He peopled the air with images of colossal stature, which impressed all his dreams and divinations, and from whose influences came his very sensations and thoughts. His whole being, asleep or waking, was thus but the reflection of great phantom puddings!

As soon as Mr Tibbets had possessed himself of the two volumes of the "History of Human Error," he had necessarily established that hold upon my father which hitherto those lubricate hands of his had failed to effect. He had found what he had so long sighed for in vain, his *point d'appui*, wherein to fix the Archimedean screw. He fixed it tight in the "History of Human Error," and moved the Caxtonian world.

A day or two after the conversation recorded in my last chapter, I saw Uncle Jack coming out of the mahogany doors of my father's banker; and, from that time, there seemed no reason why Mr Tibbets should not visit his relations on week-days as well as Sundays. Not a day, indeed, passed but what he held long conversations with my father. He had much to report of his interviews with the publishers. In these conversations he naturally recurred to that grand idea of the "Literary Times" which had so dazzled my poor father's imagination; and having heated the iron, Uncle Jack was too knowing a man not to strike while it was hot.

[388]

When I think of the simplicity my wise father exhibited in this crisis of his life, I must own that I am less moved by pity than admiration for that poor great-hearted student. We have seen that out of the learned indolence of twenty years, the ambition which is the instinct of a man of genius had emerged; the serious preparation of the great book for the perusal of the world, had insensibly restored the charms of that noisy world on the silent individual. And therewith came a noble remorse that he had hitherto done so little for his species. Was it enough to write quartos upon the past history of Human Error? Was it not his duty, when the occasion was fairly presented, to enter upon that present, daily, hourly, war with Error—which is the sworn chivalry of Knowledge? St George did not dissect dead dragons, he fought the live one. And London, with that magnetic atmosphere which in great capitals fills the breath of life with stimulating particles, had its share in quickening the slow pulse of the student. In the country, he read but his old authors, and lived with them through the gone ages. In the city, my father, during the intervals of repose from the great book, and still more now that the great book had come to a pause,—inspected the literature of his own time. It had a prodigious effect upon him. He was unlike the ordinary run of scholars, and, indeed, of readers for that matter—who, in their superstitious homage to the dead, are always willing enough to sacrifice the living. He did justice to the marvellous fertility of intellect which characterises the authorship of the present age. By the present age, I do not only mean the present day, I commence with the century. "What," said my father one day in dispute with Trevanion—"what characterises the literature of our time is—its *human interest*. It is true that we do not see scholars addressing scholars, but men addressing men,—not that scholars are fewer, but that the reading public is more large. Authors in all ages address themselves to what interests their readers; the same things do not interest a vast community which interested half a score of monks or bookworms. The literary *polis* was once an

oligarchy, it is now a republic. It is the general brilliancy of the atmosphere which prevents your noticing the size of any particular star. Do you not see, that with the cultivation of the masses has awakened the Literature of the Affections? Every sentiment finds an expositor, every feeling an oracle. Like Epimenides, I have been sleeping in a cave; and, waking, I see those whom I left children are bearded men; and towns have sprung up in the landscapes which I left as solitary wastes."

Thence, the reader may perceive the causes of the change which had come over my father. As Robert Hall says, I think, of Dr Kippis, "he had laid so many books at the top of his head, that the brains could not move." But the electricity had now penetrated the heart, and the quickened vigour of that noble organ enabled the brain to stir. Meanwhile, I leave my father to these influences, and to the continuous conversations of Uncle Jack, and proceed with the thread of my own egotism.

Thanks to Mr Trevanion, my habits were not those which favour friendships with the idle; but I formed some acquaintances amongst young men a few years older than myself, who held subordinate situations in the public offices, or were keeping their terms for the bar. There was no want of ability amongst these gentlemen; but they had not yet settled into the stern prose of life. Their busy hours only made them more disposed to enjoy the hours of relaxation. And when we got together, a very gay, light-hearted set we were! We had neither money enough to be very extravagant, nor leisure enough to be very dissipated; but we amused ourselves notwithstanding. My new friends were wonderfully erudite in all matters connected with the theatres. From an opera to a ballet, from Hamlet to the last farce from the French, they had the literature of the stage at the finger-ends of their straw-coloured gloves. They had a pretty large acquaintance with actors and actresses, and were perfect *Walpoluli* in the minor scandals of the day. To do them justice, however, they were not indifferent to the more masculine knowledge necessary in "this wrong world." They talked as familiarly of the real actors of life as of the sham ones. They could adjust to a hair the rival pretensions of contending statesmen. They did not profess to be deep in the mysteries of foreign cabinets, (with the exception of one young gentleman connected with the Foreign Office, who prided himself on knowing exactly what the Russians meant to do with India—when they got it!); but to make amends, the majority of them had penetrated the closest secrets of our own. It is true that, according to a proper subdivision of labour, each took some particular member of the government for his special observation; just as the most skilful surgeons, however profoundly versed in the general structure of our frame, rest their anatomical fame on the light they throw on particular parts of it,—one man taking the brain, another the duodenum, a third the spinal cord, while a fourth, perhaps, is a master of all the symptoms indicated by a pensile finger. Accordingly, one of my friends appropriated to himself the Home Department; another the Colonies; and a third, whom we all regarded as a future Talleyrand, (or a de Retz at least,) had devoted himself to the special study of Sir Robert Peel, and knew, by the way in which that profound and inscrutable statesman threw open his coat, every thought that was passing in his breast! Whether lawyers or officials, they all had a great idea of themselves—high notions of what they were to *be*, rather than what they were to *do*, some day. As the king of modern fine gentlemen said of himself, in paraphrase of Voltaire, "they had letters in their pockets addressed to Posterity,—which the chances were, however, that they might forget to deliver." Something "priggish" there might be about some of them; but, on the whole, they were far more interesting than mere idle men of pleasure. There was about them, as features of a general family likeness, a redundant activity of life—a gay exuberance of ambition—a light-hearted earnestness when at work—a schoolboy's enjoyment of the hours of play.

[389]

A great contrast to these young men was Sir Sedley Beaudesert, who was pointedly kind to me, and whose bachelor's house was always open to me after noon; Sir Sedley was visible to no one, but his valet, before that hour. A perfect bachelor's house it was, too—with its windows opening on the Park, and sofas niched into the windows, on which you might loll at your ease, like the philosopher in Lucretius,—

"Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre,  
Errare,"—

And see the gay crowds ride to and fro Rotten Row—without the fatigue of joining them, especially if the wind was in the east.

There was no affectation of costliness, or what the French and the upholsterers call *recherché*, about the rooms, but a wonderful accumulation of comfort. Every patent chair that proffered a variety in the art of lounging, found its place there; and near every chair a little table, on which you might deposit your book or your coffee-cup, without the trouble of moving more than your hand. In winter, nothing warmer than the quilted curtains and Axminster carpets can be conceived. In summer, nothing airier and cooler than the muslin draperies and the Indian mattings. And I defy a man to know to what perfection dinner may be brought, unless he had dined with Sir Sedley Beaudesert. Certainly, if that distinguished personage had but been an egotist, he had been the happiest of men. But, unfortunately for him, he was singularly amiable and kind-hearted. He had the *bonne digestion*, but not the other requisite for worldly felicity—the *mauvais cœur*. He felt a sincere pity for every one else who lived in rooms without patent chairs and little coffee tables—whose windows did not look on the Park, with sofas niched into their recesses. As Henry IV. wished every man to have his *pot au feu*, so Sir Sedley Beaudesert, if he could have had his way, would have every man served with an early cucumber for his fish, and a caraffe of iced water by the side of his bread and cheese. He thus evinced on politics a naïve

simplicity, which delightfully contrasted his acuteness on matters of taste. I remember his saying, in a discussion on the Beer Bill, "The poor ought not to be allowed to drink beer, it is so particularly rheumatic! The best drink in hard work is dry champagne—(not *mousseux*.) I found that out when I used to shoot on the moors."

Indolent as Sir Sedley was, he had contrived to open an extraordinary number of drains on his great wealth.

First, as a landed proprietor, there was no end to applications from distressed farmers, aged poor, benefit societies, and poachers he had thrown out of employment by giving up his preserves to please his tenants.

Next, as a man of pleasure, the whole race of womankind had legitimate demands on him. From a distressed duchess, whose picture lay *perdu* under a secret spring of his snuff-box, to a decayed laundress, to whom he might have paid a compliment on the perfect involutions of a frill, it was quite sufficient to be a daughter of Eve to establish a just claim on Sir Sedley's inheritance from Adam.

Again, as an amateur of art, and a respectful servant of every muse, all whom the public had failed to patronise—painter, actor, poet, musician—turned, like dying sun-flowers to the sun, towards the pitying smile of Sir Sedley Beaudesert. Add to these the general miscellaneous multitude, who 'had heard of Sir Sedley's high character for benevolence,' and one may well suppose what a very costly reputation he had set up. In fact, though Sir Sedley could not spend on what might fairly be called "himself," a fifth part of his princely income, I have no doubt that he found it difficult to make both ends meet at the close of the year. That he did so, he owed perhaps to two rules which his philosophy had peremptorily adopted. He never made debts, and he never gambled. For both these admirable aberrations from the ordinary routine of fine gentlemen, I believe he was indebted to the softness of his disposition. He had a great compassion for a wretch who was dunned. "Poor fellow!" he would say, "it must be so painful to him to pass his life in saying No." So little did he know about that class of promisers,—as if a man dunned ever said No! As Beau Brummell, when asked if he was fond of vegetables, owned that he had once eaten a pea, so Sir Sedley Beaudesert owned that he had once played high at piquet. "I was so unlucky as to win," said he, referring to that indiscretion, "and I shall never forget the anguish on the face of the man who paid me. Unless I could always lose, it would be a perfect purgatory to play."

Now nothing could be more different in their kinds of benevolence than Sir Sedley and Mr Trevanion. Mr Trevanion had a great contempt for individual charity. He rarely put his hand into his purse—he drew a great cheque on his bankers. Was a congregation without a church, or a village without a school, or a river without a bridge, Mr Trevanion set to work on calculations, found out the exact sum required by an algebraic  $x-y$ , and paid it as he would have paid his butcher. It must be owned that the distress of a man, whom he allowed to be deserving, did not appeal to him in vain. But it is astonishing how little he spent in that way. For it was hard, indeed, to convince Mr Trevanion that a deserving man ever was in such distress as to want charity.

That Trevanion, nevertheless, did infinitely more real good than Sir Sedley, I believe; but he did it as a mental operation—by no means as an impulse from the heart. I am sorry to say that the main difference was this,—distress always seemed to accumulate round Sir Sedley, and vanish from the presence of Trevanion. Where the last came, with his busy, active, searching mind, energy woke, improvement sprang up. Where the first came, with his warm kind heart, a kind of torpor spread under its rays; people lay down and basked in the liberal sunshine. Nature in one broke forth like a brisk sturdy winter, in the other like a lazy Italian summer. Winter is an excellent invigorator, no doubt, but we all love summer better.

Now, it is a proof how loveable Sir Sedley was, that I loved him, and yet was jealous of him. Of all the satellites round my fair Cynthia, Fanny Trevanion, I dreaded most this amiable luminary. It was in vain for me to say with the insolence of youth that Sir Sedley Beaudesert was of the same age as Fanny's father;—to see them together he might have passed for Trevanion's son. No one amongst the younger generation was half so handsome as Sir Sedley Beaudesert. He might be eclipsed at first sight by the showy effect of more redundant locks and more brilliant bloom. But he had but to speak, to smile, in order to throw a whole cohort of dandies into the shade. It was the expression of his countenance that was so bewitching; there was something so kindly in its easy candour, its benign good-nature. And he understood women so well! He flattered their foibles so insensibly; he commanded their affection with so gracious a dignity. Above all, what with his accomplishments, his peculiar reputation, his long celibacy, and the soft melancholy of his sentiments, he always contrived to *interest* them. There was not a charming woman by whom this charming man did not seem just on the point of being caught! It was like the sight of a splendid trout in a transparent stream, sailing pensively to and fro your fly, in a will and a won't sort of way. Such a trout! it would be a thousand pities to leave him, when evidently so well disposed! That trout, fair maid, or gentle widow, would have kept you—whipping the stream and dragging the fly—from morn to dewy eve. Certainly I don't wish worse to my bitterest foe of five-and-twenty than such a rival as Sedley Beaudesert at seven-and-forty.

Fanny, indeed, perplexed me horribly. Sometimes I fancied she liked me; but the fancy scarce thrilled me with delight before it vanished in the frost of a careless look, or the cold beam of a sarcastic laugh. Spoiled darling of the world as she was, she seemed so innocent in her exuberant happiness, that one forgot all her faults in that atmosphere of joy which she diffused around her.

And despite her pretty insolence, she had so kind a woman's heart below the surface! When she once saw that she had pained you, she was so soft, so winning, so humble, till she had healed the wound. But *then*, if she saw she had pleased you too much, the little witch was never easy till she had plagued you again. As heiress to so rich a father, or rather, perhaps, mother, (for the fortune came from Lady Ellinor,) she was naturally surrounded with admirers not wholly disinterested. She did right to plague *them*—but ME! Poor boy that I was, why should I seem more disinterested than others! how should she perceive all that lay hid in my young deep heart? Was I not in all worldly pretensions the least worthy of her suitors, and might I not seem, therefore, the most mercenary? I who never thought of her fortune, or, if that thought did come across me, it was to make me start and turn pale! And then it vanished at her first glance, as a ghost from the dawn. How hard it is to convince youth, that sees all the world of the future before it, and covers that future with golden palaces, of the inequalities of life! In my fantastic and sublime romance, I looked out into that Great Beyond, saw myself orator, statesman, minister, ambassador—Heaven knows what; laying laurels, which I mistook for rent-rolls, at Fanny's feet.

Whatever Fanny might have discovered as to the state of my heart, it seemed an abyss not worth prying into by either Trevanion or Lady Ellinor. The first, indeed, as may be supposed, was too busy to think of such trifles. And Lady Ellinor treated me as a mere boy—almost like a boy of her own, she was so kind to me. But she did not notice much the things that lay immediately around her. In brilliant conversation with poets, wits, and statesmen—in sympathy with the toils of her husband—or proud schemes for his aggrandisement, Lady Ellinor lived a life of excitement. Those large eager shining eyes of hers, bright with some feverish discontent, looked far abroad as if for new worlds to conquer—the world at her feet escaped from her vision. She loved her daughter, she was proud of her, trusted in her with a superb repose—she did not watch over her. Lady Ellinor stood alone on a mountain, and amidst a cloud.

[392]

## CHAPTER XXVII.

One day the Trevanions had all gone into the country, on a visit to a retired minister, distantly related to Lady Ellinor, and who was one of the few persons Trevanion himself condescended to consult. I had almost a holiday. I went to call on Sir Sedley Beaudesert. I had always longed to sound him on one subject, and had never dared. This time I resolved to pluck up courage.

"Ah, my young friend!" said he, rising from the contemplation of a villanous picture by a young artist, which he had just benevolently purchased, "I was thinking of you this morning—Wait a moment, Summers, (this to the valet.) Be so good as to take this picture, let it be packed up, and go down into the country. It is a sort of picture," he added, turning to me, "that requires a large house. I have an old gallery with little casements that let in no light. It is astonishing how convenient I have found it!" As soon as the picture was gone, Sir Sedley drew a long breath as if relieved; and resumed more gaily—

"Yes, I was thinking of you; and if you will forgive any interference in your affairs—from your father's old friend—I should be greatly honoured by your permission to ask Trevanion what he supposes is to be the ultimate benefit of the horrible labours he inflicts upon you—"

"But, my dear Sir Sedley, I like the labours; I am perfectly contented—"

"Not to remain always secretary to one who, if there were no business to be done among men, would set about teaching the ants to build hills upon better architectural principles! My dear sir, Trevanion is an awful man, a stupendous man, one *catches fatigue* if one is in the same room with him three minutes! At your age, an age that ought to be so happy," continued Sir Sedley, with a compassion perfectly angelic, "it is sad to see so little enjoyment!"

"But, Sir Sedley, I assure you that you are mistaken. I thoroughly enjoy myself; and have I not heard even you confess that one may be idle and not happy?"

"I did not confess that till I was on the wrong side of forty," said Sir Sedley, with a slight shade on his brow.

"Nobody would ever think you were on the wrong side of forty!" said I with artful flattery, winding into my subject. "Miss Trevanion for instance—"

I paused—Sir Sedley, looked hard at me, from his bright dark-blue eyes. "Well, Miss Trevanion for instance?—"

"Miss Trevanion, who has all the best-looking fellows in London round her, evidently prefers you to any of them." I said this with a great gulp. I was obstinately bent on plumbing the depth of my own fears.

Sir Sedley rose; he laid his hand kindly on mine and said, "Do not let Fanny Trevanion torment you even more than her father does!—"

"I don't understand you, Sir Sedley!"

"But if I understand you, that is more to the purpose. A girl like Miss Trevanion is cruel till she discovers she has a heart. It is not safe to risk one's own with any woman till she has ceased to be a coquette. My dear young friend, if you took life less in earnest, I should spare you the pain of these hints. Some men sow flowers, some plant trees—you are planting a tree under which you will soon find that no flower will grow. Well and good, if the tree could last to bear fruit and give

shade; but beware lest you have to tear it up one day or other, for then—what then? why, you will find your whole life plucked away with its roots!"

Sir Sedley said these last words with so serious an emphasis, that I was startled from the confusion I had felt at the former part of his address. He paused long, tapped his snuff-box, inhaled a pinch slowly, and continued with his more accustomed sprightliness.

"Go as much as you can into the world—again I say 'enjoy yourself.' And again I ask, what is all this labour to do for you? On some men, far less eminent than Trevanion, it would impose a duty to aid you in a practical career, to secure you a public employment—not so on him. He would not mortgage an inch of his independence by asking a favour from a minister. He so thinks occupation the delight of life, that he occupies you out of pure affection. He does not trouble his head about your future. He supposes your father will provide for *that*, and does not consider that meanwhile your work leads to nothing! Think over all this. I have now bored you enough."

[393]

I was bewildered—I was dumb: these practical men of the world, how they take us by surprise! Here had I come to *sound* Sir Sedley, and here was I plumed, gauged, measured, turned inside out, without having got an inch beyond the surface of that smiling, *debonnair*, unruffled ease. Yet with his invariable delicacy, in spite of all this horrible frankness, Sir Sedley had not said a word to wound what he might think the more sensitive part of my *amour propre*—not a word as to the inadequacy of my pretensions to think seriously of Fanny Trevanion. Had we been the Celadon and Chloé of a country village, he could not have regarded us as more equal, so far as the world went. And for the rest, he rather insinuated that poor Fanny, the great heiress, was not worthy of me, than that I was not worthy of Fanny.

I felt that there was no wisdom in stammering and blushing out denials and equivocations; so I stretched my hand to Sir Sedley, took up my hat,—and went. Instinctively I bent my way to my father's house. I had not been there for many days. Not only had I had a great deal to do in the way of business, but I am ashamed to say that pleasure itself had so entangled my leisure hours, and Miss Trevanion especially so absorbed them, that, without even uneasy foreboding, I had left my father fluttering his wings more feebly and feebly in the web of Uncle Jack. When I arrived in Russell Street, I found the fly and the spider cheek by jowl together. Uncle Jack sprang up at my entrance, and cried, "Congratulate your father, congratulate *him*. No; congratulate the world!"

"What, Uncle!" said I, with a dismal effort at sympathising liveliness, "is the 'Literary Times' launched at last?"

"Oh, that is all settled—settled long since. Here's a specimen of the type we have chosen for the leaders." And Uncle Jack, whose pocket was never without a wet sheet of some kind or other, drew forth a steaming papyral monster, which in point of size was to the political "Times" as a mammoth may be to an elephant. "That is all settled. We are only preparing our contributors, and shall put out our programme next week or the week after. No, Pisistratus, I mean the Great Work."

"My dear father, I am so glad. What! it is really sold then?"

"Hum!" said my father.

"Sold!" burst forth Uncle Jack. "Sold—no, sir, we would not sell it! No; if all the booksellers fell down on their knees to us, as they will some day, that book should not be sold! Sir, that book is a revolution—it is an era—it is the emancipator of genius from mercenary thralldom;—THAT BOOK! —"

I looked inquiringly from uncle to father, and mentally retracted my congratulations. Then Mr Caxton, slightly blushing, and shyly rubbing his spectacles, said, "You see, Pisistratus, that though poor Jack has devoted uncommon pains to induce the publishers to recognise the merit he has discovered in the 'History of Human Error,' he has failed to do so."

"Not a bit of it; they all acknowledge its miraculous learning—its—"

"Very true; but they don't think it will sell, and therefore most selfishly refuse to buy it. One bookseller, indeed, offered to treat for it if I would leave out all about the Hottentots and Caffres, the Greek philosophers and Egyptian priests, and, confining myself solely to polite society, entitle the work 'Anecdotes of the Courts of Europe, ancient and modern.'"

"The wretch!" groaned Uncle Jack.

"Another thought it might be cut up into little essays, leaving out the quotations, entitled 'Men and Manners.'"

"A third was kind enough to observe, that though this particular work was quite unsaleable, yet as I appeared to have some historical information, he should be happy to undertake a historical romance from 'my graphic pen'—that was the phrase, was it not, Jack?"

[394]

Jack was too full to speak. —"Provided I would introduce a proper love-plot, and make it into three volumes post octavo, twenty-three lines in a page, neither more nor less. One honest fellow at last was found, who seemed to me a very respectable and indeed enterprising person. And after going through a list of calculations, which showed that no possible profit could arise, he generously offered to give me half of those no-profits, provided I would guarantee half the very visible expenses. I was just meditating the prudence of accepting this proposal, when your uncle

was seized with a sublime idea, which has whisked up my book in a whirlwind of expectation."

"And that idea?" said I despondently.

"That idea," quoth Uncle Jack, recovering himself, "is simply and shortly this. From time immemorial authors have been the prey of the publishers. Sir, authors have lived in garrets, nay, have been choked in the street by an unexpected crumb of bread, like the man who wrote the play, poor fellow!"

"Otway," said my father. "The story is not true—no matter."

"Milton, sir, as every body knows, sold *Paradise Lost* for ten pounds—ten pounds, sir! In short, instances of a like nature are too numerous to quote. But the booksellers, sir,—they are leviathans—they roll in seas of gold. They subsist upon authors as vampires upon little children. But at last endurance has reached its limit—the fiat has gone forth—the tocsin of liberty has resounded—authors have burst their fetters. And we have just inaugurated the institution of 'THE GRAND ANTI-PUBLISHER CONFEDERATE AUTHORS' SOCIETY,' by which, Pisistratus—by which, mark you, every author is to be his own publisher; that is, every author who joins the Society. No more submission of immortal works to mercenary calculators, to sordid tastes—no more hard bargains and broken hearts!—no more crumbs of bread choking great tragic poets in the streets—no more *Paradises Lost* sold at £10 a-piece! The author brings his book to a select committee appointed for the purpose; men of delicacy, education, and refinement—authors themselves—they read it, the Society publish; and after a modest commission towards the funds of the Society, the treasurer hands over the profits to the author."

"So that in fact, Uncle, every author who can't find a publisher any where else, will of course come to the Society. The fraternity will be numerous!"

"It will indeed."

"And the speculation—ruinous?"

"Ruinous, why?"

"Because in all mercantile negotiations it is ruinous to invest capital in supplies which fail of demand. You undertake to publish books that booksellers will not publish. Why? because booksellers can't sell them! It is just probable that you'll not sell them any better than the booksellers. Ergo, the more your business the larger your deficit. And the more numerous your society, the more disastrous your condition. Q.E.D."

"Pooh! The select committee will decide what books are to be published."

"Then where the deuce is the advantage to the authors? I would as lief submit my work to a publisher as I would to a select committee of authors. At all events, the publisher is not my rival; and I suspect he is the best judge, after all, of a book—as an accoucheur ought to be of a baby."

"Upon my word, nephew, you pay a bad compliment to your father's great work, which the booksellers will have nothing to do with."

That was artfully said, and I was posed; when Mr Caxton observed, with an apologetic smile—

"The fact is, my dear Pisistratus, that I want my book published without diminishing the little fortune I keep for you some day. Uncle Jack starts a society so to publish it.—Health and long life to Uncle Jack's society! One can't look a gift-horse in the mouth."

Here my mother entered, rosy from a shopping expedition with Mrs Primmins; and in her joy at hearing that I could stay dinner, all else was forgotten. By a wonder, which I did not regret, Uncle Jack really was engaged to dine out. He had other irons in the fire besides the "Literary Times" and the "Confederate Authors' Society;" he was deep in a scheme for making house-tops of felt, (which, under other hands, has, I believe, since succeeded;) and he had found a rich man (I suppose a hatter) who seemed well inclined to the project, and had actually asked him to dine and expound his views!

[395]

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Here we three are seated round the open window—after dinner—familiar as in the old happy time—and my mother is talking low that she may not disturb my father, who seems in thought.—

Cr-cr-crrr-cr-cr! I feel it—I have it.—Where! What! Where! Knock it down—brush it off! For Heaven's sake, see to it!—Crrrr-crrrrr—there—here—in my hair—in my sleeve—in my ear.—Cr-cr.

I say solemnly, and on the word of a Christian, that, as I sate down to begin this chapter, being somewhat in a brown study, the pen insensibly slipt from my hand, and, leaning back in my chair, I fell to gazing into the fire. It is the end of June, and a remarkably cold evening—even for that time of year. And while I was so gazing, I felt something crawling, just by the nape of the neck, ma'am. Instinctively and mechanically, and still musing, I put my hand there, and drew forth—What? That *what* it is which perplexes me. It was a thing—a dark thing—a much bigger thing than I had expected. And the sight took me so by surprise that I gave my hand a violent shake, and the thing went—where I know not. The what and the where are the knotty points in the whole question! No sooner had it gone than I was seized with repentance not to have examined it more closely—not to have ascertained what the creature was. It might have been an earwig—a

very large motherly earwig—an earwig far gone in that way in which earwigs wish to be who love their lords. I have a profound horror of earwigs—I firmly believe that they do get into the ear. That is a subject on which it is useless to argue with me upon philosophical grounds. I have a vivid recollection of a story told me by Mrs Primmins—How a lady for many years suffered under the most excruciating headaches; how, as the tombstones say, "physicians were in vain;" how she died; how her head was opened, and how such a nest of earwigs—ma'am—such a nest!—Earwigs are the prolifickest things, and so fond of their offspring! They sit on their eggs like hens—and the young, as soon as they are born, creep under them for protection—quite touchingly! Imagine such an establishment domesticated at one's tympanum!

But the creature was certainly larger than an earwig. It might have been one of that genus in the family of *Forficulidæ*, called *Labidoura*—monsters whose antennæ have thirty joints! There is a species of this creature in England, but, to the great grief of naturalists, and to the great honour of Providence, very rarely found, infinitely larger than the common earwig or *Forficulida auriculana*. Could it have been an early hornet? It had certainly a black head, and great feelers. I have a greater horror of hornets, if possible, than I have of earwigs. Two hornets will kill a man, and three a carriage-horse sixteen hands high. However, the creature was gone.—Yes, but where? Where had I so rashly thrown it? It might have got into a fold of my dressing-gown—or into my slippers—or, in short, any where, in the various recesses for earwigs and hornets which a gentleman's habiliments afford. I satisfy myself at last, as far as I can, seeing that I am not alone in the room—that it is not upon me. I look upon the carpet—the rug—the chair—under the fender. It is *non inventus*. I barbarously hope it is frizzling behind that great black coal in the grate. I pluck up courage—I prudently remove, to the other end of the room. I take up my pen—I begin my chapter—very nicely, too, I think upon the whole. I am just getting into my subject, when—cr-cr-cr-crawl—crawl—crawl—creep—creep—creep. Exactly, my dear ma'am, in the same place it was before! Oh, by the Powers! I forgot all my scientific regrets at not having scrutinised its genus before, whether *Forficulida* or *Labidoura*. I made a desperate lunge with both hands, something between thrust and cut, ma'am. The beast is gone. Yes, but again where? I say that that where is a very horrible question. Having come twice, in spite of all my precautions—and exactly on the same spot, too—it shows a confirmed disposition to habituate itself to its quarters—to effect a parochial settlement upon me; there is something awful and preternatural in it. I assure you that there is not a part of me that has not gone cr-cr-cr!—that has not crept, crawled, and forficulated ever since; and I just put it to you what sort of a chapter I can make after such a—My good little girl, will you just take the candle, and look carefully under the table?—that's a dear! Yes, my love, very black indeed, with two horns, and inclined to be corpulent. Gentlemen and ladies who have cultivated an acquaintance with the Phœnician language, are aware that Belzebub, examined etymologically and entomologically, is nothing more nor less than Baalzebub—"the Jupiter-Fly"—an emblem of the Destroying Attribute, which attribute, indeed, is found in all the insect tribes, more or less. Wherefore, as Mr Payne Knight, in his *Inquiry into Symbolical Languages*, hath observed—the Egyptian priests shaved their whole bodies, even to their eyebrows, lest unaware they should harbour any of the minor Zebubs of the great Baal. If I were the least bit more persuaded that that black cr-cr were about me still, and that the sacrifice of my eyebrows would deprive him of shelter, by the souls of the Ptolemies! I would,—and I will, too. Ring the bell, my little dear! John,—my—my cigar-box! There is not a cr in the world that can abide the fumes of the Havannah! Pshaw, sir, I am not the only man who lets his first thoughts upon cold steel end, like this chapter, in—Pff—pff—pff—!

[396]

## CHAPTER XXIX.

Every thing in this world is of use, even a black thing crawling over the nape of one's neck! Grim unknown, I shall make of thee—a simile!

I think, ma'am, you will allow that if an incident such as I have described had befallen yourself, and you had a proper and ladylike horror of earwigs (however motherly and fond of their offspring,) and also of early hornets, and indeed of all unknown things of the insect tribe with black heads and two great horns, or feelers or forceps, just by your ear—I think, ma'am, you will allow that you would find it difficult to settle back to your former placidity of mood and innocent stitch-work. You would feel a something that grated on your nerves—and cr'd—cr'd "all over you like," as the children say. And the worst is, that you would be ashamed to say it. You would feel obliged to look pleased and join in the conversation, and not fidget too much, nor always be shaking your flounces, and looking into a dark corner of your apron. Thus it is with many other things in life besides black insects. One has a secret care—an abstraction—a something between the memory and the feeling, of a dark crawling cr, which one has never dared to analyse. So I sate by my mother, trying to smile and talk as in the old time,—but longing to move about and look around, and escape to my own solitude, and take the clothes off my mind, and see what it was that had so troubled and terrified me—for trouble and terror were upon me. And my mother, who was always (heaven bless her!) inquisitive enough in all that concerned her darling Anachronism, was especially inquisitive that evening. She made me say where I had been, and what I had done, and how I had spent my time,—and Fanny Trevanion, (whom she had seen, by the way, three or four times, and whom she thought the prettiest person in the world)—oh, she must know exactly what I thought of Fanny Trevanion!

[397]

And all this while my father seemed in thought; and so, with my arm over my mother's chair, and my hand in hers—I answered my mother's questions, sometimes by a stammer, sometimes by a violent effort at volubility, when, at some interrogatory that went tingling right to my heart, I



turned uneasily, and there were my father's eyes fixed on mine. Fixed, as they had been—when, and none knew why, I pined and languished, and my father said "he must go to school." Fixed, with quiet watchful tenderness. Ah no!—his thought had not been on the great work—he had been deep in the pages of that less worthy one for which he had yet more an author's paternal care. I met those eyes, and yearned to throw myself on his heart—and tell him all. Tell him what? Ma'am, I no more knew what to tell him, than I know what that black thing was which has so worried me all this blessed evening!

"Pisistratus," said my father softly, "I fear you have forgotten the saffron bag."

"No, indeed, sir," said I smiling.

"He," resumed my father—"he who wears the saffron bag has more cheerful, settled spirits than you seem to have, my poor boy."

"My dear Austin, his spirits are very good, I think," said my mother anxiously.

My father shook his head—then he took two or three turns about the room.

"Shall I ring for candles, sir, it is getting dark: you will wish to read?"

"No, Pisistratus, it is you who shall read, and this hour of twilight best suits the book I am about to open to you."

So saying, he drew a chair between me and my mother, and seated himself gravely, looking down a long time in silence—then turning his eyes to each of us alternately.

"My dear wife," said he at length, almost solemnly, "I am going to speak of myself as I was before I knew you."

Even in the twilight I saw that my mother's countenance changed.

"You have respected my secrets, Katherine, tenderly—honestly. Now the time is come when I can tell them to you and to our son."

## CHAPTER XXX.

### MY FATHER'S FIRST LOVE.

"I lost my mother early; my father, (a good man, but who was so indolent that he rarely stirred from his chair, and who often passed whole days without speaking, like an Indian dervish,) left Roland and myself to educate ourselves much according to our own tastes. Roland shot, and hunted, and fished,—read all the poetry and books of chivalry to be found in my father's collection, which was rich in such matters, and made a great many copies of the old pedigree;—the only thing in which my father ever evinced much of the vital principle. Early in life I conceived a passion for graver studies, and by good luck I found a tutor in Mr Tibbets, who, but for his modesty, Kitty, would have rivalled Porson. He was a second Budæus for industry, and, by the way, he said exactly the same thing that Budæus did, viz. 'that the only lost day in his life was that in which he was married; for on that day he had only had six hours for reading!' Under such a master I could not fail to be a scholar. I came from the university with such distinction as led me to look sanguinely on my career in the world.

"I returned to my father's quiet rectory to pause and look about me, and consider what path I should take to fame. The rectory was just at the foot of the hill, on the brow of which were the ruins of the castle Roland has since purchased. And though I did not feel for the ruins the same romantic veneration as my dear brother, (for my day-dreams were more coloured by classic than feudal recollections,) I yet loved to climb the hill, book in hand, and build my castles in the air amidst the wrecks of that which time had shattered on the earth.

[398]

"One day, entering the old weed-grown court, I saw a lady, seated on my favourite spot, sketching the ruins. The lady was young—more beautiful than any woman I had yet seen, at least to my eyes. In a word, I was fascinated, and, as the trite phrase goes, 'spell-bound.' I seated myself at a little distance, and contemplated her without desiring to speak. By-and-by, from another part of the ruins, which were then uninhabited, came a tall, imposing, elderly gentleman, with a benignant aspect; and a little dog. The dog ran up to me, barking. This drew the attention of both lady and gentleman to me. The gentleman approached, called off the dog, and apologised with much politeness. Surveying me somewhat curiously, he then began to ask questions about the old place and the family it had belonged to, with the name and antecedents of which he was well acquainted. By degrees it came out that I was the descendant of that family, and the younger son of the humble rector who was now its representative. The gentleman then introduced himself to me as the Earl of Rainsforth, the principal proprietor in the neighbourhood, but who had so rarely visited the county during my childhood and earlier youth, that I had never before seen him. His only son, however, a young man of great promise, had been at the same college with me in my first year at the university. The young lord was a reading man and a scholar; and we had become slightly acquainted when he left for his travels.

"Now, on hearing my name, Lord Rainsforth took my hand cordially, and leading me to his daughter, said, 'Think, Ellinor, how fortunate; this is the Mr Caxton whom your brother so often spoke of.'

"In short, my dear Pisistratus, the ice was broken, the acquaintance made, and Lord Rainsforth, saying he was come to atone for his long absence from the county, and to reside at Compton the greater part of the year, pressed me to visit him. I did so. Lord Rainsforth's liking to me increased: I went there often."

My father paused, and seeing my mother had fixed her eyes upon him with a sort of mournful earnestness, and had pressed her hands very tightly together, he bent down and kissed her forehead.

"There is no cause, my child!" said he. It is the only time I ever heard him call my mother by that paternal name. But then, I never heard him before so grave and solemn—not a quotation, too—it was incredible: it was not my father speaking—it was another man. "Yes, I went there often. Lord Rainsforth was a remarkable person. Shyness, that was wholly without pride, (which is rare,) and a love for quiet literary pursuits, had prevented his taking that personal part in public life for which he was richly qualified; but his reputation for sense and honour, and his personal popularity, had given him no inconsiderable influence even, I believe, in the formation of cabinets, and he had once been prevailed upon to fill a high diplomatic situation abroad, in which I have no doubt that he was as miserable as a good man can be under any infliction. He was now pleased to retire from the world, and look at it through the loopholes of retreat. Lord Rainsforth had a great respect for talent, and a warm interest in such of the young as seemed to him to possess it. By talent, indeed, his family had risen, and were strikingly characterised. His ancestor, the first peer, had been a distinguished lawyer; his father had been celebrated for scientific attainments; his children, Ellinor and Lord Pendarvis, were highly accomplished. Thus, the family identified themselves with the aristocracy of intellect, and seemed unconscious of their claims to the lower aristocracy of rank. You must bear this in mind throughout my story.

"Lady Ellinor shared her father's tastes and habits of thought—(she was not then an heiress.) Lord Rainsforth talked to me of my career. It was a time when the French Revolution had made statesmen look round with some anxiety to strengthen the existing order of things, by alliance with all in the rising generation who evinced such ability as might influence their contemporaries.

"University distinction is, or was formerly, among the popular passports to public life. By degrees Lord Rainsforth liked me so well, as to suggest to me a seat in the House of Commons. A member of Parliament might rise to any thing, and Lord Rainsforth had sufficient influence to effect my return. Dazzling prospect this to a young scholar fresh from Thucydides, and with Demosthenes fresh at his tongue's end. My dear boy, I was not then, you see, quite what I am now; in a word, I loved Ellinor Compton, and therefore I was ambitious. You know how ambitious she is still. But I could not mould my ambition to hers. I could not contemplate entering the senate of my country as a dependant on a party or a patron—as a man who must make his fortune there—as a man who, in every vote, must consider how much nearer he advanced himself to emolument. I was not even certain that Lord Rainsforth's views on politics were the same as mine would be. How could the politics of an experienced man of the world be those of an ardent young student? But had they been identical, I felt that I could not so creep into equality with a patron's daughter. No! I was ready to abandon my own more scholastic predilections—to strain every energy at the bar—to carve, or force my own way to fortune—and, if I arrived at independence, then—what then? why, the right to speak of love, and aim at power. This was not the view of Ellinor Compton. The law seemed to her a tedious, needless drudgery: there was nothing in it to captivate her imagination. She listened to me with that charm which she yet retains, and by which she seems to identify herself with those who speak to her. She would turn to me with a pleading look when her father dilated on the brilliant prospects of a parliamentary success; for he (not having gained it, yet having lived with those who had,) overvalued it, and seemed ever to wish to enjoy it through some other. But when I, in turn, spoke of independence, of the bar, Ellinor's face grew overcast. The world—the world was with her, and the ambition of the world, which is always for power or effect! A part of the house lay exposed to the east wind, 'Plant half way down the hill,' said I one day. 'Plant?' cried Lady Emily—'it will be twenty years before the trees grow up. No, my dear father, build a wall, and cover it with creepers!' That was an illustration of her whole character. She could not wait till trees had time to grow up; a dead wall would be so much more quickly thrown up, and parasite creepers would give it a prettier effect. Nevertheless, she was a grand and noble creature. And I—in love! Not so discouraged as you may suppose; for Lord Rainsforth often hinted encouragement, which even I could scarcely misconstrue. Not caring for rank, and not wishing for fortune beyond competence for his daughter, he saw in me all he required,—a gentleman of ancient birth, and one in whom his own active mind could prosecute that kind of mental ambition which overflowed in him, and yet had never had its vent. And Ellinor!—heaven forbid I should say she loved me,—but something made me think she could do so. Under these notions, suppressing all my hopes, I made a bold effort to master the influences round me, and to adopt that career I thought worthiest of us all. I went to London to read for the bar."

[399]

"The bar! is it possible?" cried I. My father smiled sadly.

"Every thing seemed possible to me then. I read some months. I began to see my way even in that short time; began to comprehend what would be the difficulties before me, and to feel there was that within me which could master them. I took a holiday and returned to Cumberland. I found Roland there on my return. Always of a roving adventurous temper, though he had not then entered the army, he had, for more than two years, been wandering over the Continent on foot. It was a young knight-errant whom I embraced, and who overwhelmed me with reproaches that I

should be reading for the law. There had never been a lawyer in the family! It was about that time, I think, that I petrified him with the discovery of the printer! I knew not exactly wherefore, whether from jealousy, fear, foreboding—but it certainly *was* a pain that seized me—when I learned from Roland that he had become intimate at Compton Hall. Roland and Lord Rainsforth had met at the house of a neighbouring gentleman, and Lord Rainsforth had welcomed his acquaintance, at first perhaps for my sake, afterwards for his own.

[400]

"I could not for the life of me," continued my father, "ask Roland if he admired Ellinor; but, when I found that he did not put that question to me, I trembled!"

"We went to Compton together, speaking little by the way. We stayed there some days."

My father here thrust his hand into his waistcoat—all men have their little ways, which denote much; and when my father thrust his hand into his waistcoat, it was always a sign of some mental effort—he was going to prove, or to argue, to moralise, or to preach. Therefore, though I was listening before with all my ears, I believe I had, speaking magnetically and mesmerically, an extra pair of ears, a new sense supplied to me, when my father put his hand into his waistcoat.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### WHEREIN MY FATHER CONTINUES HIS STORY.

"There is not a mystical creation, type, symbol, or poetical invention for meanings abstruse, recondite, and incomprehensible, which is not represented by the female gender," said my father, having his hand quite buried in his waistcoat. "There is the Sphynx, and the Enigma, and the Chimera, and Isis, whose veil no man had ever lifted: they are all ladies, Kitty, every one of them! And so was Persephone, who must be always either in heaven or hell—and Hecate, who was one thing by night and another by day. The Sibyls were females; and so were the Gorgons, the Harpies, the Furies, the Fates, and the Teutonic Valkyrs, Normies, and Hela herself: in short, all representations of ideas, obscure, inscrutable, and portentous, are nouns feminine."

Heaven bless my father! Augustine Caxton was himself again! I began to fear that the story had slipped away from him, lost in that labyrinth of learning. But, luckily, as he paused for breath, his look fell on those limpid blue eyes of my mother's, and that honest open brow of hers, which had certainly nothing in common with Sphynxes, Chimeras, Fates, Furies, or Valkyrs; and, whether his heart smote him, or his reason made him own that he had fallen into a very disingenuous and unsound train of assertion, I know not, but his front relaxed, and with a smile he resumed—"Ellinor was the last person in the world to deceive any one willingly. Did she deceive me and Roland that we both, though not conceited men, fancied that, if we had dared to speak openly of love, we had not so dared in vain? or do you think, Kitty, that a woman really can love (not much, perhaps, but somewhat) two or three, or half a dozen at a time?"

"Impossible," cried my mother. "And as for this Lady Ellinor, I am shocked at her—I don't know what to call it!"

"Nor I either, my dear!" said my father, slowly taking his hand from his waistcoat, as if the effort were too much for him, and the problem were insoluble. "But this, begging your pardon, I do think, that before a young woman does really, truly, and cordially centre her affections on one object, she suffers fancy, imagination, the desire of power, curiosity, or heaven knows what, to simulate, even to her own mind, pale reflexions of the luminary not yet risen—parhelia that precede the sun. Don't judge of Roland as you see him now, Pisistratus—grim, and gray, and formal; imagine a nature soaring high amongst daring thoughts, or exuberant with the nameless poetry of youthful life—with a frame matchless for bounding elasticity—an eye bright with haughty fire—a heart from which noble sentiments sprang like sparks from an anvil. Lady Ellinor had an ardent, inquisitive imagination. This bold fiery nature must have moved her interest. On the other hand, she had an instructed, full, and eager mind. Am I vain if I say, now at the lapse of so many years, that in my mind her intellect felt companionship? When a woman loves, and marries, and settles, why then she becomes—a one whole, a completed being. But a girl like Ellinor has in her many women. Various herself, all varieties please her. I do believe that, if either of us had spoken the word boldly, Lady Ellinor would have shrunk back to her own heart—examined it, tasked it, and given a frank and generous answer. And he who had spoken first might have had the better chance not to receive a 'No.' But neither of us spoke. And perhaps she was rather curious to know if she had made an impression, than anxious to create it. It was not that she willingly deceived us, but her whole atmosphere was delusion. Mists come before the sunrise. However this be, Roland and I were not long in detecting each other. And hence arose, first coldness, then jealousy, then quarrels."

[401]

"Oh, my father, your love must have been indeed powerful, to have made a breach between the hearts of two such brothers!"

"Yes," said my father; "it was amidst the old ruins of the castle, there, where I had first seen Ellinor—that, winding my arm round Roland's neck, as I found him seated amongst the weeds and stones, his face buried in his hands—it was there that I said—'Brother, we both love this woman! My nature is the calmer of the two, I shall feel the loss less. Brother, shake hands, and God speed you, for I go!'"

"Austin," murmured my mother, sinking her head on my father's breast.

"And therewith we quarrelled. For it was Roland who insisted, while the tears rolled down his eyes, and he stamped his foot on the ground, that he was the intruder, the interloper—that he had no hope—that he had been a fool and a madman—and that it was for him to go! Now, while we were disputing, and words began to run high, my father's old servant entered the desolate place, with a note from Lady Ellinor to me, asking for the loan of some book I had praised. Roland saw the hand-writing, and while I turned the note over and over irresolutely, before I broke the seal, he vanished.

"He did not return to my father's house. We did not know what had become of him. But I, thinking over that impulsive volcanic nature, took quick alarm. And I went in search of him; came on his track at last; and, after many days, found him in a miserable cottage amongst the most dreary of the dreary wastes which form so large a part of Cumberland. He was so altered I scarcely knew him. To be brief, we came at last to a compromise. We would go back to Compton. This suspense was intolerable. One of us at least should take courage and learn his fate. But who should speak first? We drew lots, and the lot fell on me.

"And now that I was really to pass the Rubicon, now that I was to impart that secret hope which had animated me so long—been to me a new life—what were my sensations? My dear boy, depend on it that that age is the happiest, when such feelings as I felt then can agitate us no more. They are mistakes in the serene order of that majestic life which heaven meant for thoughtful man. Our souls should be as stars on earth, not as meteors and tortured comets. What could I offer to Ellinor—to her father? What but a future of patient labour? And in either answer, what alternative of misery!—my own existence shattered, or Roland's noble heart!

"Well, we went to Compton. In our former visits we had been almost the only guests. Lord Rainsforth did not much affect the intercourse of country squires, less educated than now. And in excuse for Ellinor and for us, we were almost the only men of her own age she saw when in that large dull house. But now the London season had broken up, the house was filled; there was no longer that familiar and constant approach to the mistress of the Hall, which had made us like one family. Great ladies, fine people, were round her; a look, a smile, a passing word, were as much as I had a right to expect. And the talk, too, how different! Before, I could speak on books,—I was at home there! Roland could pour forth his dreams, his chivalrous love for the past, his bold defiance of the unknown future. And Ellinor, cultivated and fanciful, could sympathise with both. And her father, scholar and gentleman, could sympathise too. But now—"

[402]

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### WHEREIN MY FATHER BRINGS ABOUT HIS DENOUEMENT.

"It is no use in the world," said my father, "to know all the languages expounded in grammars and splintered up into lexicons, if we don't learn the language of the world. It is a talk apart, Kitty," cried my father warming up. "It is an ANAGLYPH—a spoken anaglyph, my dear! If all the hieroglyphs of the Egyptians had been A B C to you, still if you did not know the anaglyph, you would know nothing of the true mysteries of the priests."<sup>[1]</sup>

"Neither Roland nor I knew one symbol-letter of the anaglyph. Talk, talk—talk on persons we never heard of, things we never cared for. All we thought of importance, puerile or pedantic trifles—all we thought so trite and childish, the grand momentous business of life! If you found a little schoolboy, on his half holiday, fishing for minnows with a crooked pin, and you began to tell him of all the wonders of the deep, the laws of the tides, and the antediluvian relics of iguanodon and ichthyosaurus—nay, if you spoke but of pearl fisheries, and coral banks, or water-kelpies and naiads, would not the little boy cry out peevishly, 'Don't tease me with all that nonsense! let me fish in peace for my minnows.' I think the little boy is right after his own way—it was to fish for minnows that he came out, poor child, not to hear about iguanodons and water-kelpies!

"So the company fished for minnows, and not a word could we say about our pearl fisheries and coral banks! And as for fishing for minnows ourselves, my dear boy, we should have been less bewildered if you had asked us to fish for a mermaid! Do you see, now, one reason why I have let you go thus early into the world? Well, but amongst these minnow-fishers there was one who fished with an air that made the minnows look larger than salmons.

"Trevanion had been at Cambridge with me. We were even intimate. He was a young man like myself, with his way to make in the world. Poor as I—of a family upon a par with mine—old enough but decayed. There was, however, this difference between us. He had connexions in the great world—I had none. Like me his chief pecuniary resource was a college fellowship. Now, Trevanion had established a high reputation at the university; but less as a scholar, though a pretty fair one, than as a man to rise in life. Every faculty he had was an energy. He aimed at every thing—lost some things, gained others. He was a great speaker in a debating society, a member of some politico-economical club. He was an eternal talker—brilliant, various, paradoxical, florid—different from what he is now. For, dreading fancy, his career since has been an effort to curb it. But all his mind attached itself to something that we Englishmen call solid; it was a large mind—not, my dear Kitty, like a fine whale sailing through knowledge from the pleasure of sailing—but like a polypus, that puts forth all its feelers for the purpose of catching hold of something. Trevanion had gone at once to London from the university: his reputation and his talk dazzled his connexions, not unjustly. They made an effort—they got him into parliament: he had spoken, he had succeeded. He came to Compton with the flush of his virgin fame. I cannot

convey to you, who know him now—with his care-worn face, and abrupt dry manner,—reduced by perpetual gladiatorship to the skin and bone of his former self—what that man was when he first stepped into the arena of life.

"You see, my listeners, that you have to recollect that we middle-aged folks were young then—that is to say, we were as different from what we are now, as the green bough of summer is from the dry wood, out of which we make a ship or a gate-post. Neither man nor wood comes to the uses of life till the green leaves are stripped and the sap gone. And then the uses of life transform us into strange things with other names: the tree is a tree no more—it is a gate or a ship; the youth is a youth no more, but a one-legged soldier; a hollow-eyed statesman; a scholar spectacled and slippers! When Micyllus—(here the hand slides into the waistcoat again!)—when Micyllus," said my father, "asked the cock that had once been Pythagoras,<sup>[2]</sup> if the affair of Troy was really as Homer told it, the cock replied scornfully, 'How could Homer know any thing about it?—at that time he was a camel in Bactria.' Pistratus, according to the doctrine of metempsychosis, you might have been a Bactrian camel—when that which to my life was the siege of Troy saw Roland and Trevanion before the walls.

[403]

"Handsome you can see that Trevanion has been; but the beauty of his countenance then was in its perpetual play, its intellectual eagerness; and his conversation was so discursive, so various, so animated, and, above all, so full of the things of the day! If he had been a priest of Serapis for fifty years, he could not have known the Anaglyph better! Therefore he filled up every crevice and pore of that hollow society with his broken, inquisitive, petulant light. Therefore he was admired, talked of, listened to; and everybody said, 'Trevanion is a rising man.'

"Yet I did not do him then the justice I have done since—for we students and abstract thinkers are apt too much, in our first youth, to look to the *depth* of a man's mind or knowledge, and not enough to the *surface* it may cover. There may be more water in a flowing stream, only four feet deep, and certainly more force and more health, than in a sullen pool, thirty yards to the bottom! I did not do Trevanion justice. I did not see how naturally he realised Lady Ellinor's ideal. I have said that she was like many women in one. Trevanion was a thousand men in one. He had learning to please her mind, eloquence to dazzle her fancy, beauty to please her eye, reputation precisely of the kind to allure her vanity, honour and conscientious purpose to satisfy her judgment. And, above all, he was ambitious. Ambitious not as I—not as Roland was, but ambitious as Ellinor was: ambitious, not to realise some grand ideal in the silent heart, but to grasp the practical positive substances that lay without.

"Ellinor was a child of the great world, and so was he. I saw not all this, nor did Roland; and Trevanion seemed to pay no particular court to Ellinor.

"But the time approached when I ought to speak. The house began to thin. Lord Rainsforth had leisure to resume his easy conferences with me; and one day walking in his garden he gave me the opportunity. For I need not say, Pistratus," said my father, looking at me earnestly, "that before any man of honour, especially if of inferior worldly pretensions, will open his heart seriously to the daughter, it is his duty to speak first to the parent, whose confidence has imposed that trust." I bowed my head and coloured.

"I know not how it was," continued my father, "but Lord Rainsforth turned the conversation on Ellinor. After speaking of his expectations from his son, who was returning home, he said 'But he will of course enter public life,—will, I trust, soon marry, have a separate establishment, and I shall see but little of him. My Ellinor!—I cannot bear the thought of parting wholly with her. And that, to say the selfish truth, is one reason why I have never wished her to marry a rich man, and so leave me for ever. I could hope that she will give herself to one who may be contented to reside at least a great part of the year with me—who may bless me with another son, not steal from me a daughter. I do not mean that he should waste his life in the country; his occupations would probably lead him to London. I care not where my *house* is, all I want is to keep my *home*. You know' (he added, with a smile that I thought meaning,) 'how often I have implied to you that I have no vulgar ambition for Ellinor. Her portion must be very small, for my estate is strictly entailed, and I have lived too much up to my income all my life to hope to save much now. But her tastes do not require expense; and while I live, at least, there need be no change. She can only prefer a man whose talents, congenial to hers, will win their own career, and ere I die that career may be made.' Lord Rainsforth paused, and then—how, in what words I know not,—but out all burst!—my long-suppressed, timid, anxious, doubtful, fearful love. The strange energy it had given to a nature till then so retiring and calm! My recent devotion to the law,—my confidence that, with such a prize, I could succeed,—it was but a transfer of labour from one study to another. Labour could conquer all things, and custom sweeten them in the conquest. The bar was a less brilliant career than the senate. But the first aim of the poor man should be independence. In short, Pistratus, wretched egotist that I was, I forgot Roland in that moment; and I spoke as one who felt his life was in his words.

[404]

"Lord Rainsforth looked at me, when I had done, with a countenance full of affection—but it was not cheerful.

"My dear Caxton," said he, tremulously, 'I own that I once wished this—wished it from the hour I knew you; but why did you so long—I never suspected that—nor I am sure did Ellinor.' He stopped short, and added quickly—'However, go and speak, as you have spoken to me, to Ellinor. Go, it may not yet be too late. And yet—but go.'

"Too late—what meant those words? Lord Rainsforth had turned hastily down another walk, and

left me alone, to ponder over an answer which concealed a riddle. Slowly I took my way towards the house, and sought Lady Ellinor, half hoping, half dreading, to find her alone. There was a little room communicating with a conservatory, where she usually sat in the morning. Thither I took my course.

"That room, I see it still!—the walls covered with pictures from her own hand, many were sketches of the haunts we had visited together—the simple ornaments, womanly but not effeminate—the very books on the table that had been made familiar by dear associations. Yes, there the *Tasso* in which we had read together the episode of *Clorinda*—there the *Æschylus* in which I translated to her the *Prometheus*. Pedantries these might seem to some: pedantries, perhaps, they were; but they were proofs of that congeniality which had knit the man of books to the daughter of the world. That room—it was the home of my heart! Such, in my vanity of spirit, methought would be the air round a home to come. I looked about me, troubled and confused, and, halting timidly, I saw Ellinor before me, leaning her face on her hand, her cheek more flushed than usual, and tears in her eyes. I approached in silence, and as I drew my chair to the table, my eye fell on a glove on the floor. It was a man's glove. Do you know," said my father, "that once, when I was very young, I saw a Dutch picture called *The Glove*, and the subject was of murder. There was a weed-grown marshy pool, a desolate dismal landscape, that of itself inspired thoughts of ill deeds and terror. And two men, as if walking by chance, came to this pool, the finger of one pointed to a blood-stained glove, and the eyes of both were fixed on each other, as if there were no need of words. That glove told its tale! The picture had long haunted me in my boyhood, but it never gave me so uneasy and fearful a feeling as did that real glove upon the floor. Why? My dear Pisistratus, the theory of forebodings involves one of those questions on which we may ask 'why' for ever. More chilled than I had been in speaking to her father, I took heart at last and spoke to Ellinor"—

My father stopped short; the moon had risen, and was shining full into the room and on his face. And by that light the face was changed; young emotions had brought back youth—my father looked a young man. But what pain was there! If the memory alone could raise what, after all, was but the ghost of suffering, what had been its living reality! Involuntarily I seized his hand: my father pressed it convulsively, and said, with a deep breath, "It was too late; Trevanion was Lady Ellinor's accepted, plighted, happy lover. My dear Katherine, I do not envy him now; look up, sweet wife, look up!"

[405]

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

"Ellinor (let me do her justice) was shocked at my silent emotion. No human lip could utter more tender sympathy, more noble self-reproach; but that was no balm to my wound. So I left the house—so I never returned to the law—so all impetus, all motive for exertion, seemed taken from my being—so I went back into books. And so, a moping, despondent, worthless mourner might I have been to the end of my days, but that heaven, in its mercy, sent thy mother, Pisistratus, across my path; and day and night I bless God and her, for I have been, and am—oh, indeed, I am, a happy man!"

My mother threw herself on my father's breast, sobbing violently, and then turned from the room without a word,—my father's eye, swimming in tears, followed her; and then, after pacing the room for some moments in silence, he came up to me, and leaning his arm on my shoulder, whispered, "Can you guess why I have now told you all this, my son?"

"Yes, partly: thank you, father," I faltered, and sat down, for I felt faint.

"Some sons," said my father, seating himself beside me, "would find in their father's follies and errors an excuse for their own: not so will you, Pisistratus."

"I see no folly, no error, sir—only nature and sorrow."

"Pause, ere you thus think," said my father. "Great was the folly, and great the error of indulging imagination that had no basis—of linking the whole usefulness of my life to the will of a human creature like myself. Heaven did not design the passion of love to be this tyrant; nor is it so with the mass and multitude of human life. We dreamers, solitary students like me, or half poets like poor Roland, make our own disease. How many years, even after I had regained serenity, as your mother gave me a home long not appreciated, have I wasted. The main-spring of my existence was snapped—I took no note of time. And therefore now, you see, late in life the Nemesis wakes. I look back with regret at powers neglected, opportunities gone. Galvanically I brace up energies half palsied by disuse, and you see me, rather than rest quiet and good for nothing, talked into what, I dare say, are sad follies, by an Uncle Jack! And now I behold Ellinor again; and I say, in wonder, All this—all this—all this agony, all this torpor for that haggard face, that worldly spirit! So is it ever in life. Mortal things fade; immortal things spring more freshly with every step to the tomb.

"Ah!" continued my father, with a sigh, "it would not have been so, if at your age I had found out the secret of the saffron bag!"

### CHAPTER XXXIV.

"And Roland, sir," said I; "how did he take it?"

"With all the indignation of a proud unreasonable man. More indignant, poor fellow, for me than

himself. And so did he wound and gall me by what he said of Ellinor,—and so did he rage against me because I would not share his rage,—that again we quarrelled. We parted, and did not meet for many years. We came into sudden possession of our little fortunes. His he devoted (as you may know) to the purchase of the old ruins, and the commission in the army, which had always been his dream—and so went his way, wrathful. My share gave me an excuse for indolence,—it satisfied all my wants; and when my old tutor died, and his young child became my ward, and, somehow or other, from my ward my wife, it allowed me to resign my fellowship, and live amongst my books—still as a book myself. One comfort, long before my marriage, I had conceived; and that, too, Roland has since said was comfort to him. Ellinor became an heiress—her poor brother died; and all of the estate that did not pass in the male line devolved on her. That fortune made a gulf between us almost as wide as her marriage. For Ellinor, poor and portionless, in spite of her rank, I could have worked, striven, slaved. But Ellinor RICH! it would have crushed me. This was a comfort. But still, still the past—that perpetual aching sense of something that had seemed the essential of life withdrawn from life, evermore, evermore. What was left was not sorrow, it was a void. Had I lived more with men, and less with dreams and books, I should have made my nature large enough to bear the loss of a single passion. But in solitude we shrink up. No plant so much as man needs the sun and the air. I comprehend now why most of our best and wisest men have lived in capitals; and therefore again I say, that one scholar in a family is enough. Confiding in your sound heart and strong honour, I turn you thus betimes on the world. Have I done wrong? Prove that I have not, my child. Do you know what a very good man has said—Listen and follow my precept, not example.

[406]

"The state of the world is such, and so much depends on action, that every thing seems to say aloud to every man, 'Do something—do it—do it!'"<sup>[3]</sup> I was profoundly touched, and I rose refreshed and hopeful, when suddenly the door opened, and who or what in the world should come in; but certainly he, she, it, or they, shall not come into this chapter!—On that point I am resolved. No, my dear young lady, I am extremely flattered;—I feel for your curiosity; but really not a peep—not one! And yet—well then, if you will have it, and look so coaxingly—who, or what I say, should come in abrupt, unexpected—taking away one's breath, not giving one time to say, "By your leave, or with your leave," but making one's mouth stand open with surprise, and one's eyes fix in a big round stupid stare, but—

THE END OF THE CHAPTER.

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## POLITICAL ECONOMY, BY J. S. MILL.<sup>[4]</sup>

[407]

In the old feud between the man of experience and the man of theory, it sometimes happens that the former obtains a triumph by the mere activity of the latter. Cases have been known where the theorist, in the clarifying and perfecting his own theory, has argued himself round to those very truths which his empirical antagonist had held to with a firm though less reasoning faith. He stood to his post; the stream of knowledge seemed to be flowing past him, and those who floated on it laughed at his stationary figure as they left him behind. Nevertheless he stood still; and by-and-by this meandering stream, with the busy crew that navigated it, after many a turn and many a curve, have returned to the very spot where he had made his obstinate halt.

This has been illustrated, and we venture to say will be illustrated still further, in the progress of the science of political economy. The man of experience has been taunted for his obstinacy and blindness in adhering to something which he called common sense and matter of fact; and behold! the scientific economist, in the course of his own theorising, is returning to those very positions from which he has been endeavouring to drive his opponent. The present work of Mr J. S. Mill, the latest and most complete exposition of the most advanced doctrines of the political economists, manifests, on more than one occasion, this *retrograde progress*,—demolishing, on the ground of still more scientific principles—the value of which time, however, must test—those arguments by which his scientific predecessors had attempted to mislead the man of experience or of empirical knowledge.

When, moreover, we consider, that the errors of the political economist are not allowed to remain mere errors of theory, but are pushed forward into practice, thrust immediately into the vital interests of the community, we must admit that never was the man of experience and common sense more fully justified in holding back and looking long before he yielded assent to his new teachers. Stranger paradoxes were never broached than some that have lived their day in this science; and paradoxes as they were, they claimed immediately their share of influence in our legislative measures. A learned professor, a luminary of the science, demonstrated that absenteeism could have nothing whatever to do with the poverty of Ireland. So the Greek sophist demonstrated that Achilles could never catch the tortoise. But the Greek was the more reasonable of the two: he required of no one to stake his fortune on the issue of the race. The professor of political economy not only teaches his sophism—he would have us *back his tortoise*.

Although it has been our irksome task to oppose the application to practice of half-formed theories, ill made up, and most dangerously incomplete, yet we surely need not say that we take a genuine interest in the approximation to a sound and trustworthy state of the science of political economy. That, notwithstanding its obliquities, the new science has rendered a substantial service to mankind, and is calculated, when thoroughly understood, to render still

greater service—that it embraces topics of the widest and most permanent interest, and that intellects of the highest order have been worthily occupied in their investigation—this, let no strain of observation in which from time to time we have indulged, be thought to deny or controvert. To explain the complicate machinery of a modern commercial state, is assuredly one of the most useful tasks, and by no means the most easy, to which a reflective mind could address itself. When Adam Smith, leaving the arena of metaphysical inquiry, in which he had honourably distinguished himself, turned his analytic powers to the examination of the common-place yet intricate affairs of that commercial community in which he lived, he acted in the same enlightened spirit which led Bacon to demand of philosophy, that she should leave listening to the echoes of the school-room, and walk abroad into nature, amongst things and realities. The author of *The Wealth of Nations*, like him of the *Novum Organum*, struck out a new path of wisely utilitarian thinking. If the one led philosophy into the real world of nature and her daily phenomena, the other conducted her into a world still more novel to her footsteps—the world of commerce, of buying and selling, of manufacture and exchange. It may, indeed, be said of both these men, that in their leading and most valuable tenets, they were but announcing the claims of common sense; and that, in doing this, they had from time to time, and in utterances more or less distinct, been anticipated by others. But the cause of common sense is, after all, the very last which obtains a fair and potent advocacy; and the philosophy of one age is always destined, if it be true, to become the common sense of succeeding ages; and it detracts very little from the merit of an eminent writer who has been the means of impressing any great truth upon the minds of men, either at home or abroad, that others had obtained a view of it also, and given to it an imperfect and less effective enunciation. Let due honour, therefore, be paid to our countryman Adam Smith, the founder, on this side of the Channel at least, of the science of political economy—honour to him who turned a most keen intellect, sharpened by those metaphysical studies for which his fragmentary Essays, as well as and still more than his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, prove him to have been eminently qualified—turned it from these captivating subtleties to inquiries into the causes, actually in operation, of the prosperity of a commercial people. He left these regions of mazy labyrinthine thought, which, if not as beautiful as the enchanted gardens in which Tasso imprisoned his knight, are, to a certain order of spirits, quite as ensnaring, to look into the mystery of bills of exchange, of systems of banking, customs, and the currency. Be it admitted at once, and ungrudgingly, that Adam Smith and some of his successors have done a substantial service in assisting to explain the machinery of society—the organisation, so to speak, of a commercial body. Until this is done, and done thoroughly, no proposed measure of legislation, and no course of conduct voluntarily adopted by the people, can be seen in all its bearings; the true causes of the most immediate and pressing evils can never be certainly known, and, of course, the efficient remedies can never be applied. Our main quarrel—though we have many—with the political economists is on this ground—that, having constructed a theory explanatory of the *wealth* of nations, they have wished to enforce this upon our legislature, as if it had embraced all the causes which conspire to the *wellbeing* of nations; as if wealth and wellbeing were synonymous. Having determined the state of things best fitted to procure, in general, the greatest aggregate amount of riches, they have proceeded to deal with a people as if it were a corporate body, whose sole object was to increase the total amount of its possessions. They have overlooked the equally vital questions concerning the distribution of these possessions, and of the *various employments* of mankind. Full of their leading idea, and accustomed to abstractions and generalities, they forget the *individual*, and appear to treat their subject as if the aggregate wealth of a community were to be enjoyed in some aggregate manner, and a sum-total of possessions would represent the comforts and enjoyments of its several members. To know what measures tend to increase the national wealth is undoubtedly of great importance, but it is not *all*; the theory of riches, or of commerce, is not the theory of society.

[408]

As political economy arose with a metaphysician, and has been prosecuted by men of the same abstract turn of mind, it very soon aspired to the philosophical character of a science. It laid down its *laws*. But it has not always been seen that the harmonious and systematic form it has been able to assume was owing to an arbitrary division of social topics, which in their nature, and in their operation on human welfare, are inextricably combined. They laid down laws, which could only be considered such by obstinately refusing to look beyond a certain number of isolated facts; and they persisted in governing mankind according to laws obtained by this imperfect generalisation.

[409]

With regard to the main doctrine of the political economists, that of free-trade—their advocacy of unfettered industry, whether working for the home or foreign market—one sees plainly that there is a truth here. Looking at the matter abstractedly from other considerations, what doctrine could be more reasonable or more benign than that which instructs the separate communities of mankind to throw aside all commercial jealousies, all unnecessary heartburnings—to throw down their barriers, their custom-houses, their preventive stations—to let the commerce and industry of the world be free, so that the peace of the world, as well as the wealth of nations, would be secured and advanced? What better doctrine could be taught than this? Did not Fénelon, mildest and best of archbishops, reasoning from the dictates of his own Christian conscience, arrive at the same conclusion as the philosophical economist? What better, we repeat, could be taught than a doctrine which tends to make all nations as one people, and the most wealthy people possible? But hold a while. Take the microscope, and deign to look somewhat closer at the little interests of the many little men that constitute a nation. Condescend to inquire, before you change the currents of wealth and industry, (though to increase both,) into what hands the wealth is to flow, and what the class of labourers you diminish or multiply. Industry free! Good. But is the capitalist to be permitted, at all times, to gather round him and his machinery what



multitudes of workmen he pleases—workmen who are to breed up families dependent for their subsistence on the success of some gigantic and hazardous enterprise? Is he to be allowed, under all circumstances, to do this, and give the state no guarantee for the lives of these men and women and children, but what it obtains from his perhaps too sanguine calculations of his own profit and loss? Is it any consolation that he bankrupts himself in ruining others, and adding immensely to a pauper population? Commerce free! Good. It will increase your imports, and multiply by an advantageous exchange the products of your industry. But what if your measure to promote this freedom of commerce foster a mode of industry at home essentially of a precarious nature, and attended with fearful political and social dangers, at the expense of other modes of industry of a more permanent, stable, peaceful character—must nothing still be heard of but free commerce? Must the utmost amount of products, at all hazard, be obtained, whatever the mode of industry that earn it, or the fate of those called into existence by the overgrown manufacture you encourage? Is it no matter how won, or who enjoys? Is the only question that the wealth be there? What if England, by carrying out, without pause or exception, the doctrine of free-trade, should aggravate the most alarming symptoms of her present social condition—must this *law* of the political economist be still, with unmitigated strictness, urged upon her? She pleads for exception, for delay; but the political economist will not see the grounds of her plea—will not recognise her reasons for exception: full of his partial science, which has been made to occupy too large a portion of his field of vision, he *cannot* see them.

England, by a series of well-known mechanical inventions, extended in a surprising manner her manufacture of cotton, and with it her foreign commerce in this article. It is unnecessary to repeat figures that we have given before, or which may be found in any statistical tables. Enough that her operations here have been on a quite gigantic scale. Recollect that *this* is the channel into which must run the industry and capital which your measures of free-trade may drive from their old accustomed course. Look for a moment at the nature of this species of industry, and ask whether it would be wise to foster and augment it at the expense of other more ordinary and less precarious modes of earning a subsistence. An enormous population is brought together, educated, so far as their industrial habits are concerned, in no independent labour, but taught merely to perform a part in the great machinery of a cotton-mill, themselves a part of that machinery, and trusting, they and their families, for their necessary bread, to the successful sale of the great stock of goods, the annual amount of which they are annually increasing. Although the home market may absorb the greatest portion of these goods, yet the foreign market takes so considerable a share, that any derangement of the external commerce throws a large number of this densely-congregated multitude out of employment. Is there nothing peculiarly hazardous in this condition of things? Granted that nothing can, or ought to be done to restrain the enterprising capitalist from speculating too freely with the lives of men, is it a state of things to be aggravated? Now, at this juncture comes the apostle of free-trade, and demands (for illustration's sake) that French boots and shoes be admitted duty-free. He employs the well-known, and, to its own legitimate extent, unanswerable argument of the political economist. He tells us that, by so doing, we shall purchase better and cheaper boots and shoes, and sell more of our cotton; that, in short, by manufacturing more cotton goods, in which we marvellously excel, we shall procure better boots and shoes than by the old process of making them ourselves. We are evidently the gainers. Let us see the gain. The gentleman pays something less for his shoes, and is somewhat more luxuriously shod. The owner of the cotton-mill, too, finds that trade is *looking up*. To balance this, we have so many shoemakers driven from their employment—the very steady one of making shoes for their own countrymen—and added to the number of men working at cotton-mills for the foreign market,—a mode of industry which we know, by painful experience, to be precarious in the extreme. We describe the superfluous shoemaker as going over directly to the artisans of the factory: we say nothing of the miseries of the *middle passage*; though in truth this transition is accomplished with pain and difficulty, and after much struggle, and is rather done in the second generation than the first, it being rather the children of the shoemaker that are added to the population of the factory than the shoemaker himself.

[410]

We see here that the mere calculation of profit and loss, such as it might figure in a debtor and creditor account, would justify the extreme advocate of free-trade. But there are, surely, other considerations which may properly rank a little higher than such a tradesman's balance of profit and loss; we are surely allowed to follow our inquiries a little further, and ask who is enriched, and how? and what branch of industry is promoted, and what destroyed or curtailed? It is not our object here to contend against what is called the factory system—we accept it with its evil and its good; we are not calling for measures directly hostile to it; but we certainly should exclaim against the sacrifice of a branch of household, stable, permanent industry, to be compensated by an increase in this already enormous system of factory labour, which, together with much good, brings with it so dreadfully precarious a condition of thousands and tens of thousands of men. The political economist has proved that free-trade is the condition under which the industry of man, so far as the amount of its products is concerned, can be exercised with the greatest advantage: he has established this principle; it is an important one, and we thank him for its lucid exposition; but he shall be no legislator of ours until he has learned to submit his principle to wise exceptions, until he has learned to estimate the first necessity of steady and well-remunerated employment to the labourer, until he is prepared, in short, to give their due weight to other considerations besides that of multiplying the gross products of human industry.

We have been viewing the question of free-trade from the position of an opulent manufacturing people—from the position of England, in short—and we see that there may be ground even here for exception. But the case is much stronger, and the claim for exception still plainer, which might be made out by a less opulent nation, desirous of fostering its own rising manufactures.

[411]

These wisely refuse a reciprocity of free-trade measures. Even on the mere ground of the increase of national wealth, and without considering the advantage derived from a variety of employments, and a *due* admixture of a manufacturing population, they are fully justified in their protective policy. The economist will tell them that they deprive themselves of the opportunity of purchasing cheaper and better goods than they can produce. We admit that, for a season, they must forego an advantage of this description; but at the end of a few years how will the account stand? If the protective duty has fostered a home manufactory that would not otherwise have existed, (and this is an assumption which the political economist himself is compelled to admit,) then is there in that country a new industry—then amongst that people is there more *labour* and less idleness, and therefore more of the fruits of labour. It has created for itself what it otherwise would have had to purchase with its corn and oil.

The political economists love an extreme case. In order to test the universality of the principle of free-trade, we give them the following:—There is a little island somewhere in the Pacific, and it grows corn, and grapes, and the cotton plant. Two or three great ships come annually to this island, bringing a store of Manchester goods, and taking away a portion of the corn and the wine. But the wise men of the island meet and say, Let us learn to make our own cotton into stuff for raiment; so shall we have clothes without parting with our corn and wine. Would the people of the island be very foolish if they consented to wear, for a time, a much coarser raiment, in order that they might practise this new industry, and thus provide themselves with raiment, and keep their provender? We suppose that the same unequal distribution of property is found in our island as in the rest of the world—that there are rich and poor. Now, when a people exchanges its articles of food for articles of clothing, it rarely, if ever, parts with what, *to the whole of the people*, is a superfluous quantity of food. Those who own large portions of the land have a superfluity of produce, which they exchange for other articles either at home or abroad; but probably no people ever grew a greater quantity of corn, or other grain for food, than it could very willingly have consumed itself, could we conceive it distributed amongst all who had mouths to consume, and half-filled stomachs to stow it away in. Judge, therefore, whether our little island would not, in a few years, be much better off for refusing the visit of the great ships, and setting to work to weave its own cotton into garments. The political economists always talk of so much labour diverted from one employment to another; they seem to have forgotten that there is such a thing as so much idleness converted into so much labour.

In the work of John Stuart Mill, to which we have now to call the attention of our readers, the science of political economy has received its latest and most complete exposition. Nor, as the title itself will inform us, is the work limited to a formal enunciation of abstract principles, (as was the case with the brief compendium of Mr Mill, senior,) but it proceeds to apply those principles to the discussion of some of the most vital and momentous questions with which public opinion is at present occupied. There are things in these volumes, as may easily be conceived, in which we do not concur—views are supported, on some subjects, to which we have been long and notoriously opposed; but there is, in the exposition of its tenets, so accurate a statement, so severe and lucid a reasoning, and, withal, so genuine and manly an interest in the great cause of humanity, that we cannot hesitate a moment in awarding to it a high rank amongst the sterling literature of our country. This magazine has never been slow—it has been second to none—in its hearty recognition of great talent and ability, from whatever quarter of the political horizon these have made their appearance. We were amongst the first to give notice to all whom it concerned of the addition to the students' shelf of the profound and elaborate work, *The System of Logic*, by the same author. The present is a work of more general interest, yet it has the same severe character. In this, as in his logic, the author has sacrificed nothing deemed by him essential to his task, to the desire of being popular, or the fear of being pronounced *dry*—the word of most complete condemnation in the present day. Dry, however, no person who takes an interest in the actual condition and prospects of society, can possibly find the greater portion of this work. For, as we have already intimated, that which honourably distinguishes it from other professed treatises of political economy is the perpetual, earnest, never-forgotten interest, which accompanies the writer throughout, in the great questions at present mooted with respect to the social condition of man. Mr Mill very wisely refused to limit himself to the mere abstract principles of his science; he descends from them, sometimes as from a vantage ground, into the discussions which most concern and agitate the public mind at the present day; and, if his conclusions are not always, or even generally, such as we can wholly coincide with, there is so penetrating an intelligence in his remarks, and so grave and serious a philanthropy pervading his book, that it would be impossible for the most complete opponent of the work not to rise a gainer from its perusal. From what else can we gain, if not from intercourse with a keen, and full, and sincere mind, whether we have to struggle with it, or to acquiesce in its guidance? There are passages in this work, didactic as its style generally is, which have had on us all the effect of the most thrilling eloquence, from the fine admixture of severe reasoning and earnestness of feeling.

[412]

For instance—to give at once an idea of the more elevated tone this utilitarian science has assumed in the work of Mr Mill—it is no little novelty to hear a political economist speak in the following manner of the mere elements of national wealth. The author has been discoursing on that stationary state to which all opulent nations are supposed to tend, wherein, by the diminution of profits, there is little means and no temptation to further accumulation of capital:—

"I cannot," he says, "regard the stationary state of capital and wealth with the unaffected aversion so generally manifested towards it by political economists, of the old school. I am inclined to believe that it would be, on the whole, a very considerable improvement on our present condition. I confess I am not charmed with the ideal of life

held out by those who think that the normal state of human beings is that of struggling to get on; that the trampling, crushing, elbowing, and treading on each other's heels, which form the existing type of social life, are the most desirable lot of humankind, or any thing but one of the disagreeable symptoms of one of the phases of industrial progress. The northern and middle states of America are a specimen of this stage of civilisation in very favourable circumstances; having apparently got rid of all social injustices and inequalities that affect persons of Caucasian race and of the male sex, while the proportion of population to capital and land is such as to insure abundance to every able-bodied member of the community who does not forfeit it by misconduct. They have the six points of Chartism, and no poverty; and all that these advantages do for them is, that the life of the whole of one sex is devoted to dollar-hunting, and of the other to breeding dollar-hunters. This is not a kind of social perfection which philanthropists to come will feel any very eager desire to assist in realising....

"That the energies of mankind should be kept in employment by the struggle for riches, as they were formerly by the struggle of war, until the better minds succeed in educating the others into better things, is undoubtedly more desirable than that they should rust and stagnate. While minds are coarse, they require coarse stimuli, and let them have them. In the mean time, those who do not accept the present very early stage of human improvement as its ultimate type, may be excused for being comparatively indifferent to the kind of economical progress which usually excites the congratulations of politicians—the mere increase of production and accumulation. For the safety of national independence, it is essential that a country should not fall much behind its neighbours in these things. But in themselves they are of little importance, so long as either the increase of population, or any thing else, prevents the mass of the people from reaping any part of the benefit of them. I know not why it should be matter of congratulation, that persons who are already richer than any one needs to be, should have doubled their means of consuming things which give little or no pleasure, except as representative of wealth; or that numbers of individuals should pass over every year from the middle classes into a richer class, or from the class of the occupied rich to that of the unoccupied. It is only in the backward countries of the world that increased production is still an important object; in those most advanced, what is economically needed is a better distribution, of which an indispensable means is a stricter restraint on population. Levelling institutions, either of a just or an unjust kind, cannot alone accomplish it; they may lower the heights of society, but they cannot raise the depths."—(Vol. ii. p. 308.)

[413]

It will be already seen, from even this brief extract, that the too rapid increase of population presents itself to Mr Mill as the chief, or one of the chief obstacles to human improvement. Without attempting to repeat all that we have at different times urged upon this head, we may at once say here that, in the first place, we never denied, or dreamt of denying, that it was one of the first and most imperative duties of every human being, to be assured that he could provide for a family before he called one into existence. This has been at all times a plain, unquestionable duty, though it has not at all times been clearly understood as such. But, in the second place, we have combated the Malthusian alarm, precisely because we believe that the moral checks to population will be found a sufficient balance to the physical law of increase. We have repudiated the idea that there is, in the shape of the law of population, a constant enemy to human improvement, convinced that this law will be found to be in perfect harmony with all other laws that regulate the destiny of man. A certain pressure of population on the means of subsistence has been always recognised as an element necessary to the progress of society—especially at that early stage when bare subsistence is the sole motive for industry. When not only to live, but to live well, becomes the ruling motive of men, then come into play the various moral checks arising from prudence, vanity, and duty. But the mere thinness of population will not, in the first place, induce a high standard of comfortable subsistence. It is a delusion to suppose that the low standard of comfort and enjoyment prevailing amongst the multitude is the result of excessive population. If Neapolitan lazzaroni are contented with macaroni and sunshine, it matters not whether their numbers are five hundred or five thousand, they will labour for nothing beyond their macaroni. We would challenge the political economist to prove that in England, at this present time, or in any country of Europe, the prevailing standard of comfort amongst the working classes has been permanently determined by the amount of population. This standard is slowly rising, from better education, mechanical inventions, and other causes, and *it* will ultimately control the increase of population. That wages occasionally suffer a lamentable depression, owing to the numbers of any one class of workmen, is a fact which does not touch the point at issue. We say that, whether a population be dense or rare, you must first excite, by education and the example of a higher class, a certain taste for comfort, for a cleanly and orderly mode of life, amongst the mass of labouring men; that until this taste is called forth, it would be in vain to offer high wages, for men would only work one half the week, and spend the other half in idleness and coarse intemperance; and that, this taste once called forth, there will be no fear of the class of men who possess it being permanently degraded by over-population, unless the excess of population were derived from some neighbouring country, unhappily far behind it in the race of civilisation.

We now continue our quotation.

"There is room in the world, no doubt, and even in old countries, for an immense increase of population, supposing the arts of life to go on improving and capital to

increase. But, although it may be innocuous, I confess I see very little reason for desiring it. The density of population necessary to enable mankind to obtain, in the greatest degree, all the advantages both of co-operation and of social intercourse, has, in all the more populous countries, been attained. A population may be too crowded, though all be amply supplied with food and raiment. It is not good for man to be kept perforce at all times in the presence of his species. A world from which solitude is extirpated is a very poor ideal. Solitude, in the sense of being often alone, is essential to any depth of meditation or of character; and solitude, in the presence of natural beauty and grandeur, is the cradle of thoughts and aspirations which are not only good for the individual, but which society could ill do without. Nor is there much satisfaction in contemplating the world, with nothing left to the spontaneous activity of nature—with every rood of land brought into cultivation which is capable of growing food for human beings—every flowery waste or natural pasture ploughed up—all quadrupeds or birds, which are not domesticated for man's use, exterminated as his rivals for food—every hedgerow or superfluous tree rooted out, and scarcely a place left where a shrub or flower could grow, without being eradicated as a weed in the name of improved agriculture. If the earth must lose that great portion of its pleasantness which it owes to things that the unlimited increase of wealth and population would extirpate from it, for the mere purpose of enabling it to support a larger, but not a better or a happier population, I sincerely hope, for the sake of posterity, that they will be content to be stationary long before necessity compels them to it.

[414]

"It is scarcely necessary to remark, that a stationary condition of capital and population implies no stationary state of human improvement. There would be as much scope as ever for all kinds of mental culture, and moral and social progress; as much room for improving the Art of Living, and much more likelihood of its being improved, when minds ceased to be engrossed by the art of getting on. Even the industrial arts might be as earnestly and as successfully cultivated, with this sole difference—that, instead of serving no purpose but the increase of wealth, industrial improvements would produce their legitimate effect, that of abridging labour. Hitherto it is questionable if all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the daily toil of any human being. They have enabled a greater population to live the same life of drudgery and imprisonment, and an increased number of manufacturers and others to make large fortunes. They have increased the comforts of the middle classes; but they have not yet begun to effect those great changes in human destiny which it is in their nature and in their futurity to accomplish. Only when, in addition to just institutions, the increase of mankind shall be under the deliberate guidance of a judicious foresight, can the conquests made from the powers of nature, by the intellect and energy of scientific discoverers, become the common property of the species, and the means of improving and elevating the universal lot."—(Vol. ii. p. 311.)

These are not the times when truth is to be withheld because it is disagreeable. There is a morality connected with wealth, its uses and abuses, not enough taught, certainly not enough understood. The rich man, who will not learn that there is a *duty* inseparable from his riches, is no better fitted for the times that are coming down upon us, than the poor man who has not learned that patience is a duty peculiarly imposed upon him, and that the ruin of others, and the general panic which his violence may create, will inevitably add to the hardships and privations he already has to endure. If society demands of the poor man that he endure these evils of his lot, rather than desperately bring down ruin upon all, himself included; surely society must also demand of the rich man that he make the best use possible of his wealth, so that his weaker brother be not driven to madness and despair. It demands of him that he exert himself manfully for that safety of the whole in which he has so much more evident an interest. For, be it known—prescribe whatever remedies you will, political, moral, or religious—that it is by securing a certain indispensable amount of wellbeing to the multitude of mankind that the only security can be found for the social fabric, for life, and property, and civilisation. If men are allowed to sink into a wretchedness that savours of despair, it is in vain that you show them the ruins of the nation, and themselves involved in those ruins. What interest have they any longer in the preservation of your boasted state of civilisation? What to them how soon it be all a ruin? You have lost all hold of them as reasonable beings. As well preach to the winds as to men thoroughly and bitterly discontented. Those, therefore, to whom wealth, or station, or intelligence, has given power of any kind, must do their utmost to prevent large masses of mankind from sinking into this condition. If they will not learn this duty from the Christian teaching of their church, they must learn it from the stern exposition of the economist and the politician.

[415]

Political economists have some of them wasted much time, and produced no little ennui, by unprofitable discussions on the definition of terms. These Mr Mill wisely spares us: an accurate writer, by a cautious use of ordinary expressions, will make his meaning more evident and precise than he will be able to do by any laboured definitions, or the introduction of purely technical terms. Such have been the discussions on the strict limits of the science of political economy, and the propriety of the title it has so long borne; whether intellectual efforts shall be classed amongst productive or unproductive labour, and the precise and invariable meaning to be given to such terms as *wealth*, *value*, and the like. These will generally be found to be unprofitable controversies, tending more to confusion of ideas than to precision of language. Let a writer think steadily and clearly upon his subject, and ordinary language will be faithful to him; distinctions between the several meanings of the same term will be made as they are wanted. He

who *begins* by making such distinctions is only laying a snare for his own feet; he will hamper himself and perplex his reader. And with regard especially to the range of topics which an author thinks fit to embrace in his treatise upon this science, surely he may permit himself some liberty of choice, without resolving to mete out new boundaries to which all who follow him are to conform. If M. Dunoyer, for instance, in his able and, in many respects, valuable work, *De la Liberté du Travail*, chooses to write a treatise which embraces in fact the whole of human life, all the energies and activities of man, mental as well as physical, he could surely have done this without assailing old distinctions and old titles with so needless a violence. Of what avail to call in the etymologist at this time of day, to determine the meaning, or criticise the application of so familiar a term as political economy?<sup>[5]</sup>

But there is another class of discussions which, although to the general reader, who is mostly an impatient one, they will appear at first sight to be of a purely technical character, must not be so hastily dismissed. These will be often found to have a direct bearing on the most important questions that can occupy the mind of the statesman. They are in fact explanatory of that great machine, a commercial society, upon which he has to practise—which he has to keep in order, or to learn to leave alone—and therefore as necessary a branch of knowledge to him as anatomy or physiology to one who undertakes to medicine the body. Such are some of the intricate discussions which concern the nature of *capital*—a subject to which we shall in the first place and at once turn our attention. It is a subject which Mr Mill has treated throughout in a most masterly manner. We may safely say, that there is now no other work to which a student could be properly directed for obtaining a complete insight into all the intricacies of this great branch of political economy. The exposition lies scattered, indeed, through the two volumes; he must read the entire work to obtain it. This scattering of the several parts of a subject is inevitable in treating such a science as political economy, where every topic has to be discussed in relation to every other topic. We do not think that Mr Mill has been particularly happy in his arrangement of topics, but, aware as we are of the extreme difficulty, under such circumstances, of making *any arrangement at all*, we forbear from any criticism. A man must write himself out the best way he can; and the reader, after obtaining all the materials put at his disposition, may pack them up in what bundles may best suit his own convenience.

[416]

We must premise that on this subject—the nature and employment of capital—there appears to be in one part of Mr Mill's exposition—not an error—but a temporary forgetfulness of an old and familiar truth, which ought to have found its place there. Its very familiarity has occasioned it to be overlooked, in the keen inquiry after truth of a more recondite nature. The part which the economists call "unproductive consumption," the self-indulgent luxurious expenditure of the rich—the part this plays in a system of society based on individual effort and individual possession, is not fully stated.

He who spends his money, and lives to do little else, however idle he may be himself, has always had the consolation that he was, at least, setting other people to work. Mr Mill *seems* to deny him utterly this species of consolation; for in contending against a statement, made by political economists as well as others, that unproductive consumption is necessary, in a strictly *economical* sense, to the employment of the workmen, and as the indispensable relative to productive consumption, or capital spent in industrial pursuits, he has overlooked that *moral* necessity there is, in the present system of things, that there should be those who spend to enjoy, as well as those who lay out their money for profit. "What supports and employs productive labour," says Mr Mill, (Vol. i. p. 97,) "is the capital expended in setting it to work, and not the demand of purchases for the produce of the labour when completed. Demand for commodities is not demand for labour. The demand for commodities determines in what particular branch of production the labour and capital shall be employed; it determines the *direction* of the labour, but not the more or less of the labour itself, or of the maintenance and payment of the labour. That depends on the amount of the capital, or other funds directly devoted to the sustenance and remuneration of labour." Now, without a doubt, the man who purchases an article of luxury when it is manufactured, does not employ labour in the same sense as the manufacturer, who spends his wealth in supporting the artisan, and finding him the requisites of his art, and who, after selling the products of this industry, continues to spend the capital returned to him, together with the profit he has made, in the further sustenance of workmen. But it has been always understood, and the truth appears to be almost too trite to insist on, that unless the unproductive consumer were there to purchase, the capitalist would have had no motive to employ his wealth in this manner; and, what is of equal importance to bear in mind, unless the capitalist also calculated on being, some future day, an unproductive consumer himself, he would have no motive, by saving and toiling, to increase his wealth.

The necessity for a certain amount of unproductive consumption is not a necessity in the nature of things. All men might, if they chose, be saving, might spend upon themselves only what is needful for comfort, and set apart the residue of their funds for the employment of labour, not, of course, in the production of articles of luxury, for which there would be no purchasers, but for such articles as the labourers themselves, now paid from such ample stores, might be consumers of. The social machine might still *go on* under such a regime, and much to the benefit of the labourer. The capitalists would find their profits diminishing, it is true—they would be more rapidly approaching that *minimum* of profit, that stationary state, of which we shall by-and-by have to speak; but this diminution of profits must, at all events, sooner or later, take place, and depends ultimately, as we shall have occasion to show, on higher laws, over which man has no control. Men might, if they chose, be all saving, and all convert superfluous wealth into capital; but need we add, men would never choose any such thing. There is no necessity in the nature of

things, but there is a necessity in the moral nature of man for a certain portion of this unproductive consumption. The good of others is not a motive sufficiently strong to stimulate a man to any of the steady pursuits of industry. When, therefore, his real wants are satisfied, it must be the gratification of fictitious wants that induces him to toil and accumulate, or to part with any thing he has, by way of barter or exchange. From the time when the rude possessor of the soil consents to surrender a portion of his surplus produce for some trinket or piece of gaudy apparel, to the present epoch, when men consent to live frugally and toil hard during the first period of life, in order that they or their children may afterwards live idly, luxuriously, and ostentatiously, this same unproductive expenditure has performed the part of essential stimulant to human industry. It is not enough, therefore, to say, that it gives the *direction* to a certain portion of labour: it affords the stimulant that converts idleness into industry, and saving into capital. A very much more dignified being would man undoubtedly be, if desire for the general good could replace, as a motive of industry, a selfish desire, which is often no better than what we ridicule in the savage when he manifests a most disproportionate anxiety, as it seems to us, for the possession of glass beads, or a piece of painted calico. But to this point in the cultivation of human reason we have, at all events, not yet arrived. And let this be always borne in mind—in order that the class of society designated as unproductive consumers may not fall into unmerited odium—that others, who are using their wealth in the direct and profitable employment of labour, are themselves desirous, above all things, of taking their place in the class of unproductive consumers, and are working for that very end.

[417]

"Every one can see," writes Mr Mill, "that if a benevolent government possessed all the food, and all the implements and materials of the community, it could exact productive labour from all to whom it allowed a share in the food, and could be in no danger of wanting a field for the employment of this productive labour, since, as long as there was a single want unsaturated (which material objects could supply) of any one individual, the labour of the community could be turned to the production of something capable of satisfying that want. Now, the individual possessors of capital, when they add to it by fresh accumulations, are doing precisely the same thing which we suppose to be done by our benevolent government."—(Vol. i. p. 83.) Certainly the individual capitalists could do the same as the benevolent government, if they had its benevolence. If there are any political economists who teach otherwise, we hold them in error. We wish only to add to the statement the old moral truth long ago recognised, before political economy had a distinct place or name in the world, that as man is constituted, or rather, as he has hitherto demeaned himself, (for who knows what moral as well as other reformations may take place?—the civilised man, such as we have him at this day, postponing habitually the present enjoyment to the future, is a creature of cultivation; and who can tell but that advanced cultivation may make of man a being habitually acting for the general good, in which general good he finds his own particular interest sufficiently represented and provided for?)—that, as man has hitherto acted, this same unproductive selfish expenditure is indispensable as the motive to set that industry to work, which ultimately distributes the real necessities and rational comforts of life to so many thousands.

Having, in justice to the class of unproductive consumers, brought out this homely truth, which, in the scientific exposition of Mr Mill, seemed in danger of being overlooked, we proceed to a branch of the subject which, if it appears at first of a very technical and abstruse description, is yet capable of very important applications. One of the most striking facts relating to the nature of capital is the tendency of profits, in wealthy and populous countries, to diminish as the amount of capital increases—a tendency to arrive at a certain *minimum* beyond which there would be no motive for saving, and little possibility of accumulating. This tendency Mr Mill explains as being the result, not of what has been somewhat vaguely called the competition of capital, over-production, or general glut in the market, but, in reality, of the physical laws of nature—of the simple fact that the products of the soil cannot be indefinitely multiplied. Manufacturing industry must be ultimately limited by the supply of the raw material it fashions, which is furnished by the soil, and the supply of food for the artisan, furnished also by the soil; it therefore is subjected, as well as agricultural industry, to the limits which have been set to the productiveness of the earth. Now, without seeking for any definite ratio, such as might be expressed in numbers, between the labour and ingenuity of man and the products of the soil, it may be stated as a simple fact, which admits of no dispute, that after the land has been fairly cultivated, additional labour and additional cost yield but a small proportionate return.

[418]

"The limitation to production from the properties of the soil," writes our author, "is not like the obstacle opposed by a wall, which stands immovable in one particular spot, and offers no hindrance to motion, short of stopping it entirely. We may rather compare it to a highly elastic and extensible band, which is hardly ever so violently stretched that it could not possibly be stretched any more; yet the pressure of which is felt long before the final limit is reached, and felt more severely the nearer that limit is approached.

"After a certain, and not very advanced stage in the progress of agriculture—as soon, in fact, as men have applied themselves to cultivation with any energy, and have brought to it any tolerable tools—from that time it is the law of production from the land, that, in any given state of agricultural skill and knowledge, by increasing the labour the produce is not increased in an equal degree; doubling the labour does not double the produce; or, to express the same thing in other words, every increase of produce is obtained by a more than proportional increase in the application of labour to the land.

"This general law of agricultural industry is the most important proposition in political

economy. Were the law different, nearly all the phenomena of the production and distribution of wealth would be other than they are. The most fundamental errors, which still prevail on our subject, result from not perceiving this law at work underneath the more superficial agencies on which attention fixes itself; but mistaking these agencies for the ultimate causes of effects of which they may influence the form and mode, but of which it alone determines the essence."—(Vol. i. p. 212.)

It is to this physical law, underlying, as it were, the commercial and industrial energies of man, that we must finally attribute that gradual diminution of profits, observable in advanced and opulent countries. This is popularly attributed, we believe, and has been assigned, by some political economists, to over-production; to a general glut of the market, or, in other words, a preponderance of supply over demand. Over-production in this or that article may very easily, for a time, take place; but general over-production, a general over-balance in the supply, and deficiency in the demand, may be demonstrated to be impossible.

The simple but convincing argument against a general glut or over-balance between supply and demand, which we believe Mr Mill senior first originated, is this,—that as each producer produces in order to part with his produce—in order, in fact, to exchange, to purchase, he must necessarily bring into the market a demand equivalent to the supply he furnishes. "All sellers," as our present author expresses it, "are *ex vi termini* buyers. Could we suddenly double the productive powers of the country, we should double the supply of commodities in every market; but we should, by the same stroke, double the purchasing power. Every body would bring a double demand as well as supply; every body would be able to buy twice as much, because every one would have twice as much to offer in exchange."—(Vol. ii. p. 91.) Of certain articles, there may, of course, be a superfluity; of certain others a deficiency; but such a thing as a general over-balance between supply and demand cannot take place.

The argument, if it laid claim to a sort of mathematical precision, might be open to an ingenious cavil. The exchange of commodities, it might be said, is effected through the instrumentality of money; now, it is one of the peculiar advantages of money that it enables the vender to sell at one time and purchase at another; it gives him a command over future markets; it enables him to postpone indefinitely one half of the operation of barter. Men who come into a market, wishing to dispose of their commodities *now*, but not intending to select what commodity they shall take in exchange, till some future time, postponing indefinitely the other half of the operation of barter, and seeking only for money, for that *token* which will give them or their children a claim on subsequent markets—do *not* bring with them a demand equivalent to their supply. [419]

The answer to the objection lets us more fully into the real facts of the case. Those only who wished to sell their produce in order to *hoard*, would fall under the description of men who bring a present supply into the market, postponing indefinitely their demand. But the producer is almost always a man desirous of increasing his wealth—he does not hoard; he immediately lays out his capital in some productive manner, in the purchase of food for labourers, and of the raw materials of industry. But these articles, it happens, cannot be supplied to him with the increasing abundance he demands; and thus we fall back upon the ultimate law to which we have alluded. The manufacturer finds, that every additional demand he makes for these is supplied at a greater cost. What has limited the profits of the agricultural capitalist limits his profits also. He cannot sell his goods at the accustomed advantage. He exclaims that there is a glut in the market. What he takes for a glut is a deficiency. It is quite natural and permissible, however, that this phenomenon of the diminution of profits should be spoken of as the result of a superabundance of capital, provided only it be understood *why* the later accumulations of capital fail to bring the same return as the earlier.

A simple law of nature, therefore, is the true cause of this commercial phenomenon. Countries, after a certain progress in the career of wealth, must cease to accumulate;—the diminished profit on capital affording no longer any motive for frugality and toil;—and they arrive at what may be called the stationary state. "When a country," says Mr Mill, "has long possessed a large production, and a large net income to make savings from, and when, therefore, the means have long existed of making a great annual addition to capital, (the country not having, like America, a large reserve of fertile land still unused,) it is one of the characteristics of such a country, that the rate of profit is habitually within, as it were, a hand's breadth of the minimum, and the country, therefore, on the very verge of the stationary state. By this, I do not mean that this state is likely, in any of the great countries of Europe, to be soon actually reached, or that capital does not still yield a profit considerably greater than what is barely sufficient to induce the people of these countries to save and accumulate. My meaning is, that it would require but a short time to reduce profits to the minimum, if capital continued to increase at its present rate, and no circumstances having a tendency to raise the rate of profit occurred in the mean time."—(Vol. ii. p. 287.)

Mr Mill then states what are the counteracting circumstances which arrest this downward tendency of profits. He mentions the waste of capital in periods of over-trading and rash speculation, the expenditure of an unproductive kind, and the perpetual overflow of capital into colonies and foreign countries, to seek higher profits than can be obtained at home. This last has a twofold operation. "In the first place, it does what a fire, or an inundation, or a commercial crisis, would have done,—it carries off a part of the increase of capital from which the reduction of profits proceeds. Secondly, the capital so carried off is not lost, but is chiefly employed either in founding colonies, which become large exporters of cheap agricultural produce, or in extending, and perhaps improving, the agriculture of older communities. It is to the emigration of

English capital that we have chiefly to look for keeping up a supply of cheap food and cheap materials of clothing, proportional to the increase of our population; thus enabling an increasing capital to find employment in the country, without reduction of profit, in producing manufactured articles with which to pay for this supply of raw produce. Thus, the exportation of capital is an agent of great efficacy in extending the field of employment for that which remains; and it may be said truly that, up to a certain point, the more capital we send away, the more we shall possess and be able to retain at home."—(Vol. ii. p. 297.)

[420]

This last observation we have quoted is well deserving of attention. It is an instance of what we mentioned in the outset, of the science correcting as it advances its own errors. What follows is a still more striking instance, and still more worthy of attention. It occurs in the chapter entitled, —*Consequences of the tendency of profits to a minimum*. To such observations we have wished to draw the especial attention of our readers, but could not do so till the previous exposition had been gone through.

"The theory of the effect of accumulation on profits, laid down in the preceding chapter, materially alters many of the practical conclusions which might otherwise be supposed to follow from the general principles of political economy, and which were, indeed, long admitted as true by the highest authorities on the subject.

"It must greatly abate, or, rather, altogether destroy, in countries where profits are low, the immense importance which used to be attached, by political economists, to the effects which an event or a measure of government might have in adding to, or subtracting from, the capital of the country. We have now seen that the lowness of profits is a proof that the spirit of accumulation is so active, and that the increase of capital has proceeded at so rapid a rate, as to outstrip the two counter agencies, improvements in production, and increased supply of cheap necessaries from abroad: and that unless a considerable portion of the annual increase of capital were either periodically destroyed, or exported for foreign investment, the country would speedily attain the point at which further accumulation would cease, or at least spontaneously slacken, so as no longer to overpass the march of invention in the arts which produce the necessaries of life. In such a state of things as this, a sudden addition to the capital of the country, unaccompanied by any increase of productive power, would be but of transitory duration; since, by depressing profits and interest, it would rather diminish, by a corresponding amount, the savings which would be made from income in the year or two following, or it would cause an equivalent amount to be sent abroad, or to be wasted in rash speculations. Neither, on the other hand, would a sudden abstraction of capital, unless of inordinate amount, have any real effect in impoverishing the country. After a few months or years there would exist in the country just as much capital as if none had been taken away. The abstraction, by raising profits and interest, would give a fresh stimulus to the accumulative principle, which would speedily fill up the vacuum. Probably, indeed, the only effect that would ensue, would be that, for some time afterwards, less capital would be exported, and less thrown away in hazardous speculation.

"In the first place, then, this view of things greatly weakens, in a wealthy and industrious country, the force of the economical argument against the expenditure of public money for really valuable, even though industrially unproductive purposes. *If for any great object of justice or philanthropic policy, such as the industrial regeneration of Ireland, or a comprehensive measure of colonisation or of public education, it were proposed to raise a large sum by way of loan, politicians need not demur to the abstraction of so much capital, as tending to dry up the permanent sources of the country's wealth, and diminish the fund which supplies the subsistence of the labouring population. The utmost expense which could be requisite for any of these purposes, would not, in all probability, deprive one labourer of employment, or diminish the next year's production by one ell of cloth or one bushel of grain.* In poor countries the capital of the country requires the legislator's sedulous care; he is bound to be most cautious in encroaching upon it, and should favour to the utmost its accumulation at home, and its introduction from abroad. But in rich, populous, and highly cultivated countries, it is not capital which is the deficient element, but fertile land; and what the legislator should desire and promote, is not a greater aggregate saving, but a greater return to saving, either by improved cultivation, or by access to the produce of more fertile lands in other parts of the globe. In such countries, the government may take any moderate portion of the capital of the country and convert it into revenue, without affecting the national wealth; the whole being rather drawn from that portion of the annual saving which would otherwise be sent abroad, or being subtracted from the unproductive expenditure of individuals for the next year or two, since every million sent makes room for another million to be saved, before reaching the overflowing point. When the object in view is worth the sacrifice of such an amount of the expenditure that furnishes the daily enjoyment of the people, the only well grounded economical objection against taking the necessary funds directly from the capital, consists of the inconveniences attending the process of raising a revenue, by taxation, to pay the interest of a debt.

[421]

"*The same considerations enable us to throw aside, as unworthy of regard, one of the common arguments against emigration as a means of relief for the labouring class. Emigration, it is said, can do no good to the labourers, if, in order to defray the cost, as*



much must be taken away from the capital of the country as from its population. That any thing like this proportion could require to be abstracted from capital for the purpose even of the most extensive colonisation, few, I should think, would now assert; but even on that untenable supposition, it is an error to suppose that no benefit could be conferred on the labouring class. If one-tenth of the labouring people of England were transferred to the colonies, and along with them one-tenth of the circulating capital of the country, either wages, or profits, or both, would be greatly benefited by the diminished pressure of capital and population upon the fertility of the land. There would be a reduced demand for food; the inferior arable lands would be thrown out of cultivation, and would become pasture; the superior would be cultivated less highly, but with a greater proportional return; food would be lowered in price, and, though money wages would not rise, every labourer would be considerably improved in circumstances—an improvement which, if no increased stimulus to population and fall of wages ensued, would be permanent; while, if there did, profits would rise, and accumulation start forward so as to repair the loss of capital. The landlords alone would sustain some loss of income; and even they, only if colonisation went to the length of actually diminishing capital and population, but not if it merely carried off the annual increase."—(Vol. ii. p. 999.)

Does not all this place the condition of England in a very striking aspect before us? We have a country here so wealthy, so nearly approaching that state where its accessions of capital can no longer be profitably employed, that it wastes its funds in ruinous speculations, building perhaps useless factories—and, if useless, how mischievous!—that it sends its money abroad to construct foreign railways, or throws it away upon South American republics. Yet the people of this country is degraded and brutalised for want of education, and it is threatened with political convulsions for want of a good system of emigration; and you call for education, and you call for colonisation, and the only obstacle that is opposed to you is—the want of money! Shame upon England, if this be so! With all her knowledge and civilisation, she will go down to ruin, rather than give, in the shape of taxes, for the most necessary as well as philanthropic purposes, that wealth which she can fling abroad or waste at home with the most reckless prodigality.

Of late the Irish landlord has been very justly held up to public reproof for the hard, unthinking, extortionate manner in which he has been in the habit of dealing with the soil—or allowing certain middlemen to deal with it—taking a famine-price for the land—permitting the miserable cottiers to bid against each other, instead of fixing an equitable rent, such as would finally have secured to himself better and more profitable tenants. For his thoughtlessness or cupidity, whichever it may be, both he and the country at large are paying a severe penalty. But the Irish landlords are not the only class that are to blame. That indiscriminate recoil from all taxation, whatever be its object, which characterises the upper and middling classes of society in England, is a sad blot in their escutcheon.<sup>[6]</sup>

Before quitting this subject of capital, we must quote a passage which occurs at an earlier part of the work, but which is in perfect harmony with the strain of observations we have been calling attention to. It serves to show and explain the elastic power there is in every thoroughly industrious country to revive from any temporary loss, or sacrifice, or calamity. Let but the people with their knowledge and habits, the soil and a little food, remain, and there is no effort, and no ruin or desolation from which it would not speedily recover. Moreover, it is a passage of a certain popular interest, and we are glad of the opportunity to relieve our pages by its quotation. [422]

"Every thing which is produced is consumed; both what is saved and what is said to be spent; and the former quite as rapidly as the latter. All the ordinary forms of language tend to disguise this. When men talk of the ancient wealth of a country, of riches inherited from ancestors, and similar expressions, the idea suggested is, that the riches so transmitted were produced long ago, at the time when they are said to have been first acquired, and that no portion of the capital of the country was produced this year, except so much as may have been this year added to the total amount. The fact is far otherwise. The greater part, in value, of the wealth now existing in England, has been produced by human hands within the last twelve months. A very small proportion indeed of that large aggregate was in existence ten years ago;—of the present productive capital of the country, scarcely any part except farm-houses and factories, and a few ships and machines; and even these would not in most cases have survived so long, if fresh labour had not been employed within that period in putting them in repair. The land subsists, and the land is almost the only thing that subsists. Every thing which is produced perishes, and most things very quickly. Most kinds of capital are not fitted by their nature to be long preserved. There are a few, and but a few productions, capable of a very prolonged existence. Westminster Abbey has lasted many centuries, with occasional repairs; some ancient sculptures have existed above two thousand years; the Pyramids perhaps double or treble that time. But these were objects devoted to unproductive use. If we except bridges and aqueducts, (to which may sometimes be added tanks and embankments,) there are few instances of any edifice applied to industrial purposes which has been of great duration: such buildings do not hold out against wear and tear, nor is it good economy to construct them of the solidity necessary for permanency. Capital is kept in existence from age to age, not by preservation, but by perpetual reproduction: every part of it is used and destroyed, generally very soon after it has been produced; but those who consume it are employed

meanwhile in producing more. The growth of capital is similar to the growth of population. Every individual who is born, dies, but in each year the number born exceeds the number who die; the population, therefore, always increases, although not one person of those comprising it was alive until a very recent date.

"This perpetual consumption and reproduction of capital affords the explanation of what has so often excited wonder—the great rapidity with which countries recover from a state of devastation; the disappearance in a short time of all traces of the mischief done by earthquakes, of floods, hurricanes, and the ravages of war. An enemy lays waste a country by fire and sword, and destroys or carries away nearly all the movable wealth existing in it: all the inhabitants are ruined; yet in a few years after, every thing is much as it was before. This *vis medicatrix naturæ* has been a subject of sterile astonishment, or has been cited to exemplify the wonderful strength of the principle of saving, which can repair such enormous losses in so brief an interval. There is nothing at all wonderful in the matter. What the enemy have destroyed would have been destroyed in a little time by the inhabitants themselves; the wealth which they so rapidly reproduce would have needed to be produced, and would have been reproduced in any case, and probably in as short an interval."—(Vol. i. p. 91.)

[423]

One of the most interesting portions of the work is that devoted to questions touching the cultivation of the land—as whether large or small farms are most advisable. Mr Mill appears to advocate the latter, and enlarges much on the industry universally displayed by the peasants of those countries who either cultivate land of their own, or in which they have a certain and permanent interest. Additional value is given to these chapters, from the bearing they are made to have on the vexed questions of the causes and the remedies of the lamentable state of that unhappy country, Ireland.

We remember well the impression made upon us on reading, some time ago, these passages in Sismondi's work which Mr Mill quotes on this occasion, where the habits and life of the peasant proprietors of Switzerland are so minutely, and apparently so faithfully described. Coupling his description with what our own hasty observation had taught us of this country, we were disposed to believe that nowhere, and under no circumstances, does human life wear a more enviable aspect than amongst these small proprietors, this rustic aristocracy of Switzerland. But we regarded it, as we still do, as one of those instances of *compensation* so general in the moral world. All the wealth of England could not purchase this sort of pastoral happiness. At all events, only here and there such a primitive state of things could exist. It was not necessary for our Norman ancestors to have added manor to manor: a wealthy commercial state, which gives origin to great fortunes, must inevitably give origin to large properties. The same wealth which decides for us that the land shall be cultivated in large farms, would also decide that it should be divided amongst large proprietors. It is well to keep in mind that neither of these facts is, to any material extent, owing to any peculiarity in the history or the laws of England, but to its commercial opulence.

Meanwhile we may be permitted to admire "the picture of unwearied industry, and what may be called affectionate interest in the land;" the patience, frugality, and prudence in entering into marriage, that almost always characterise the class of small proprietors cultivating their own soil. Our own yeomen, at that distant and almost fabulous epoch when our country obtained the name of "merry England," were of this description of men. We wish we had space to transfer to our pages some of the extracts which our author has drawn together from French, and German, and English writers, all showing the hearty, incessant, and, as one author calls it, the "superhuman" industry of the peasant proprietor.

A great number of such properties England cannot be expected to have; there may, too, be reasons for not desiring their existence; but one fact is placed beyond all controversy, both by the testimony of travellers, and the known operations of the common feelings of our nature, that they are the most indefatigable of all labourers. If you wish to convert an idle and improvident man into an industrious and frugal one, give him a piece of land of his own: the recipe *may* fail; but if this does not reform him, nothing else will.

It is on the condition of Ireland, as we have intimated, that this description of the peasant proprietor is made particularly to bear. To substitute for the wretched cottier system, some system under which the Irish peasant, having a substantial interest in the improvement of the soil, would be placed under strong motives to industry and providence, is the great remedy which Mr Mill proposes for the unhappy state of that country.

The evils of the cottier system are notorious. A peasantry who have no resource but the potato field, and who are multiplying as only utter poverty can multiply, bid against each other for the possession of the land. They promise rents they cannot possibly pay. They are immediately and continually in debt; but being there upon the soil, they can first feed themselves; this they do, and the rest, whatever it may be, is for the landlord.

[424]

"In such a condition," writes Mr Mill, "what can a tenant gain by any amount of industry or prudence, and what lose by any recklessness? If the landlord at any time exerted his full legal rights, the cottier would not be able even to live. If by extra exertion he doubled the produce of his bit of land, or if he prudently abstained from producing mouths to eat it up, his only gain would be to have more left to pay to his landlord, while, if he had twenty children, they would still be fed first, and the landlord would

only take what was left. Almost alone among mankind, the Irish cottier is in this condition,—that he can scarcely be either better or worse off by any act of his own. If he was industrious or prudent, nobody but his landlord would gain; if he is lazy or intemperate, it is at his landlord's expense. A situation more devoid of motives to either labour or self-command, imagination itself cannot conceive. The inducements of free human beings are taken away, and those of a slave not substituted. He has nothing to hope and nothing to fear, except being dispossessed of his holding; and against this he protects himself by the *ultima ratio* of a civil war."—(Vol. i. p. 374)

That this system must be got rid of is admitted by all—but how? It is often proposed to convert the cottiers into hired labourers; but without entering upon (either to admit or controvert) the other objections which Mr Mill makes to this plan, it is enough to say that it is, at present, impracticable. "The conversion of cottiers into hired labourers," he justly observes, "implies the introduction all over Ireland of capitalist farmers, in lieu of the present small tenants. These farmers, or their capital at least, must come from England. But to induce capital to come in, the cottier population must first be peaceably got rid of: in other words, that must be already accomplished, which English capital is proposed as the means of accomplishing." Besides which, it is the characteristic of the English system of farming, that it employs the fewest number of labourers. "Taking the number of Irish peasants in the square mile, and the number of hired labourers in an equal space in the model counties of Scotland or England, the former number is commonly computed to be about three times the latter. Two-thirds, therefore, of the Irish peasantry would be absolutely dispensed with. What is to be done with them?... The people are there; and the problem is, not how to improve the country, but how it can be improved by and for its present inhabitants."

To wait till the English system of farming can be introduced into Ireland is tantamount to resigning all attempt to improve the condition of the people of that country. Something must be done to prepare the way for the introduction of that system. There are several schemes afloat for giving or extending a certain *tenant-right* to the peasantry. Into these we have not space to enter—for it would take some to explain the several significations attached to this term tenant-right. It is sufficient to say, that, whenever the term has any really important signification, and under it any effective remedy is proposed, it means this,—that the legislature should interfere between the landlord and tenant, and assign an equitable rent, and an equitable duration of the tenancy. Such an act of the legislature might be perfectly justifiable, and might be found to be as advantageous to the landlord as the tenant; for the former as much needs to be protected from his own indolence or thoughtless cupidity, as the latter from the desperate pressure of want. But we should, of course, infinitely prefer that such an equitable arrangement between these parties should be arrived at without the intervention of the legislature; and we think it would be an indirect result of the scheme which Mr Mill proposes, or rather advocates. He would begin the work of reformation by forming a body of peasant proprietors on the waste lands of Ireland. Carried out with due consideration to the rights of property, we confess we can detect no objections to this plan. Some differences of opinion, we believe, exist amongst the best judges as to the nature of the soil in question, and its capability of being reclaimed; and on this point we cannot profess to give an opinion: but, so far as principles of legislation, or the objects in view are concerned, we cordially approve of the scheme, though we cannot say that we entertain the same sanguine view of it as the author before us. It deserves a trial, in conjunction with other measures of relief, when the temper of that misguided people shall admit of the application, with any probability of success, of this class of remedial measures.

[425]

We shall give the project as it is stated in the work before us. After observing that it is not necessary that peasant properties should be universal, in order to be useful, nor, indeed, desirable that they should be universal, he thus proceeds:—

"It is enough, if there be land available on which to locate so great a portion of the population, that the remaining area of the country shall not be required to maintain greater numbers than are compatible with large farming and hired labour. For this purpose there is an obvious resource in the waste lands, which are happily so extensive, and a large portion of them so improveable, as to afford a means by which, without making the present tenants proprietors, nearly the whole surplus population might be converted into peasant proprietors elsewhere. This plan has been strongly pressed upon the public by several writers; but the first to bring it prominently forward in England, was Mr William Thornton.<sup>[7]</sup>

"The detailed estimate of an irrefragable authority, Mr Griffith, annexed to the Report of Lord Devon's Commission, shows nearly a million and a half of acres reclaimable for the spade or plough, some of them with the promise of great fertility, and about two millions and a half more reclaimable for pasture; the greater part being in most convenient proximity to the principal masses of destitute population. Besides these four millions of acres, there are above two millions and a half, pronounced by Mr Griffith to be unimprovable; but he is only speaking of reclamation for profit: it is doubtful if there be any land, in a temperate climate, which cannot be reclaimed and rendered productive by labourers themselves under the inducement of a permanent property. Confining ourselves to the one and a half millions of arable first mentioned, it would furnish properties averaging five acres each to three hundred thousand persons, which, at the rate of five persons to a family—a rather low rate for Ireland—answers to a population of fifteen hundred thousand. Suppose such a number drafted off to a state of

independence and comfort, together with any moderate additional relief of emigration, and the introduction of English capital and farming over the remaining surface of Ireland would cease to be chimerical.

"The improvement of waste,' Mr Thornton observes, 'may perhaps be thought to require a good deal of capital; but capital is principally useful for its command of labour, and the Irish peasantry have quite labour enough at their own disposal. Their misfortune is that they have so much. Their labour would not be worse applied because they worked for themselves instead of for a pay-master. So far is large capital from being indispensable for the cultivation of barren tracts, that schemes of this kind, which could only bring loss to a real speculator, are successfully achieved by his penniless rival. A capitalist must have a certain return for the money he lays out, but the poor man expends nothing but his own superabundant labour, which would be valueless if not so employed; so that his returns, however small, are all clear profit. No man in his senses would ever have thought of wasting money upon the original sand of the Pays de Waes; but the hard-working boors who settled there two hundred years ago, without any other stock than their industry, contrived to enrich both themselves and the land, and indeed to make the latter the richest in Europe.'

"The profit of reclaiming waste land,' says the Digest of Evidence to Lord Devon's Commission, 'will be best understood from a practice not uncommon in Ireland, to which farmers sometimes resort. This consists in giving the use of a small portion of it to a poor cottier or herdsman for the first three crops, after which this improved portion is given up to the farmer, and a fresh piece of the waste land is taken on the same terms by the cottier.' Well may the compiler say, 'Here we have the example of the very poorest class in Ireland obtaining a livelihood by the cultivation of waste land under the most discouraging and the least remunerative circumstances that can well be imagined.'

"It is quite worthy of the spirit which pervades the wretched attempts as yet made to do good to Ireland, that this spectacle of the poorest of mankind making the land valuable by their labour for the profit of other people who have done nothing to assist them, does not at once strike Lord Devon and his Commission as a thing which ought not to be. Mr Thornton strongly urges the claims of common justice and common sense.

[426]

"The colonists ought to be allowed to retain permanent possession of the spots reclaimed by them. To employ them as labourers in bringing the land into a remunerative condition, (see Report of Land Occupation Commissioners,) in order that it may then be let to some one else, while they are sent to shift for themselves where they can, may be an excellent mode of enriching the landlord, but must eventually aggravate the sufferings of the poor. It is probably because this plan has been generally practised, that the reclamation of waste land has hitherto done nothing for the benefit of the Irish peasantry. If the latter are to derive any advantage from it, such of them as may be located on the waste should receive perpetual leases of their respective allotments—should be made freeholders in fact, or at least perpetual tenants at a quit-rent. Such an appropriation of waste land would, of course, require that compensation should be made to all who previously possessed any interest in it. But the value of a legal interest in land which cannot be enclosed or cultivated without permission of the legislature, can only be proportionate to the actual yearly produce; and as land in a natural state yields little or nothing, all legal claims upon it might be bought up at a trifling expense, or might be commuted for a very small annual payment to be made by the settlers. Of the perfect competence of parliament to direct some arrangement of this kind there can be no question. An authority which compels individuals to part with their most valued property on the slightest pretext of public convenience, and permits railway projectors to throw down family mansions and cut up favourite pleasure-grounds, need not be very scrupulous about forcing the sale of boggy meadows or mountain pastures, in order to obtain the means of curing the destitution and misery of an entire people.'

"It would be desirable," continues Mr Mill, "and in most cases necessary, that the tracts of land should be prepared for the labours of the peasant by being drained and intersected with roads, at the expense of government; the interest of the sums so expended, and of compensation paid for the existing rights to the waste land, being charged on it, when reclaimed, as a perpetual quit-rent, redeemable at a moderate number of years' purchase. The state would thus incur no loss, while the advances made would give that immediate employment to the surplus labour of Ireland, which, if not given in this manner, will assuredly have to be given in some other, not only less useful, but far less likely to repay its cost. The millions lavished, during the famine, in the almost nominal execution of useless works, without any result but that of keeping the people alive, would, if employed in a great operation in the waste lands, have been quite as effectual for relieving immediate distress, and would have laid the foundation, broad and deep, for something really deserving the name of social improvement. But, as usual, it was thought better to throw away money and exertion in a beaten track, than to take the responsibility of the most advantageous investment of them in an untrodden one."—(Vol. i. p. 392.)

We make no apology for the length of the above extract; the subject is of great importance; but

having stated the proposal in the words of its principal author (if Mr Thornton can claim the distinction) and its most distinguished advocate, we have nothing left but to express our own wish that some such wide and general plan will at all events meet with a fair trial, when the fitting time shall occur for making the experiment.

Any of our readers into whose hands the work of Mr Mill has already fallen, will be aware of the numerous topics on which it must excite controversy or provoke discussion. Some of these topics we had marked out for examination; but we have no space to enter upon a new subject, and shall content ourselves with closing our notice with an extract or two from what is the closing chapter of the work itself—*On the Limits of the Province of Government*. His observations upon this subject are so temperate and judicious, and conceived throughout in so liberal and enlightened a spirit, that although there must always be a *shade* of difference between such a writer and ourselves, we should have little hesitation in adopting almost the whole of the chapter. He draws a very necessary distinction between the authoritative interference of government, controlling and interdicting, and that kind of intervention where a government, "leaving individuals free to use their own means of pursuing any object of general interest, but not trusting the object solely to their care, establishes, side by side with their arrangements, an agency of its own for a like purpose. Thus it is one thing to maintain a church establishment, and another to refuse toleration to other religions, or to persons professing no religion. It is one thing to provide schools or colleges, and another to require that no person shall act as an instructor of youth without a government license."

[427]

We like the tone of the following remark:—"Whatever theory we adopt respecting the foundation of the social union, and under whatever political institutions we live, there is a circle around every individual human being which no government, be it that of one, of a few, or of the many, ought to be permitted to overstep; there is a part of the life of every person, who has come to years of discretion, within which the individuality of that person ought to reign uncontrolled, either by any other individual or the public collectively. That there is, or ought to be, some space of human existence thus entrenched round, and sacred from authoritative intrusion, no one who professes the smallest regard to human freedom or dignity will call in question."

"Many," he continues, "in latter times have been prone to think that limitation of the powers of government is only essential when the government itself is badly constituted; when it does not represent the people, but is the organ of a class, or a coalition of classes; and that a government of a sufficiently popular constitution might be trusted with any amount of power over the nation, since its power would be only that of the nation over itself. This might be true, if the nation, in such cases, did not practically mean a mere majority of the nation, and if minorities only were capable of oppressing, but not of being oppressed. Experience, however, proves that the depositaries of power, who are mere delegates of the people—that is, of a majority—are quite as ready (when they think they can count upon popular support) as any organs of oligarchy to assume arbitrary power, and encroach unduly on the liberty of private life. The public collectively is abundantly ready to impose, not only its generally narrow views of its interests, but its abstract opinions, and even its tastes, as laws binding upon individuals; and our present civilisation tends so strongly to make the power of persons acting in masses the only substantial power in society, that there never was more necessity for surrounding individual independence of thought, speech, and conduct with the most powerful defences, in order to maintain that originality of mind and individuality of character, which are the only source of any real progress, and of most of the qualities which make the human race much superior to any herd of animals."

It is not the error which Conservative politicians are liable to commit, to throw too large a share of the management of affairs into the hands of a central power; they would, therefore, readily coincide with Mr Mill, when he observes, that even if a government could comprehend within itself the most eminent intellectual capacity and active talent of the nation, it would not be the less desirable that the conduct of a large portion of the affairs of society should be left in the hands of the persons immediately interested in them. "The business of life," he remarks, "is an essential part of the practical education of a people; without which, book and school instruction, though most necessary and salutary, does not suffice to qualify them for conduct, and for the adaptation of means to ends.... A people among whom there is no habit of spontaneous action for a collective interest—who look habitually to their government to command or prompt them in all matters of joint concern—who expect to have every thing done for them, except what can be made an affair of mere habit and routine—have their faculties only half developed; their education is defective in one of its most important branches."

We must conclude with the following extract, which is so extremely applicable to the affairs of our neighbours, that we wish we could make it heard from the tribune of their National Assembly.

"A democratic constitution, not supported by democratic institutions in detail, but confined to the central government, not only is not political freedom, but often creates a spirit precisely the reverse, carrying down to the lowest grade in society the desire and ambition of political domination. In some countries, the desire of the people is for not being tyrannised over, but in others, it is merely for an equal chance to every body of tyrannising. Unhappily, this last state of the desires is fully as natural to mankind as the former, and in many of the conditions even of civilised humanity, is far more largely

[428]

exemplified. In proportion as the people are accustomed to manage their affairs by their own active intervention, instead of leaving them to the government, their desires will turn to the repelling tyranny, rather than to tyrannising; while, in proportion as all real initiative and direction resides in the government, and individuals perpetually feel and act as under its perpetual tutelage, popular institutions develop in them not the desire of freedom, but an unmeasured appetite for place and power; diverting the intelligence and activity of the country from its principal business to a wretched competition for the selfish prizes and the petty vanities of office."—(Vol. ii. p. 515.)

In quitting this work, we must again repeat that our task would be endless if we entered upon every topic on which it provokes discussion. On some of these we may take a future opportunity to express ourselves. Amongst the subjects we had designed, had space permitted, for some discussion, are certain heresies, as we think them, regarding property in land; and some views, rather hinted at than explained, on the position which the female sex ought to take in society. In the extract we first made, the reader may have remarked this singular expression. Speaking of the Americans, he says they have "apparently got rid of all social injustices and inequalities that affect persons of Caucasian race *and of the male sex*;" leaving it to be inferred, that even in America there still remain certain social injustices and inequalities affecting *the female sex*. There are many inuendos scattered throughout the book of the same description, but we nowhere gather a distinct view of the sort of reformation that is called for. In a writer of another character these expressions would be encountered only with ridicule; coming from Mr Mill, they excite our surprise, and, in some measure, our curiosity.

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## LIFE IN THE "FAR WEST."

[429]

### PART V.

The Mission of San Fernando is situated on a small river called Las Animas, a branch of the Los Martires. The convent is built at the neck of a large plain, at the point of influx of the stream from the broken spurs of the sierra. The savanna is covered with luxuriant grass, kept down, however, by the countless herds of cattle which pasture on it. The banks of the creek are covered with a lofty growth of oak and poplar, which near the Mission have been considerably thinned for the purpose of affording fuel and building material for the increasing settlement. The convent stands in the midst of a grove of fruit-trees, its rude tower and cross peeping above them, and contrasting picturesquely with the wildness of the surrounding scenery. Gardens and orchards lie immediately in front of the building, and a vineyard stretches away to the upland ridge of the valley. The huts of the Indians are scattered here and there, built of stone and adobe, sometimes thatched with flags and boughs, but comfortable enough. The convent itself is a substantial building, of the style of architecture characterising monastic edifices in most parts of the world. Loopholes peer from its plastered walls, and on a flat portion of the roof a comically mounted gingall or wall-piece, carrying a two-pound ball, threatens the assailant in time of war. At one end of the oblong building, a rough irregular arch of sun-burned bricks is surmounted by a rude cross, under which hangs a small but deep-toned bell—the wonder of the Indian peones, and highly venerated by the frayles themselves, who received it as a present from a certain venerable archbishop of Old Spain, and who, whilst guarding it with reverential awe, tell wondrous tales of its adventures on the road to its present abiding place.

Of late years the number of the canonical inmates of the convent has been much reduced—there being but four priests now to do the duties of the eleven who formerly inhabited it: Fray Augustin, a Capuchin of due capacity of paunch, being at the head of the holy quartette. Augustin is the conventual name of the reverend father, who fails not to impress upon such casual visitants to that *ultima Thule* as he deems likely to appreciate the information, that, but for his humility, he might add the sonorous appellations of Ignacio Sabanal-Morales-y Fuentes—his family being of the best blood of Old Castile, and known there since the days of Ruy Gomez—el Campéador—possessing, moreover, half the "vega" of the Ebro, &c., where, had fate been propitious, he would now have been the sleek superior of a rich capuchin convent, instead of vegetating, a leather-clad frayle, in the wilds of California Alta.

Nevertheless, his lot is no bad one. With plenty of the best and fattest meat to eat, whether of beef or venison, of bear or mountain mutton; with good wine and brandy of home make, and plenty of it; fruit of all climes in great abundance; wheaten or corn bread to suit his palate; a tractable flock of natives to guide, and assisted in the task by three brother shepherds; far from the strife of politics or party—secure from hostile attack, (not quite, by-the-by,) and eating, drinking, and sleeping away his time, one would think that Fray Augustin Ignacio Sabanal-Morales-y Fuentes had little to trouble him, and had no cause to regret even the vega of Castilian Ebro, held by his family since the days of el Campéador.

One evening Fray Augustin sat upon an adobe bench, under the fig-tree shadowing the porch of the Mission. He was dressed in a goat-skin jerkin, softly and beautifully dressed, and descending to his hips, under which his only covering—tell it not in Gath!—was a long linen shirt, reaching to his knees, and lately procured from Puebla de los Angeles, as a sacerdotal garment. Boots, stockings, or unmentionables, he had none. A cigarito, of tobacco rolled in corn shuck, was occasionally placed between his lips; whereupon huge clouds of smoke rushed in columns from

[430]

his mouth and nostrils. His face was of a golden yellow colour, relieved by arched and very black eyebrows; his shaven chin was of most respectable duplicity—his corporation of orthodox dimensions. Several Indians and half-bred Mexican women were pounding Indian corn on metates near at hand; whilst sundry beef-fed urchins of whitey-brown complexion sported before the door, exhibiting, as they passed Fray Augustin, a curious resemblance to the strongly marked features of that worthy padre. They were probably his nieces and nephews—a class of relations often possessed in numbers by priests and monks.

The three remaining brothers were absent from the Mission; Fray Bernardo, hunting elk in the sierra; Fray José, gallivanting at Puebla de los Angeles, ten days' journey distant; Fray Cristoval, lassoing colts upon the plain. Augustin, thus left to his own resources, had just eaten his vespertine frijolitos and chile colorado, and was enjoying a post-cœnal smoke of fragrant pouche under the shadow of his own fig-tree.

Whilst thus employed, an Indian dressed in Mexican attire approached him hat in hand, and, making a reverential bow, asked his directions concerning domestic business of the Mission.

"Hola! friend José," cried Fray Augustin in a thick guttural voice, "pensaba yo—I was thinking that it was very nearly this time three years ago when those 'malditos Americanos' came by here and ran off with so many of our cavallada."

"True, reverend father," answered the administrador, "just three years ago, all but fifteen days: I remember it well. *Malditos sean*—curse them!"

"How many did we kill, José?"

"Quizas mōochos—a great many, I dare say. But they did not fight fairly—charged right upon us, and gave us no time to do any thing. They don't know how to fight, these Mericanos; come right at you, before you can swing a lasso, hallooing like Indios Bravos."

"But, José, how many did they leave dead on the field?"

"Not one."

"And we?"

"Valgame Dios! thirteen dead, and many more wounded."

"That's it! Now if these savages come again, (and the Chemeguaba, who came in yesterday, says he saw a large trail,) we must fight adentro—within—outside is no go; for as you very properly say, José, these Americans don't know how to fight, and kill us before—before we can kill them. Vaya!"

At this moment there issued from the door of the Mission Don Antonio, Velez Trueba, a Gachupin—that is, a native of Old Spain—a wizened old hidalgo refugee, who had left the mother country on account of his political opinions, which were staunchly Carlist, and had found his way—how, he himself scarcely knew—from Mexico to San Francisco in Upper California, where, having a most perfect contempt for every thing Mexican, and hearing that in the Mission of San Fernando, far away, were a couple of Spanish padres of "sangre regular," he had started into the wilderness to ferret them out; and having escaped all dangers on the route, (which, however, were hardly dangers to the Don, who could not realise the idea of scalp-taking savages,) had arrived with a whole skin at the Mission. There he was received with open arms by his countryman Fray Augustin, who made him welcome to all the place afforded, and there he harmlessly smoked away his time; his heart far away on the banks of the Genil and in the grape-bearing vegas of his beloved Andalusia, his withered cuerpo in the sierras of Upper California. Don Antonio was the walking essence of a Spaniard of the *ancien régime*. His family dated from the Flood, and with the exception of sundry refreshing jets of Moorish blood, injected into the Truebas during the Moorish epoch, no strange shoot was ever engrafted on their genealogical tree. The marriages of the family were ever confined to the family itself—never looking to fresh blood in a station immediately below it, which was not hidalgueno; nor above, since any thing higher in rank than the Trueba y Trueba family, *no habia*, there was not.

[431]

Thus, in the male and female scions of the house, were plainly visible the ill effects of breeding "in and in." The male Truebas were sadly degenerate Dons, in body as in mind—compared to their ancestors of Boabdil's day; and the señoritas of the name were all eyes, and eyes alone, and hardly of such stamp as would have tempted that amorous monarch to bestow a kingdom for a kiss, as ancient ballads tell.

"Dueña de la negra toca,  
Por un beso de tu boca,  
Diera un reyno, Boabdil;  
Y yo por ello, Cristiana,  
Te diera de buena gana  
Mil cielos, si fueran mil."

Come of such poor stock, and reared on tobacco smoke and "gazpacho," Don Antonio would not have shone, even amongst pigmy Mexicans, for physical beauty. Five feet high, a frame-work of bones covered with a skin of Andalusian tint, the Trueba stood erect and stiff in all the consciousness of his "sangre regular." His features were handsome, but entirely devoid of flesh, his upper lip was covered with a jet-black mustache mixed with gray, his chin was bearded "like

the pard." Every one around him clad in deer and goat skin, our Don walked conspicuous in shining suit of black—much the worse for wear, it must be confessed—with beaver hat sadly battered, and round his body and over his shoulder an unexceptionable "capa" of the amplest dimensions. Asking, as he stepped over him, the pardon of an Indian urchin who blocked the door, and bowing with punctilious politeness to the sturdy mozas who were grinding corn, Don Antonio approached our friend Augustin, who was discussing warlike matters with his administrador.

"Hola! Don Antonio, how do you find yourself, sir?"

"Perfectly well, and your very humble servant, reverend father; and your worship also, I trust you are in good health?"

"*Sin novedad*—without novelty;" which, since it was one hour and a half since our friends had separated to take their siestas, was not impossible.

"Myself and the worthy José," continued Fray Augustin, "were speaking of the vile invasion of a band of North American robbers, who three years since fiercely assaulted this peaceful Mission, killing many of its inoffensive inhabitants, wounding many more, and carrying off several of our finest colts and most promising mules to their dens and caves in the Rocky Mountains. Not with impunity, however, did they effect this atrocity. José informs me that many of the assailants were killed by my brave Indians. How many said you, José?"

"Quizas mo-o-ochos," answered the Indian.

"Yes, probably a great multitude," continued the padre; "but, unwarned by such well-merited castigation, it has been reported to me by a Chemeguaba mansito, that a band of these audacious marauders are now on their road to repeat the offence, numbering many thousands, well mounted and armed; and to oppose these white barbarians it behoves us to make every preparation of defence."<sup>[8]</sup>

"There is no cause for alarm," answered the Andaluz. "I (tapping his breast) have served in three wars: in that glorious one 'de la Independencia,' when our glorious patriots drove the French like sheep across the Pyrenees; in that equally glorious one of 1821; and in the late magnanimous struggle for the legitimate rights of his majesty Charles V., king of Spain, (doffing his hat,) whom God preserve. With that right arm," cried the spirited Don, extending his shrivelled member, "I have supported the throne of my kings—have fought for my country, mowing down its enemies before me; and with it," vehemently exclaimed the Gachupin, working himself into a perfect frenzy, "I will slay these Norte Americanos, should they dare to show their faces in my front. Adios, Don Augustin Ignacio Sabanal-Morales-y Fuentes," he cried, doffing his hat with an earth-sweeping bow: "I go to grind my sword. Till then adieu."

[432]

"A countryman of mine!" said the frayle, admiringly, to the administrador. "With him by our side we need not to fear: neither Norte Americanos, nor the devil himself, can harm us when he is by."

Whilst the Trueba sharpens his Tizona, and the priest puffs volumes of smoke from his nose and mouth, let us introduce to the reader one of the muchachitas, who knelt grinding corn on the metate, to make tortillas for the evening meal. Juanita was a stout wench from Sonora, of Mexican blood, hardly as dark as the other women who surrounded her, and with a drop or two of the Old Spanish blood struggling with the darker Indian tint to colour her plump cheeks. An enagua (a short petticoat) of red serge, was confined round her waist by a gay band ornamented with beads, and a chemisette covered the upper part of the body, permitting, however, a prodigal display of her charms. Whilst pounding sturdily at the corn, she laughed and joked with her fellow-labourers upon the anticipated American attack, which appeared to have but few terrors for her. "Que vengan," she exclaimed—"let them come; they are only men, and will not molest us women. Besides, I have seen these white men before—in my own country, and they are fine fellows, very tall, and as white as the snow on the sierras. Let them come, say I!"

"Only hear the girl!" cried another: "if these savages come, then will they kill Pedrillo, and what will Juanita say to lose her sweetheart?"

"Pedrillo!" sneered the latter; "what care I for Pedrillo? Soy Mejicana, yo—a Mexican girl am I, I'd have you know, and don't demean me to look at a wild Indian. Not I, indeed, by my salvation! What I say is, let the Norte Americanos come."

At this juncture Fray Augustin called for a glass of aguardiente, which Juanita was despatched to bring, and, on presenting it, the churchman facetiously inquired why she wished for the Americans, adding, "Don't think they'll come here—no, no: here we are brave men, and have Don Antonio with us, a noble fellow, well used to arms." As the words were on his lips, the clattering of a horse's hoofs was heard rattling across the loose stones and pebbles in the bed of the river, and presently an Indian herder galloped up to the door of the Mission, his horse covered with foam, and its sides bleeding from spur-wounds.

"Oh, padre mio!" he cried, as soon as he caught sight of his reverence, "vienen los Americanos—the Americans, the Americans are upon us. Ave Maria purissima—more than ten thousand are at my heels!"

Up started the priest and shouted for the Don.

That hidalgo presently appeared, armed with the sword that had graced his thigh in so many



glorious encounters, the sword with which he had mowed down the enemies of his country, and by whose aid he now proposed to annihilate the American savages should they dare to appear before him.

The alarm was instantly given; peones, vagueros hurried from the plains; and milpas, warned by the deep-toned bell, which soon rung out its sonorous alarm. A score of mounted Indians, armed with gun and lasso, dashed off to bring intelligence of the enemy. The old gingall on the roof was crammed with powder and bullets to the very muzzle, by the frayle's own hand. Arms were brought and piled in the sala, ready for use. The padre exhorted, the women screamed, the men grew pale and nervous, and thronged within the walls. Don Antonio, the fiery Andaluz, alone remained outside, flourishing his whetted sabre, and roaring to the padre, who stood on the roof with lighted match, by the side of his formidable cannon, not to be affrighted. "That he, the Trueba, was there, with his Tizona, ready to defeat the devil himself should he come on."

He was deaf to the entreaties of the priest to enter.

"Siempre en el frente—Ever in the van," he said, "was the war-cry of the Truebas."

[433]

But now a cloud of dust was seen approaching from the plain, and presently a score of horsemen dashed headlong towards the Mission. "El enemigo," shouted Fray Augustin; and, without waiting to aim, he clapped his match to the touch-hole of the gun, harmlessly pointed to the sky, and crying out "in el nombre de Dios"—in God's name—as he did so, was instantly knocked over and over by the recoil of the piece, then was as instantly seized by some of the Indian garrison, and forced through the trap-door into the building; whilst the horsemen (who were his own scouts) galloped up with the intelligence that the enemy was at hand, and in overwhelming force.

Thereupon the men were all mounted, and formed in a body before the building, to the amount of more than fifty, well armed with guns or bows and arrows. Here the gallant Don harangued them, and infusing into their hearts a little of his own courage, they eagerly demanded to be led against the enemy. Fray Augustin re-appeared on the roof, gave them his blessing, advised them to give no quarter, and, with slight misgivings, saw them ride off to the conflict.

About a mile from the Mission, the plain gradually ascended to a ridge of moderate elevation, on which was a growth of dwarf oak and ilex. To this point the eyes of the remaining inmates of the convent were earnestly directed, as at this point the enemy was first expected to make his appearance. Presently a few figures were seen to crown the ridge, clearly defined against the clear evening sky. Not more than a dozen mounted men composed this party, which all imagined must be doubtless the vanguard of the thousand invaders. On the summit of the ridge they halted a few minutes, as if to reconnoitre; and by this time the Californian horsemen were halted in the plain, midway between the Mission and the ridge, and distant from the former less than half-a-mile, so that all the operations were clearly visible to the lookers-on.

The enemy wound slowly, in Indian file, down the broken ground of the descent; but when the plain was reached, they formed into something like a line, and trotted fearlessly towards the Californians. These began to sit uneasily in their saddles; nevertheless they made a forward movement, and even broke into a gallop, but soon halted, and again huddled together. Then the mountaineers quickened their pace, and their loud shout was heard as they dashed into the middle of the faltering troop. The sharp cracks of the rifles were heard, and the duller reports of the smooth-bored pieces of the Californians; a cloud of smoke and dust arose from the plain, and immediately half-a-dozen horses, with empty saddles, broke from it, followed quickly by the Californians, flying like mad across the level. The little steady line of the mountaineers advanced, and puffs of smoke arose, as they loaded and discharged their rifles at the flying horsemen. As the Americans came on, however, one was seen to totter in his saddle, the rifle fell from his grasp, and he tumbled headlong to the ground. For an instant his companions surrounded the fallen man, but again forming, dashed towards the Mission, shouting fierce war-whoops, and brandishing aloft their long and heavy rifles. Of the defeated Californians some jumped off their horses at the door of the Mission, and sought shelter within; others galloped off towards the sierra in panic-stricken plight. Before the gate, however, still paced valiantly the proud hidalgo, encumbered with his cloak, and waving with difficulty his sword above his head. To the priest and women, who implored him to enter, he replied with cries of defiance, of "Viva Carlos Quinto," and "Death or glory." He shouted in vain to the flying crowd to halt; but, seeing their panic was beyond hope, he clutched his weapon more firmly as the Americans dashed at him, closed his teeth and his eyes, thought once of the vega of his beloved Genil, and of Granada la Florida, and gave himself up for lost. Those inside the Mission, when they observed the flight of their cavalry, gave up the defence as hopeless; and already the charging mountaineers were almost under the walls when they observed the curious figure of the little Don making demonstrations of hostility.

[434]

"Wagh!" exclaimed the leading hunter, (no other than our friend La Bonté) "here's a little crittur as means to do all the fighting;" and seizing his rifle by the barrel, he poked at the Don with the butt-end, who parried the blow, and with such a sturdy stroke, as nearly severed the stock in two. Another mountaineer rode up, and, swinging his lasso over-head, threw the noose dexterously over the Spaniard's head, and as it fell over his shoulders, drew it taut, thus securing the arms of the pugnacious Don as in a vice.

"Quartel!" cried the latter; "por Dios, quartel!"

"Quarter be d—!" exclaimed one of the whites, who understood Spanish; "who's agoin' to hurt you, you little crittur?"

By this time Fray Augustin was waving a white flag from the roof, in token of surrender; and soon after he appeared trembling at the door, beseeching the victors to be merciful and to spare the lives of the vanquished, when all and every thing in the Mission would be freely placed at their disposal.

"What does the nigger say?" asked old Walker, the leader of the mountaineers, of the interpreter.

"Well, he talks so queer, this hos can't rightly make it out."

"Tell the old coon then to quit that, and make them darned greasers clear out of the lodge, and pock some corn and shucks here for the animals, for they're nigh give out."

This being conveyed to him in mountain Spanish, which fear alone made him understand, the padre gave orders to the men to leave the Mission, advising them, moreover, not to recommence hostilities, as himself was kept as hostage, and if a finger was lifted against the mountaineers, he would be killed at once, and the Mission burned to the ground. Once inside, the hunters had no fear of attack, they could have kept the building against all California; so, leaving a guard of two outside the gate, and first seeing their worn-out animals supplied with piles of corn and shucks, they made themselves at home, and soon were paying attention to the hot tortillas, meat, and chile colorado which were quickly placed before them, washing down the hot-spiced viands with deep draughts of wine and brandy. It would have been amusing to have seen the faces of these rough fellows as they gravely pledged each other in the grateful liquor, and looked askance at the piles of fruit served by the attendant Hebes. These came in for no little share of attention, it may be imagined; but the utmost respect was paid to them, for your mountaineer, rough and bear-like though he be, never, by word or deed, offends the modesty of a woman, although sometimes obliged to use a compulsory wooing, when time is not allowed for regular courtship, and not unfrequently known to jerk a New Mexican or Californian beauty behind his saddle, should the obdurate parents refuse consent to their immediate union. It tickled the Americans not a little to have all their wants supplied, and to be thus waited upon, by what they considered the houris of paradise; and after their long journey, and the many hardships and privations they had suffered, their present luxurious situation seemed scarcely real.

The Hidalgo, released from the durance vile of the lasso, assisted at the entertainment; his sense of what was due to the "sangre regular" which ran in his veins being appeased by the fact, that he sat *above* the wild uncouth mountaineers, these preferring to squat crosslegged on the floor in their own fashion, to the uncomfortable and novel luxury of a chair. Killbuck, indeed, seemed to have quite forgotten the use of such pieces of furniture. On Fray Augustin offering him one, and begging him, with many protestations, to be seated, that old mountain worthy looked at it, and then at the padre, turned it round, and at length comprehending the intention, essayed to sit. This he effected at last, and sat grimly for some moments, when, seizing the chair by the back, he hurled it out of the open door, exclaiming,—"Wagh! this coon aint hamshot anyhow, and don't want such fixins, he don't;" and gathering his legs under his body, reclined in the manner customary to him. There was a prodigious quantity of liquor consumed that night, the hunters making up for their many banyans; but as it was the pure juice of the grape, it had little or no effect upon their hard heads. They had not much to fear from attacks on the part of the Californians; but, to provide against all emergencies, the padre and the Gachupin were "hobbled," and confined in an inner room, to which there was no ingress nor egress save through the door which opened into the apartment where the mountaineers lay sleeping, two of the number keeping watch. A fandango with the Indian girls had been proposed by some of them, but Walker placed a decided veto on this. He said "they had need of sleep now, for there was no knowing what to-morrow might bring forth; that they had a long journey before them, and winter was coming on; they would have to 'streak' it night and day, and sleep when their journey was over, which would not be until Pike's Peak was left behind them. It was now October, and the way they'd have to hump it back to the mountains would take the gristle off a painter's tail."

[435]

Young Ned Wooton was not to the fore when the roll was called. He was courting the Sonora wench Juanita, and to some purpose, for we may at once observe, that the maiden accompanied the mountaineer to his distant home, and at the present moment is sharing his lodge on Hardscrabble creek of the upper Arkansa, having been duly and legally married by Fray Augustin before their departure.

But now the snow on the ridge of the Sierra Madre, and the nightly frosts; the angular flights of geese and ducks constantly passing over-head; the sober tints of the foliage, and the dead leaves that strew the ground; the withering grass on the plain, and the cold gusts, sometimes laden with snow and sleet, that sweep from the distant snow-clad mountains;—all these signs warn us to linger no longer in the tempting valley of San Fernando, but at once to pack our mules to cross the dreary and desert plains and inhospitable sierras; and to seek with our booty one of the sheltered bayous of the Rocky Mountains.

On the third day after their arrival, behold our mountaineers again upon the march, driving before them—with the assistance of half-a-dozen Indians, impressed for the first few days of the journey until the cavallada get accustomed to travel without confusion—a band of four hundred head of mules and horses, themselves mounted on the strongest and fleetest they could select from at least a thousand.

Fray Augustin and the Hidalgo, from the house-top, watched them depart: the former glad to get rid of such unscrupulous guests at any cost, the latter rather loath to part with his boon companions, with whom he had quaffed many a quartillo of Californian wine. Great was the grief,

and violent the sobbing, when all the girls in the Mission surrounded Juanita to bid her adieu; as she, seated *en cavalier* on an easy pacing mule, bequeathed her late companions to the keeping of every saint in the calendar, and particularly to the great St Ferdinand himself, under whose especial tutelage all those in the Mission were supposed to live. Pedrillo, poor forsaken Pedrillo, a sullen sulky half-breed, was overcome, not with grief, but with anger at the slight put upon him, and vowed revenge. He of the "sangre regular," having not a particle of enmity in his heart, waved his arm—that arm with which he had mowed down the enemies of Carlos Quinto—and requested the mountaineers, if ever fate should carry them to Spain, not to fail to visit his quinta in the vega of Genil, which, with all in it, he placed at their worships' disposal—con muchissima franqueza.

Fat Fray Augustin likewise waved his arm, but groaned in spirit as he beheld the noble band of mules and horses, throwing back clouds of dust on the plain where they had been bred. One noble roan stallion seemed averse to leave his accustomed pasture, and again and again broke away from the band. Luckily old Walker had taken the precaution to secure the "*bell mare*" of the herd, and mounted on her rode ahead, the animals all following their well-known leader. As the roan galloped back, the padre was in ecstasy. It was a favourite steed, and one he would have gladly ransomed at any price.

"Ya viene, ya viene!" he cried out, "now, now it's coming! hurra for the roan!" but, under the rifle of a mountaineer, one of the Californians dashed at it, a lasso whirling round his head, and turning and twisting like a doubling hare, as the horse tried to avoid him, at last threw the open coil over the animal's head, and led him back in triumph to the band. [436]

"Maldito sea aquel Indio—curse that Indian!" quoth the padre, and turned away.

And now our sturdy band—less two who had gone under—were fairly on their way. They passed the body of their comrade who had been killed in the fight before the Mission; the wolves, or Indian dogs, had picked it to the bones; but a mound near by, surrounded by a rude cross, showed where the Californians (seven of whom were killed) had been interred—the pile of stones at the foot of the cross testifying that many an *ave maria* had already been said by the poor Indians, to save the souls of their slaughtered companions from the pangs of purgatory.

For the first few days progress was slow and tedious. The confusion attendant upon driving so large a number of animals over a country without trail or track of any description, was sufficient to prevent speedy travelling; and the mountaineers, desirous of improving the pace, resolved to pursue a course more easterly, and to endeavour to strike the great SPANISH TRAIL, which is the route followed by the New Mexicans in their journeys to and from the towns of Puebla de los Angeles and Santa Fé. This road, however, crosses a long stretch of desert country, destitute alike of grass and water, save at a few points, the regular halting-places of the caravans; and as but little pasture is to be found at these places at any time, there was great reason to doubt, if the Santa Fé traders had passed this season, that there would not be sufficient grass to support the numerous cavallada, after the herbage had been laid under contribution by the traders' animals. However, a great saving of time would be effected by taking this trail, although it wound a considerable distance out of the way to avoid the impassable chain of the Sierra Nevada—the gap in those mountains through which the Americans had come being far to the southward, and at this late season probably obstructed by the snow.

Urged by threats and bribes, one of the Indians agreed to guide the cavalcade to the trail, which he declared was not more than five days' distant. As they advanced, the country became wilder and more sterile,—the valleys, through which several small streams coursed, being alone capable of supporting so large a number of animals. No time was lost in hunting for game; the poorest of the mules and horses were killed for provisions, and the diet was improved by a little venison when a deer casually presented itself near the camping ground. Of Indians they had seen not one; but they now approached the country of the Diggers, who infest the district through which the Spanish trail passes, laying contributions on the caravans of traders, and who have been, not inaptly, termed the "Arabs of the American desert." The Californian guide now earnestly entreated permission to return, saying, that he should lose his life if he attempted to pass the Digger country alone on his return. He pointed to a snow-covered peak, at the foot of which the trail passed; and leave being accorded, he turned his horse's head towards the Mission of San Fernando.

Although the cavallada travelled, by this time, with much less confusion than at first, still, from the want of a track to follow, great trouble and exertion were required to keep the proper direction. The bell-mare led the van, carrying Walker, who was better acquainted with the country than the others; another hunter, of considerable distinction in the band, on a large mule, rode by his side. Then followed the cavallada, jumping and frisking with each other, stopping whenever a blade of grass showed, and constantly endeavouring to break away to green patches which sometimes presented themselves in the plains. Behind the troop, urging them on by dint of loud cries and objurgations, rode six mountaineers, keeping as much as possible in a line. Two others were on each flank to repress all attempts to wander, and keep the herd in a compact body. In this order the caravan had been crossing a broken country, up and down ridges, all day, the animals giving infinite trouble to their drivers, when a loud shout from the advanced guard put them all upon the *qui-vive*. Old Walker was seen to brandish the rifle over his head and point before him, and presently the cry of "The trail! the trail!" gladdened all hearts with the anticipation of a respite from the harassing labour of mule-driving. Descending a broken ridge, they at once struck into a distinct and tolerably well-worn track, into which the cavallada turned [437]

as easily and instinctively, as if they had all their lives been accustomed to travel on beaten roads. Along this they travelled merrily—their delight being, however, alloyed by frequent indications that hunger and thirst had done their work on the mules and horses of the caravans which had preceded them on the trail. They happened to strike it in the centre of a long stretch of desert, extending sixty miles without either water or pasture; and many animals had perished here, leaving their bones to bleach upon the plain. The soil was sandy, but rocks and stones covered the surface, disabling the feet of many of the young horses and mules; several of which, at this early stage of the journey, were already abandoned. Traces of the wretched Diggers became very frequent; these abject creatures resorting to the sandy plains for the purpose of feeding upon the lizards which there abound. As yet they did not show; only at night they prowled around the camp, waiting a favourable opportunity to run the animals. In the present instance, however, many of the horses having been left on the road, the Diggers found so plentiful a supply of meat as to render unnecessary any attack upon the formidable mountaineers.

One evening the Americans had encamped, earlier than usual, on a creek well-timbered with willow and quaking-ash, and affording tolerable pasture; and although it was still rather early, they determined to stop here, and give the animals an opportunity to fill themselves. Several deer had jumped out of the bottom as they entered it; and La Bonté and Killbuck had sallied from the camp with their rifles, to hunt and endeavour to procure some venison for supper. Along the river banks, herds of deer were feeding in every direction, within shot of the belt of timber; and the two hunters had no difficulty in approaching and knocking over two fine bucks within a few paces of the thicket. They were engaged in butchering the animals, when La Bonté, looking up from his work, saw half-a-dozen Indians dodging among the trees, within a few yards of himself and Killbuck. At the same instant two arrows *thudded* into the carcass of the deer over which he knelt, passing but a few inches from his head. Hollowing to his companion, La Bonté immediately seized the deer, and, lifting it with main strength, held it as a shield before him, but not before an arrow had struck him in the shoulder. Rising from the ground he retreated, behind cover, yelling loudly to alarm the camp, which was not five hundred yards distant on the other side of the stream. Killbuck, when apprised of the danger, ran bodily into the plain, and, keeping out of shot of the timber, joined La Bonté, who now, out of arrow-shot, threw down his shield of venison and fired his rifle at the assailants. The Indians appeared at first afraid to leave the cover; but three or four more joining them, one a chief, they advanced into the plain, with drawn bows, scattering wide apart, and running swiftly towards the whites, in a zigzag course, in order not to present a steady mark to their unerring rifles. The latter were too cautious to discharge their pieces, but kept a steady front, with rifle at shoulder. The Indians evidently disliked to approach nearer; but the chief, an old grizzled man, incited them by word and gesture,—running in advance and calling upon the others to follow him.

"Ho, boy!" exclaimed Killbuck to his companion, "that old coon must go under, or we'll get rubbed out by these darned critturs."

La Bonté understood him. Squatting on the ground, he planted his wiping-stick firmly at the extent of his left arm, and resting the long barrel of his rifle on his left hand, which was supported by the stick, he took a steady aim and fired. The Indian, throwing out his arms, staggered and let fall his bow,—tried hard to recover himself, and then fell forward on his face. The others, seeing the death of their chief, turned and made again for the cover. "You darned critturs," roared Killbuck, "take that!" and fired his rifle at the last one, tumbling him over as dead as a stone. The camp had also been alarmed. Five of them waded across the creek and took the Indians in rear; their rifles cracked within the timber, several more Indians fell, and the rest quickly beat a retreat. The venison, however, was not forgotten; the two deer were packed into camp, and did the duty of mule-meat that night.

[438]

This lesson had a seasonable effect upon the Diggers, who made no attempt on the cavallada that night or the next; for the camp remained two days to recruit the animals.

We will not follow the party through all the difficulties and perils of the desert route, nor detail the various devilries of the Diggers, who constantly sought opportunities to stampede the animals, or, approaching them in the night as they grazed, fired their arrows indiscriminately at the herd, trusting that dead or disabled ones would be left behind, and afford them a good supply of meat. In the month of December, the mountaineers crossed the great dividing ridge of the Rocky Mountains, making their way through the snowy barrier with the utmost difficulty, and losing many mules and horses in the attempt. On passing the ridge, they at once struck the head-springs of the Arkansa river, and turned into the Bayou Salade. Here they found a village of Arapahós, and were in no little fear of leaving their cavallada with these dexterous horse-thieves. Fortunately the chief in command was friendly to the whites, and restrained his young men; and a present of three horses insured his good offices. Still, the near neighbourhood of these Indians being hardly desirable, after a few days' halt, the Americans were again on their way, and halted finally at the juncture of the Fontaine-qui-bout with the Arkansa, where they determined to construct a winter camp. They now considered themselves at home, and at once set about building a log-shanty capable of containing them all, and a large corral for securing the animals at night, or in case of Indian alarms. This they effected by felling several large cottonwoods, and throwing them in the form of a horse-shoe: the entrance, however, being narrower than in that figure, and secured by upright logs, between which poles were fixed to be withdrawn at pleasure. The house, or, "fort"—as any thing in the shape of a house is called in these parts, where, indeed, every man must make his house a castle—was loopholed on all sides, and boasted a turf chimney of rather primitive construction; but which answered the purpose of drawing the smoke from the

interior. Game was plentiful all around;—bands of buffalo were constantly passing the Arkansa; and there were always deer and antelope within sight of the fort. The pasture, too, was good and abundant,—being the rich grama or buffalo grass, which, although rather dry at this season, still retains its fattening qualities; and the animals soon began to improve wonderfully in condition and strength.

Of the four hundred head of mules and horses with which they had started from California, but one-half reached the Arkansa. Many had been killed for food, (indeed they had furnished the only provisions during the journey,) many had been stolen by the Indians, or shot by them at night; and many had strayed off and not been recovered. We have omitted to mention that the Sonora girl, Juanita, and her spouse, Ned Wooton, remained behind at Roubideau's fort and rendezvous on the Uintah, which our band had passed on the other side of the mountains, whence they proceeded with a party to Taos in New Mexico, and resided there for some years, blessed with a fine family, &c. &c. &c., as the novels end.

As soon as the animals were fat and strong, they were taken down the Arkansa to Bent's Indian trading fort, about sixty miles below the mouth of Fontaine-qui-bout. Here a ready sale was found for them, mules being at that time in great demand on the frontier of the United States, and every season the Bents carried across the plains to Independence a considerable number collected in the Indian country, and in the upper settlements of New Mexico. As the mountaineers descended the Arkansa, a little incident occurred, and some of the party very unexpectedly encountered an old friend. Killbuck and La Bonté, who were generally compañeros, were riding some distance ahead of the cavallada, passing at the time the mouth of the Huerfano or Orphan Creek, when, at a long distance before them, they saw the figure of a horseman, followed by two loose animals, descending the bluff into the timbered bottom of the river. Judging the stranger to be Indian, they spurred their horses and galloped in pursuit, but the figure ahead suddenly disappeared. However, they quickly followed the track, which was plain enough in the sandy bottom, that of a horse and two mules. Killbuck scrutinised the "sign," and puzzled over it a considerable time; and at last exclaimed—"Wagh! this sign's as plain as mon beaver to me; look at that hos-track, boy; did ye ever see that afore?"

[439]

"Well, I have!" answered La Bonté, peering down at it: "that ar shuffle-toe seems handy to me now, I *tell* you."

"The man as used to ride that hos is long gone under, but the hos, darn the old crittur, is old Bill Williams's, I'll swar by hook."

"Well, it aint nothin else," continued La Bonté, satisfying himself by a long look; "it's the old boy's hos as shure as shootin: and them Rapahos has rubbed him out at last, and raised his animals. Ho, boy! let's lift their hair."

"Agreed," answered Killbuck; and away they started in pursuit, determined to avenge the death of their old comrade.

They followed the track through the bottom and into the stream, which it crossed, and, passing a few yards up the bank, entered the water again, when they could see nothing more of it. Puzzled at this, they sought on each side the river, but in vain; and, not wishing to lose more time in the search, they proceeded through the timber on the banks to find a good camping-place for the night, which had been their object in riding in advance of the cavallada. On the left bank, a short distance before them, was a heavy growth of timber, and the river ran in one place close to a high bluff, between which and the water was an almost impervious thicket of plum and cherry trees. The grove of timber ended before it reached this point, and but few scattered trees grew in the little glade which intervened, and which was covered with tolerable grass. This being fixed upon as an excellent camp, the two mountaineers rode into the glade, and dismounted close to the plum and cherry thicket, which formed almost a wall before them, and an excellent shelter from the wind. Jumping off their horses, they were in the act of removing the saddles from their backs, when a shrill neigh burst from the thicket not two yards behind them; a rustling in the bushes followed, and presently a man dressed in buck-skin, and rifle in hand, burst out of the tangled brush, exclaiming in an angry voice—

"Do'ee hy'ar now? I was nigh upon gut-shootin some of e'e—I was now; thought e'e was darned Rapahos, I did, and câched right off."

"Ho, Bill! what, old hos! not gone under yet?" cried both the hunters. "Give us your paw."

"Do'ee now, if hy'ar ar'nt them boys as was rubbed out on Lodge Pole (creek) a time ago. Do'ee hy're? if this aint 'some' now, I wouldn't say so."

Leaving old Bill Williams and our two friends to exchange their rough but hearty greetings, we will glance at that old worthy's history since the time when we left him câching in the fire and smoke on the Indian battle-ground in the Rocky Mountains. He had escaped fire and smoke, or he would not have been here on Arkansa with his old grizzled Nez-percé steed. On that occasion, the veteran mountaineer had lost his two pack-animals and all his beaver. He was not the man, however, to want a horse or mule as long as an Indian village was near at hand. Skulking, therefore, by day in cañons and deep gorges of the mountains, and travelling by night, he followed closely on the trail of the victorious savages, bided his time, struck his "coup," and recovered a pair of pack-horses, which was all he required. Ever since, he had been trapping alone in all parts of the mountains; had visited the rendezvous but twice for short periods, and then with full packs of beaver; and was now on his way to Bent's Fort, to dispose of his present

[440]

loads of peltry, enjoy one good carouse on Taos whisky, and then return to some hole or corner in the mountains which he knew of, to follow in the spring his solitary avocation. He too had had his share of troubles, and had many Indian scrapes, but passed safely through all, and scarcely cared to talk of what he had done, so matter-of-fact to him were the most extraordinary of his perilous adventures.

Arrived at Bent's Fort, the party disposed of their cavallada, and then—respect for the pardonable weaknesses of our mountain friends prompts us to draw a veil over the furious orgies that ensued. A number of hunters and trappers were "in" from their hunting-grounds, and a village of Shians and some lodges of Kioways were camped round the fort. As long as the liquor lasted, and there was good store of alcohol as well as of Taos whisky, the Arkansa resounded with furious mirth—not unmixed with graver scenes; for your mountaineer, ever quarrelsome in his cups, is quick to give and take offence, when rifles alone can settle the difference, and much blood is spilt upon the prairie in his wild and frequent quarrels.

Bent's Fort is situated on the left or northern bank of the river Arkansa, about one hundred miles from the foot of the Rocky Mountains—on a low and level bluff of the prairie which here slopes gradually to the water's-edge. The walls are built entirely of adobes—or sun-burned bricks—in the form of a hollow square, at two corners of which are circular flanking towers of the same material. The entrance is by a large gateway into the square, round which are the rooms occupied by the traders and employés of the host. These are small in size, with walls coloured by a white-wash made of clay found in the prairie. Their flat roofs are defended along the exterior by parapets of adobe, to serve as a cover to marksmen firing from the top; and along the coping grow plants of cactus of all the varieties common in the plains. In the centre of the square is the press for packing the furs; and there are three large rooms, one used as a store and magazine, another as a council-room, where the Indians assemble for their "talks," whilst the third is the common dining-hall, where the traders, trappers, and hunters, and all employés, feast upon the best provender the game-covered country affords. Over the culinary department presided of late years a fair lady of colour, Charlotte by name, who was, as she loved to say, "de onlee lady in de dam Injun country," and who moreover was celebrated from Long's Peak to the Cumbres Espanolás for slap-jacks and pumpkin pies.

Here congregate at certain seasons the merchants of the plains and mountains, with their stocks of peltry. Chiefs of the Shian, the Kioway, and Arapahó, sit in solemn conclave with the head traders, and smoke the "calumet" over their real and imaginary grievances. Now O-cun-no-whurst, the Yellow Wolf, grand chief of the Shian, complains of certain grave offences against the dignity of his nation! A trader from the "big lodge" (the fort) has been in his village, and before the trade was opened, in laying the customary chief's gift "on the prairie"<sup>[9]</sup> has not "opened his hand," but "squeezed out his present between his fingers" grudgingly and with too sparing measure. This was hard to bear, but the Yellow Wolf would say no more!

Tah-kai-buhl or, "he who jumps," is deputed from the Kioway to warn the white traders not to proceed to the Canadian to trade with the Comanche. That nation is mad—a "heap mad" with the whites, and has "dug up the hatchet" to "rub out" all who enter its country. The Kioway loves the paleface, and gives him warning, (and "he who jumps" looks as if he deserves something "on the prairie" for his information.)

[441]

Shawh-noh-qua-mish, "the peeled lodge-pole," is there to excuse his Arapahó braves, who lately made free with a band of horses belonging to the fort. He promises the like shall never happen again, and he, Shawh-noh-qua-mish, speaks with a "single tongue." Over clouds of tobacco and kinnik-kinnik, these grave affairs are settled and terms arranged.

In the corral, groups of leather-clad mountaineers, with "decks" of "euker" and "seven up," gamble away their hard-earned peltries. The employés—mostly St Louis Frenchmen and Canadian voyageurs—are pressing packs of buffalo skins, beating robes, or engaged in other duties of a trading fort. Indian squaws, the wives of mountaineers, strut about in all the pride of beads and fanfaron, jingling with bells and bugles, and happy as paint can make them. Hunters drop in with animals packed with deer or buffalo meat to supply the fort; Indian dogs look anxiously in at the gateway, fearing to enter and encounter the enmity of their natural enemies, the whites; and outside the fort, at any hour of the day or night, one may safely wager to see a dozen coyotes or prairie wolves loping round, or seated on their haunches, and looking gravely on, waiting patiently for some chance offal to be cast outside. Against the walls, groups of Indians, too proud to enter without an invitation, lean, wrapped in their buffalo robes, sulky and evidently ill at ease to be so near the whites without a chance of fingering their scalp-locks; their white lodges shining in the sun, at a little distance from the river-banks; their horses feeding in the plain beyond.

The appearance of the fort is very striking, standing as it does hundreds of miles from any settlement, on the vast and lifeless prairie, surrounded by hordes of hostile Indians, and far out of reach of intercourse with civilised man; its mud-built walls inclosing a little garrison of a dozen hardy men, sufficient to hold in check the numerous tribes of savages ever thirsting for their blood. Yet the solitary stranger passing this lone fort, feels proudly secure when he comes within sight of the "stars and stripes" which float above the walls.

Again we must take a jump with La Bonté over a space of several months; when we find him, in company of half a dozen trappers, amongst them his inseparable compañero Killbuck, camped on the Greenhorn creek, *en route* to the settlements of New Mexico. They have a few mules packed

with beaver for the Taos market; but this expedition has been planned more for pleasure than profit—a journey to Taos valley being the only civilised relaxation coveted by the mountaineers. Not a few of the present band are bound thither with matrimonial intentions; the belles of Nuevo Mejico being to them the *ne plus ultra* of female perfection, uniting most conspicuous personal charms (although coated with cosmetic *alegría*—an herb, with the juice of which the women of Mexico hideously bedaub their faces) with all the hardworking industry of Indian squaws. The ladies, on their part, do not hesitate to leave the paternal abodes, and eternal tortilla-making, to share the perils and privations of the American mountaineers in the distant wilderness. Utterly despising their own countrymen, whom they are used to contrast with the dashing white hunters who swagger in all the pride of fringe and leather through their towns—they, as is but natural, gladly accept husbands from the latter class; preferring the stranger, who possesses the heart and strong right arm to defend them, to the miserable, cowardly "pelados," who hold what little they have on sufferance of savage Indians, but one degree superior to themselves.

Certainly no band of hunters that ever appeared in the vale of Taos, numbered in its ranks a properer lot of lads than those now camped on Greenhorn, intent on matrimonial foray into the settlements of New Mexico. There was young Dick Wooton, who was "some" for his inches, being six feet six, and as straight and strong as the barrel of his long rifle. Shoulder to shoulder with this "boy," stood Rube Herring, and not a hair's-breadth difference in height or size between them. Killbuck, though mountain winters had sprinkled a few snow-flakes on his head, *looked up* to neither; and La Bonté held his own with any mountaineer who ever set a trap in sight of Long's Peak or the Snowy Range. Marcelline—who, though a Mexican, despised his people and abjured his blood, having been all his life in the mountains with the white hunters—looked down easily upon six feet and odd inches. In form a Hercules, he had the symmetry of an Apollo; with strikingly handsome features, and masses of long black hair hanging from his slouching beaver over the shoulders of his buck-skin hunting shirt. He, as he was wont to say, was "no dam Spaniard, but 'mountainee man,' wagh!" Chabonard, a half-breed, was not lost in the crowd;—and, the last in height, but the first in every quality which constitutes excellence in a mountaineer, whether of indomitable courage, or perfect indifference to death or danger; with an iron frame capable of withstanding hunger, thirst, heat, cold, fatigue and hardships of every kind; of wonderful presence of mind, and endless resource in time of great peril; with the instinct of an animal, and the moral courage of a *man*,—who was "taller" for his inches than KIT CARSON, paragon of mountaineers?<sup>[10]</sup> Small in stature, and slenderly limbed, but with muscles of wire, with a fair complexion and quiet intelligent features, to look at Kit none would suppose that the mild-looking being before him was an incarnate devil in Indian fight, and had raised more hair from head of Redskins than any two men in the western country; and yet, thirty winters had scarcely planted a line or furrow on his clean-shaven face. No name, however, was better known in the mountains—from Yellow Stone to Spanish Peaks, from Missouri to Columbia River,—than that of Kit Carson, "raised" in Boonlick, county of Missouri State, and a credit to the diggins that gave him birth.

[442]

On Huerfano or Orphan Creek, so called from an isolated *hutte* which stands on a prairie near the stream, our party fell in with a village of Yutah Indians, at that time hostile to the whites. Both parties were preparing for battle, when Killbuck, who spoke the language, went forward with signs of peace, and after a talk with several chiefs, entered into an armistice, each party agreeing not to molest the other. After trading for a few deer-skins which the Yutahs are celebrated for dressing delicately fine, the trappers moved hastily on out of such dangerous company, and camped under the mountain on Oak Creek, where they fortified in a strong position, and constructed a corral in which to secure their animals at night. At this point is a tolerable pass through the mountains, where a break occurs in the range, whence they gradually decrease in magnitude until they meet the sierras of Mexico, which connect the two mighty chains of the Andes and the Rocky Mountains. From the summit of the dividing ridge, to the eastward, a view is had of the vast sea of prairie which stretches away from the base of the mountains, in dreary barrenness, for nearly a thousand miles, until it meets the fertile valley of the great Missouri. Over this boundless expanse, nothing breaks the uninterrupted solitude of the view. Not a tree or atom of foliage relieves the eye; for the lines of scattered timber which belt the streams running from the mountains, are lost in the shadow of their stupendous height, and beyond this nothing is seen but the bare surface of the rolling prairie. In no other part of the chain are the grand characteristics of the Far West more strikingly displayed than from this pass. The mountains here rise, on the eastern side, abruptly from the plain, and the view over the great prairies is not therefore obstructed by intervening ridges. To the westward the eye sweeps over the broken spurs which stretch from the main range in every direction; whilst distant peaks, for the most part snow-covered, are seen at intervals rising isolated above the range. On all sides the scene is wild and dismal.

[443]

Crossing by this pass, the trappers followed the Yutah trail over a plain, skirting a pine-covered ridge, in which countless herds of antelope, tame as sheep, were pasturing. Numerous creeks intersect it, well timbered with oak, pine, and cedar, and well stocked with game of all kinds. On the eleventh day from leaving the Huerfano, they struck the Taos valley settlement on Arroyo Hondo, and pushed on at once to the village of Fernandez—sometimes, but improperly, called Taos. As the dashing band clattered through the village, the dark eyes of the reboso-wrapped muchachas peered from the doors of the adobe houses, each mouth armed with cigarito, which was at intervals removed to allow utterance to the salutation to each hunter as he trotted past of *Adios, Americanos*,—"Welcome to Fernandez!" and then they hurried off to prepare for the fandango, which invariably followed the advent of the mountaineers. The men, however, seemed

scarcely so well pleased; but leaned sulkily against the walls, their sarapes turned over the left shoulder, and concealing the lower part of the face, the hand appearing from its upper folds only to remove the eternal cigarro from their lips. They, from under their broad-brimmed sombreros, scowled with little affection upon the stalwart hunters, who clattered past them, scarcely deigning to glance at the sullen Peládos, but paying incomprehensible compliments to the buxom wenches who smiled at them from the doors. Thus exchanging salutations, they rode up to the house of an old mountaineer, who had long been settled here with a New Mexican wife, and who was the recognised entertainer of the hunters when they visited Taos valley, receiving in exchange such peltry as they brought with them.

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## A LEGEND FROM ANTWERP.

[444]

I scarcely know why, upon my last passage through Antwerp, I took up my quarters at the Park Hotel, instead of alighting, according to my previous custom, at the sign of the blessed Saint Anthony. The change was perhaps owing to my hackney coachman, who, seeing me fagged and bewildered by a weary jolting on the worst of European railroads, affected to mistake my directions—a misunderstanding that possibly resulted from his good understanding with mine host of the "Park." Be that as it may, my baggage, before I could say nay, was in the embraces of a cloud of waiters, who forthwith disappeared in the recesses of the inn, whither I was fain to follow. It was a bright May day, and I felt no way dissatisfied with the change of hostelry when, on looking from the window of my exquisitely clean Flemish bedroom, I saw the cheerful boulevard crowded with comely damsels and uniformed idlers, and the spring foliage of the lime-trees fluttering freshly in the sunshine. And having picked up the commencement of a furious appetite during my rickety ride from Herbesthal, I replied by a particularly willing affirmative to the inquiry of a spruce waiter, whether *Monsieur* would be pleased to dine at the *table-d'hôte*, at the early hour of three o'clock.

The excellent dinner of the Park Hotel was served up that day to unusually few guests; so at least it appeared to one accustomed to the numerous daily congregations at the public tables of France and Germany. Twelve persons surrounded the board, or, I should rather say, took post in two opposite rows at one extremity of the long dresser-like table, whose capacity of accommodating six times the number was tacit evidence that the inn was not wont to reckon its diners by the single dozen. Of these twelve guests, three or four were of the class *commis-voyageur—Anglicé*, bagmen—whose talk, being as usual confined to the rail and the road, their grisettes and their samples, I did my best not to hear. There was a French singer, then starring at the Antwerp theatre; a plump, taciturn, respectable-looking man, in blue spectacles and a loose coat, whom I had difficulty in recognising that evening when I saw him trip the boards in the character of the gay Count Almaviva. Next to the man of notes sat a thin, sunburned, middle-aged German, who informed us, in the course of conversation, that after spending twenty years on a cochineal farm in Mexico, he was on his way back to his native land, to pass the latter portion of his life in the tranquil enjoyment of pipe, beer, and competency, in the shadow of his village steeple, and possibly—although of this he said nothing—in the peaceful companionship of a placid, stocking-knitting, child-bearing *Frau*. There was another German at table, a coarse, big-headed baron from Swabia, who ate like a pig, used his fork as a toothpick, and indulged, to a most disgusting extent, in the baronial and peculiarly Teutonic amusement of *hawking*. These persons were all foreigners; but the remainder of the party, myself excepted, consisted of natives, belonging to the better class of Antwerp burghers. With one of these, next to whom I sat, I got into conversation; and finding him courteous, intelligent, and good-humoured, I was glad to detain him after dinner over the best bottle of Bordeaux the "Park" cellars could produce. This opened his heart, and he volunteered to act as my cicerone through Antwerp. Although I had seen, upon former visits, all the "lions" of the place, it had been under the guidance of those odious animals called *valets-de-place*; and I now gladly availed myself of my new friend's offer, and walked out to the citadel. He had lived in Antwerp all his life; consequently had been there during the siege, in reminiscences of whose incidents and episodes he abounded—so much so, that the invalid soldier who exhibits the fortress was kind enough to spare us his monotonous elucidations, and, whilst opening gates, to keep his mouth closed. I lingered willingly on the scene of that unjust aggression and gallant defence, and saw every thing worth seeing, including the identical arm-chair in which, as the story goes, old Chassé, gouty as he was brave, sat and smoked and gave his orders, unruffled by the thunder of French batteries and the storm of French shot. Daylight began to fade as we re-entered the town, and passed, at my request, through some of its older portions, where I begged my Antwerper to point out to me any houses of particular antiquity, or notable as the residence of remarkable persons. He showed me the dwellings of more than one of those great artists of whom Flanders is so justly proud; also several mansions of Spanish grandees, dating from the days of Alva's rule, and built in Spanish style, with abundant and massive balconies, and the *patio*, or inner court. At last I thought of returning to my hotel, and was meditating an invitation to supper to my obliging acquaintance, when, as we passed through a narrow and sequestered street, he suddenly stood still.

[445]

"See there!" he said; "that house, although of great age, has apparently little to distinguish it from others, equally ancient, scattered through Antwerp; nevertheless, to us Flemings it possesses powerful and peculiar interest. And truly no residence of painter or grandee could tell stranger tales, were its walls to speak all that has passed within them."



I looked curiously at the house, but could see nothing remarkable about it, except that it was visibly very old—to all appearance one of the oldest in the town. It was of moderate dimensions, built of mingled stone and brick, to which time and damp had given one general tint of dingy greenish black. Its door was low, and of unusual strength; its windows were narrow, and defended here and there by iron bars. Formerly these bars had been much more numerous, but many had been sawn off close to the stone-work, in which their extremities still remained deeply set. A shallow niche in the wall contained one of those rudely-carved images of the Virgin and Child, once deemed an indispensable appendage to Antwerp houses as a protection against evil spirits, and especially against one,—a sort of municipal brownie, the scarecrow of the honest and credulous burgesses. The features of the images, never very delicately chiselled, were obtuse and scarcely distinguishable with age and dirt, but vestiges of blue and crimson were still discernible on the Virgin's garments. I observed that the house had the appearance of having once stood alone—perhaps in the middle of a garden, or, more probably, of a paved court—for it receded some yards from the line of street, and the open plot in its front was paved with blocks of stone, worn, here and there, by frequent treading, whilst on either hand a house of modern architecture filled up a space originally left between the centre building and another of corresponding date. There being nothing else out of the common in the exterior of the house, I concluded that whatever singularity pertained to it was to be sought in its interior or its inmates, and I looked to my companion for an explanation.

"That house," he said, replying to my mute inquiry, "was for centuries the dwelling of the Antwerp executioner."

I started at the word. The strange customs, laws, and traditions connected with the last minister of the law, during the less civilised ages of the Christian era, had always exercised upon my mind a peculiar fascination. With fresh and strong interest I gazed at the building, and for a minute I almost fancied its front became transparent, disclosing to me the horrid instruments of death and torture, the grisly rack, the keen broad axe and glittering sword, the halter and the thongs; whilst in another compartment the headsman and his aids, sad, sullen men, in hose and jerkins of a blood-red hue, sat moodily at their evening meal. The momentary hallucination was quickly dispelled. The door opened, and a tall and comely damsel, whose dark eyes, and skin of a slightly olive hue, hinted at the possible partiality of some gay ancestress for a Spanish cavalier, issued forth, pitcher on head, and carolling a lively air, to fetch water from the fountain. The smiling, cheerful reality incontinently chased away the dismal vision.

"Evidently," said I, "it is now no hangman's abode. Such fresh flowers bloom not in the shade of the gallows-tree: the walls of the doomster's dwelling would refuse to echo ditties so joyous." [446]

"Perhaps," said my companion, with a smile. "And yet a tale is told that would partly refute one of your propositions."

"A tale!" cried I, catching at the word—"about what?"

"About some former occupants of the house. A wild old story, but a true one, as I believe."

"My dear sir!" I exclaimed, "did I not fear encroaching on your kindness, I would beg you to grant me the evening, as you have already given me the afternoon, and, after supping with me at the 'Park,' to relate the tradition in question."

"Willingly," said the Antwerper, good-humouredly, "were I not pledged to the theatre to-night. We do not often catch such a nightingale as this Frenchman, and when we do, we make the most of him. But the legend is in print; I have the book, and will lend it you with pleasure."

"A thousand thanks," said I, rather cooled, however, on the subject, by the discovery that the tale of wonder I anticipated was written instead of oral.

"By the bye," said my companion, when we had walked a few yards in silence, "are you acquainted with Flemish?"

"The patois of the country?" said I, smiling, perhaps a little contemptuously—"Perfectly unacquainted."

"Then you cannot read the legend, for it is printed in that language?"

"In what language?"

"In Flemish."

If he had said in Laputan, I should hardly have been more surprised.

"I thought the patois was spoken only by the lower orders, and that to the reading-classes it was as unintelligible as myself."

"It is not a *patois*, but a language," replied the Fleming, gravely. "The general use of French is a modern innovation in our country, and no good one either. Flemish is the original language of the land; and not only is it much more widely known than you imagine, but several very eminent writers, both of prose and poetry, compose in no other tongue, preferring it far before the French, on account of its greater sweetness and power."

I began to feel as much ashamed of my non-acquaintance with the Flemish school of literature, as if I had been convicted of profound ignorance of a Flemish school of painting. Of course, I made

allowance for a little patriotic exaggeration, when accepting my friend's account of this host of poets and prosaists, who pass their lives in writing a language which scarce any besides themselves understand. But after all, thought I, why should there not be Flemish writers, just as writers are found in other tongues, equally unknown to the world at large? Did I not myself, when in Southern France, get shaved, clipped, and trimmed, in the prune-producing town of Agen, by a literary barber, hight Jessamine, who had written volume upon volume of poems in that Gascon dialect which, according to M. Alexandre Dumas, and other of the highest French literary authorities, is entirely comprised in the words *Cadedis*, *Mordious*, *Capdedious*, *Parfandious*, and eight or ten other expletives, equally profane and energetic,—just as, according to some funny Frenchman, the essence of the English tongue resides in a favourite anti-ocular malediction? At any rate, it was neither civil nor grateful to let my kind companion suspect contempt on my part for what he chose to consider his national tongue. So I bowed humbly, and expressed my deep regret that a defective education left it out of my power to read the legend with which I had desired to become acquainted. The contrite tone of this confession fully regained me any ground I had lost in my Fleming's good opinion. He mused for a minute before again breaking silence.

"Are you bent upon leaving Antwerp to-morrow?"

"It is my present intention."

"Change it. Come to the opera to-night, breakfast with me in the morning, and I will read you the tale between coffee and *chasse*."

"I have already had the painful honour of informing you that my godfathers, reckless of baptismal promises, have suffered me to attain my present mature age in profound ignorance of the Flemish tongue." [447]

The Fleming looked at me with the half-pleased half-angry air of a dog pelted with marrow-bones, and as if he smoked I was roasting him. I loaded my countenance with a double charge of gravity.

"It is fortunate," he said, "that my sponsors have been less negligent towards me with respect to French, in which language, if you will take patience with slow reading, I doubt not of conveying to you the substance, and in some degree the style of the tale. Nay, no thanks," added he, forestalling my acknowledgments. "My motives are more selfish than you think. I want to convince you that if the Flemish tongue is little known, there are Flemish writers well worth the knowing."

There was no resisting such amiable pertinacity. I put off my journey, breakfasted with my Fleming, and after breakfast—none of your tea and toast business, but a real good *déjeuner-à-la-fourchette*, a dinner less the soup—he produced his Flemish volume, and read me in French the promised story. Seemingly unused to this off-hand style of translation, and patriotically anxious to do full justice to the original, he read so slowly that I had time to put down the narrative nearly verbatim. As it is more than probable that none of the readers of *Maga*, numberless though they be as the pebbles upon ocean's strand, are acquainted with the Flemish, I might have arrogated to myself, with every chance of impunity, the invention of the tale I now place before them. But it would go against conscience thus to rob the poor; and therefore have I taken the trouble to write these few pages, to explain the source whence I derive the veracious legend of

## THE DOOMSTER'S FIRSTBORN.

### CHAP. I—THE TAVERN.

The eve of Whitsuntide, in the year of grace 1507, was unusually dark and dismal in the good city of Antwerp, over which a dense and impenetrable canopy of cloud had spread and settled down. It was owing, doubtless, to this unpleasant aspect of the weather that at nine o'clock, an hour at which few of the inhabitants were in bed, profound silence reigned in the streets, broken only by the occasional dull clang of a church bell, and by the melancholy dripping of the water which a small dense noiseless rain made to stream from the eaves and gutters. Heedless of the rain and of the raw fog from the Scheldt, a man stood motionless and absorbed in thought upon one of the deserted squares. His back was against a tree, his arms were folded on his breast, his eyes were wide open; although evidently awake, he had the appearance of one in a dream. From time to time unintelligible but energetic words escaped his lips, and his features assumed an expression of extraordinary wildness; then a deep and painful sigh burst from his breast, or a sound, half groan, half gasping, like that with which an over-burthened porter throws down his load. At times, too, a smile passed across his face—no sign of joy, or laugh extorted by jovial or pleasant thoughts, but the bitter smile of agony and despair, more afflicting to behold than a flood of tears. He smiled, certainly, but whilst his countenance yet wore the deceitful sign of joy, he bit his lips till they bled, and his hand, thrust within his doublet, dug its nails into his breast. Thrice wretched was this unhappy man: for him the pains of purgatory had no new terrors, for already, during twenty years, he had felt its direst torments in his heart. To him the pleasant earth had been a valley of tears, an abode of bitter sorrow. When his mother bore him, and his first cry broke upon her ear, she pressed no kiss of welcome on his cheek. It was no gush of tenderness and maternal joy that brought tears to her eyes, when she knew it was a man-child she had brought forth. His father felt no pride in the growth and beauty of his first and only son; often he wept over him and prayed for his death, as though the child had been the offspring of some foul and accursed sin. And when the infant grew—although fed with his mother's tears rather than with her milk—into a comely boy, and ventured forth to mingle in the sports of others of his age, [448]

he was scoffed, tormented, and despised, as though his face were the face of a devil. Yet was he so patient and gentle, that none ever saw frown on his brow, or the flush of anger on his features; only his father knew what bitter melancholy lurked in the heart of his son.

Now the child had become a man. Despite his sufferings, his body had grown into strength and vigour. He felt a craving after society, a burning desire for the sympathy and respect of his fellows. But the hatred and persecution that had made his youth wretched, clung to him in manhood,—scoff and scorn were his portion wheresoever he showed himself; and if he failed instantly to retire, with servile mien and prayer for pity, he was driven forth, like a dog, with kick and cuff. For him there was no justice in the wide world,—submission was his lot, God his only comforter.

Such had been the life of the man who now leaned against the poplar tree, a prey to the tortures of despair. Yet that man's heart was formed for tenderness and love, his mind was intelligent, his countenance not without nobility, his gait proud and manly, his voice earnest and persuasive. At this moment he lifted it up to heaven, towards which he passionately extended his arms.

"Great God!" he cried, "since thy holy will created me to suffer, grant me also strength to endure my tortures! My heart burns! my senses leave me! Protect me, O Lord, from despair and madness! Preserve to me the consolatory belief in thy goodness and justice; for my heart is rent with the agonies of doubt!"

His voice grew weaker and subsided into an inarticulate murmur. Suddenly raising his head and starting from his leaning posture, he hurried across the square and through two or three streets, as though endeavouring to escape reflection by rapidity of motion. Then his pace slackened and grew irregular, and he occasionally stood still, like one who, absorbed in weighty thoughts, unconsciously pauses, the better to indulge them. On a sudden a shrill harsh sound broke from his lips; they were parched with thirst and fever.

"I must drink," he cried; "I am choked by this burning thirst."

There were many taverns in that street, and he approached the windows of several, from the crevices of whose shutters a bright light streamed; but he entered not, and still passed on, for in every house he heard men's voices, and that sufficed to drive him away. In St Jan's Street he paused somewhat longer before a public-house, and listened attentively at all the windows. A transient gleam of satisfaction lighted up his countenance.

"Ha!" he said to himself, "no one is there. I can drink then!"

And lifting the latch, he entered. Hearing nothing, he expected to find no one; but how great was his disappointment, when he saw a number of persons sitting at a long table with bottles and beer-cans before them. The silence that had deceived him was caused by the profound attention given to one of the party, who enacted the juggler for his companions' amusement, and who was busied, when the stranger listened at the window, in certain mysterious preparations for a new trick. All eyes were fixed upon his fingers, in a vain endeavour to detect the legerdemain.

The thirsty youth started at the sight of all these men, and took a step backwards as if to leave the house, but observing several heads turned toward him with curious looks, and fearing such sudden departure might prove a signal for his pursuit and persecution, he approached the bar and asked the landlady for a can of beer. The woman cast a suspicious look at her new customer, and sought to distinguish his features beneath the broad slouched brim of his hat; but, observing this, he sank his head still more upon his breast to escape her observation. But whilst she descended the cellar stairs to fetch him the beer, the whole of the guests fixed their eyes upon him with no friendly expression. Then they laid their heads together and whispered, and made indignant gestures, and one of them in particular appeared inflamed with anger, and looked furiously at the stranger, as though he would fain have fallen foul of him. The stranger, his face averted, waited silently for his beer; but he trembled with anxiety and apprehension. The landlady made unusual haste, and handed the full can to the object of her curiosity, who drank with hurried eagerness, and half-emptied the vessel at a draught; then, placing it upon the bar, he gave a small coin in payment. But whilst the woman sought for change, one of the guests strode across the room, took up the can, and threw the remaining beer in the young man's face.

[449]

"Accursed gallows'-bird!" he cried, "how dare you drink in our company? What can you urge that I should not break your bones here upon the spot? Thank heaven, thou wretched outcast, that I will not befoul my hand by contact with thy vile carcass!"

The unfortunate being to whom this cruel and outrageous speech was addressed, was the only son of the Antwerp executioner: his name was Gerard, and he was little more than twenty years old. His parentage sufficiently explains why he shunned the sight of men, from whom hatred and persecution were the best he had to expect. What now befell him always took place when a headsman ventured into the society of other burghers.

Patiently bowing his head, the unhappy Gerard gazed vacantly at the beer-stains upon his garments, without daring by word or deed to resent the brutality of his enemy, who, continuing to overwhelm him with abuse and maledictions, at last directed part of his indignation against the hostess:

"You will draw no more beer for us, woman!" he said. "To-morrow night I and my friends meet at Sebastian's. You would be giving us our liquor in the hangman's can!"

"See, there it lies!" exclaimed the hostess, terrified for the loss of custom, and dashing upon the ground the stone pot, which broke in pieces. "Is it fault of mine if the hangman's bastard sneaks into an honest house? Out with you!" cried she furiously to Gerard; "out of my doors, dealer in dead men, torturer of living bodies! Will'st not be gone, base panderer to the rack? Away to thy bed beneath the scaffold!"

The youth, who had borne at first with silence and resignation the abuse heaped upon him, was roused at last by these coarse invectives to a sense of what manly dignity persecution had left him. Instead of flying from the woman's execrations, he raised his head and answered coldly and calmly.

"Woman, I go! Although a hangman's son, I would show more compassion to my fellow-creatures than they show me. My father tortures men, because the law and man compel him; but *men* torture *me* without necessity, and without provocation. Remember that you sin against God by treating me, his creature, like a dog."

So gentle and touching were the tones of the young man's voice, that the hostess wondered, and could not understand how one so sorely ill-treated could speak thus mildly. For a moment the woman got the better of the trader, and, with something like a tear glistening in her eye, she took up the coin Gerard had given her, and threw it over to him.

"There," she said; "I want not thy money; take it, and go in peace."

The man who had thrown the beer in Gerard's face picked the coin from the floor, looked at it, and threw it upon a table with a gesture of disgust.

"See!" he cried, "there is blood upon it—human blood!"

His companions crowded round the table, and started back in horror, as from a fresh and bleeding corpse. A murmur of loathing and aversion assailed the ears of Gerard, who well knew the charge was false, for he had taken the piece of money in change that very evening, from a woman who let out praying-chairs in the church. The injustice of his foes so irritated him, that his face turned white with passion, as a linen cloth. Pressing his hat more firmly upon his head, he sprang forward to the table, and confronted his enemies with the fierce bold brow of an exasperated lion.

"Scoundrels!" he shouted, "what speak you of blood? See you not that the metal is alloyed, and looks red, like all other coins of the kind? But no, you are blinded by hate, and know not justice. You say I am the hangman's son. 'Tis true,—God so willed it. But yet are ye more despicable than I am; and proud am I to resemble neither in name nor deed such base and heartless men!"

[450]

The words were scarcely uttered when from all sides blows and kicks rained upon the imprudent speaker. Manfully did he defend himself, and brought more than one assailant to the ground; but the numbers were too great for his strength. Oaths and abuse resounded through the apartment, tables and benches were upset, jugs and glasses broken; the hostess screamed for help. But the strife and tumult were brief; and Gerard suddenly found himself in the street, stunned and bruised by the blows he had received. Settling his cloak, and smoothing his crushed hat, he went his way, scarce bestowing another thought upon the scuffle; for things far weightier, far more painful and engrossing, crowded upon his excited mind.

## CHAP. II—THE LOVERS.

Whilst the above occurred in the beer-house, a fair young girl waited Gerard's coming, her heart beating fast from apprehension that some evil had befallen him. To the headsman's son she was the angel of hope and consolation; she alone loved him,—partly, perhaps, because she knew that the world hated and despised him. Her love had braved her mother's censure, her neighbours' reproaches, her companions' sneers. Nay, more than this,—when they shouted after her, by way of scoff, the office of Gerard's father, or called her the headsman's bride, and the like, she rejoiced and was glad; for then she felt her love was noble and pure, and acceptable in the sight of God. For was she not, in loving Gerard, doing as she would be done by, comforting and supporting him whom all men oppressed and persecuted?

This poor girl, whose name was Lina, lived in a small apartment in the Vlier Street, with her old mother and her brother Franz, a good-hearted, hard-handed fellow, who worked like a slave for five days out of the seven, spent half a day in church, and a day and a half in the beer-house, where he drank and sang to his heart's content, and which he seldom left without a black eye. During the five days allotted to labour, there was not in Antwerp a more clever and indefatigable carpenter; and punctually each Saturday night he brought his mother a round sum from his earnings, wherefore the old woman had him in particular affection.

On the night of Gerard's ill-timed visit to the tavern, Lina sat opposite to her mother in their humble chimney-corner, a single slender candle burning between them,—their fingers busily engaged in lace-making. On the other side of the room stood a joiner's bench, at which Franz was hard at work. The room itself was clean and neat, and strewn with white sand; a crucifix and a few pictures of saints decorated the walls; but otherwise it contained little beyond the most necessary furniture, for, labour as they would, its inmates' combined efforts could earn but a scanty pittance.

Eight o'clock was the usual hour of Gerard's visit, and hitherto he had never come later without

warning Lina beforehand of the probable delay; but now it was ten, and there were no signs of his appearance. The maiden knew not what to think of this irregularity, and was so uneasy and absent that she neither heard nor answered a question put to her by her mother.

"Now then, child," cried the old woman, "your wits are surely wool-gathering. What's the use of fretting? If he come not to-day, he will to-morrow. There are days enough in the year."

"True, mother; but I fear some harm has happened to him, that he misses coming. People are so ill-minded towards him!"

"Ay, that are they; but then he is the headsman's son, and hatred is the portion of his tribe. Did not the mob murder Headsman Hansken with stones, and drown Headsman Harmen, hard by the Kroonenburg tower?"

"And what had they done, mother?"

"I'm sure I can't tell. Nothing, I believe. But it so happens, because the executioners hang many innocent people." [451]

"Surely, mother, the headsman must do what the judge bids him. Why not drown the judge, sooner than his servant?"

"Ay, ay, Lina, but it has always been so. Mind the proverb—'In a kennel of dogs, the smallest gets fewest bits and most bites.'"

"That is a stupid proverb, mother."

And the two women gossiped on, till the old one got weary of watching, and said to her daughter

—  
"Leave off work, child, and let us to bed. The night grows late."

The young girl was ill-pleased with the order, for she had not yet given up hopes of Gerard's coming; but she could think of no pretext to keep her mother from her bed. After brief reflection

—  
"Mother," she said, "wait a little longer; three more flowers and my lace is done."

"Make haste then, dear child, or I shall sleep on my chair."

"I am not yet for bed," cried Franz from his bench. "I must finish this sewing-cushion for the landlady at Peerdeken; she is to fetch it early to-morrow."

"Boy, boy!" said his mother, smiling and shaking her head, "for a certainty you drank more last Sunday at Peerdeken than your pocket could pay for, and now you are working out your debt. Well, well!—good-night; and forget not your prayers before laying your heads to rest."

And with this pious injunction, the good woman got up and entered a small adjacent closet, serving as sleeping chamber for herself and her daughter. She could have been but a few minutes in bed when Gerard knocked at the door, and Franz let him in.

The young man's face was pale and gloomy, but Lina wondered not at this, for seldom had she the happiness of seeing her lover's brow otherwise than care-laden. Slowly approaching her, Gerard took her hand and pressed it sadly and silently to his breast. This was his usual greeting. Of words he was habitually frugal, but his eyes expressed heartfelt gratitude and ardent love.

"Gerard!" cried Lina, "what is wrong? Your hand is cold as ice! Heavens! there is blood upon your throat!"

"'Tis nothing, Lina; I knocked myself in the dark. Happy for me, were my sufferings only of the body!"

The words were followed by a deep sigh, and by a look of profound dejection, that filled Lina with alarm. Gerard's eyes had assumed a fixed hard look, in which she read the announcement of some terrible novelty. With the tenderest care she cleansed his neck from the blood, which flowed from a trifling wound; and taking her lover's hand, clasped it in both of hers, with a glance of affectionate encouragement. But he continued to regard her with the same unvarying gaze, until at last, unable longer to endure the suspense and his seeming coldness, she sank into a chair.

"Oh, Gerard!" she exclaimed, "look not thus, if you would not kill me with your glance!"

The young man cast his eyes upon the ground, then raised them again to Lina's face, but this time with an expression of ineffable sadness, and took a seat by her side.

"Lina," he said, in a tone betraying the deepest emotion, "give me patient hearing, for I have much to say. We meet for the last time."

And without attending to poor Lina's increasing agitation, he continued—

"When children," he said, "we played together, mutually attracted by a feeling we could not understand, and which has since grown into love. You knew not, sweet Lina, what it is to be the headsman's firstborn. You knew not that he who hangs and racks and brands, is laden with more ignominy than the criminal who suffers at his hands. Later you learned it, but your pure soul

refused to become accomplice of man's injustice, and you loved me the more, when you found how much I needed love to save me from despair. And truly, without thee my sufferings had long since been ended in the grave; for I no longer had faith in any thing save in the justice of God, and that He reserved me compensation in a better world. Men persecute me like one accursed; the blood you have just now wiped was shed by their hatred. But I care little for pain of body; blest with thy love, my Lina, I would bear uncomplaining the worst tortures they could inflict. The pain, the martyrdom is here." He paused, and pressed his hand upon his temples. "Lina, we have ever indulged a fond dream that some unexpected event would free me from the headsman's terrible duties. In this expectation you have sacrificed yourself, and I, blinded by love, have hoped where hope there was none. Beloved! the illusion has fled, the dream is past. To-morrow I am no longer the headsman's son, but the headsman himself! My father lies upon a bed of sickness whence he can never rise. To-morrow there is an execution, and his odious duties devolve on me! But think not, Lina, that I will basely claim the pledges given in hopes of a brighter future. Think not I will expose you to the disgrace of being pointed at as the headsman's mistress—the headsman's wife! No, Lina, I come to release you from all promises; from this moment you are free!"

[452]

Whilst Gerard spoke, a gradual but visible change came over the young girl's countenance, and when he paused, it wore an expression of joyful pride—a pride that flashed out of her eyes, and smiled in the dimples of her cheeks. She felt that exhilaration of the heart, the consequence and reward of generous and noble resolves.

"I understand your meaning, Gerard," she said, "and could quarrel with you for thinking me less devoted than yourself, or less ready with a sacrifice. O my beloved! thine I am, and thine will I remain, to-day, to-morrow, and for ever—here or on the scaffold. Gerard, the path of duty is plain before me; as thy wife, I will console thee for the cruelty of men, and shed over thy life the soothing balm of love!"

"Never, Lina, never! What! thou the doomster's wife! A double curse would be upon me, did I consent to such profanation. Dare I drag you down into the pit of ignominy and contempt? Never, oh never!"

"And never," said the maiden, in accents of solemn determination, "will I abandon thee, Gerard, or annul the pledges by which we are mutually bound. Whithersoever thou goest, thither will I go; and all thy efforts shall not detach me from thee. Our lives are indissolubly united. Think you I would desert you on your solitary path? Friend, did you but know how proud and happy I feel! With humble confidence shall I approach the table of the Lord, for my heart tells me the good and just God approves and blesses my resolve."

Gerard gazed in wondering and rapturous admiration on the pure and beautiful countenance of his mistress, now flushed with the enthusiasm of her generous love. There was something divine in the affection that thus courted shame and opprobrium for the sake of the loved one. For a moment his brow beamed with heartfelt joy, and a sigh, but not of sorrow, escaped his lightened breast.

"Forgive me, O Lord," he exclaimed, raising his eyes to heaven, "forgive me that I murmured! In thy great mercy thou has sent an angel to console me!"

Whilst this affecting dialogue took place, Franz had continued his work, without attending to the discourse of Gerard and his sister. Now, however, having finished the cushion, he put by his tools, took up his lamp, and approached the lovers.

"Come, Lina," said he, "I am dead with sleep, and in haste for bed. You must bid Gerard come earlier to-morrow."

Although Gerard had still much to say to his mistress, he could not but take the hint thus plainly but kindly given.

"Franz," said he, gloomily, to his future brother-in-law, "to-morrow I must strike off a man's head upon the scaffold."

"Have a care, then, Gerard!" replied Franz coolly: "if you miss your stroke they will stone you, as they did Headsman Hansken. However, in case of mishap, there is one man at least will stand by you to the last."

The young headsman looked mournfully at Lina, and approached the door, a tear trembling on his eyelid. But Lina threw herself passionately on his neck.

[453]

"To-morrow," she cried, "I will be near the scaffold. Observe me well."

And she listened, with clasped hands and tearful cheeks, to her lover's footsteps, as they grew fainter and more faint, and finally died away in the distance.

### CHAPTER III.—FATHER AND SON.

The house of the Antwerp executioner stood hard by the fortifications, and was surrounded by a high stone wall, over whose solid portal a red flag, denoting the occupation of the tenant, was displayed during the day. The grim ensign had been some hours removed when Gerard knocked for admission.

"Has the judge been here, Jan?" inquired the young man of the varlet who opened.

"Yes, he has but just left. Your father desires to speak to you."

Gerard ascended the stairs, and entered the room where his sick father lay stretched upon his bed.

The old headsman was ashy pale, and worn to the very bone; the ravages of a terrible malady were legible in his hollow cheeks and sunken glassy eyes. But, although sick and weak of body, his mind was still active and vigorous as that of one in health. With a quick glance he noted his son's entrance; but he uttered no greeting. Gerard took a chair beside his father's pillow, sought under the bed-clothes for his thin and feeble hand, and pressed it anxiously and affectionately.

"Father!" he cried in an unsteady voice, "tell me my doom! The judge has been here! Say, must I assume the headsman's office?"

"My son," replied the old man, mournfully, "I have done my utmost, but in vain. The judge will not hear of my varlet's doing the duty. Neither gold nor entreaties softened him. My unhappy son, there is no alternative. Headsman you must become!"

Although Gerard had foreseen his fate, this confirmation, destroying the last ray of hope, was a terrible shock. A cold sweat broke out upon his forehead, and he convulsively squeezed his father's hand. But the emotion was of brief duration, and he relapsed into his habitual calm dejection.

"To-morrow!" he exclaimed, after a short pause—"Father, to-morrow destroys my last hope of a future happier than the past. To-morrow I must dip my hands in the blood of a fellow-creature. To-morrow is the first day of a life of agony. Thenceforward I am a hired murderer!"

"My son!" said the old headsman anxiously but firmly, "what must be must, and against destiny 'tis vain to strive. It were sin to deceive you. Be prepared for a joyless and weary existence. But there is a God above, who takes account of human suffering, to repay it in His own good time."

Gerard heard but the bitter portion of his father's speech—the concluding words of comfort escaped his ear. He replied as if he had heard nothing.

"I can conceive," he said, "my fellow-citizens' hatred of me. May I not be called upon, any day and every day, to strike off the head of one of them, and he perhaps innocent? They think the headsman takes pleasure in bloodshed, that he gloats over his victim; and yet, if he shrinks at sight of the sufferer's naked throat, if his trembling hands refuse to wield the sword, then, indeed, they slay him with stones, because he is no true headsman, but suffers himself to be touched by pity!"

"Often, my son, has this inexplicable contradiction struck me."

"Methinks, father, 'tis not hard to interpret. In every society of men a scapegoat is needed, on whom to pour out the superabundant hate and malice of the human heart, to serve as a ready butt for the brutal, a safe laughingstock for cowards. But, father!—is there no possible outlet, no means of escape, unthought of or untried? Is my fate inevitable—*must* I steep myself in blood?"

[454]

"My son!" said the headsman, "there is no remedy. See yonder book, left me by the judge. It is open at the page that seals thy doom."

Gerard read; then dashed the book violently to the ground.

"Accursed be the unjust law," he cried, "that sentenced me, whilst yet in my mother's womb, to a life of infamy and blood! Thrice accursed, I say, be the law and its makers! What! whilst I lay in my cradle, smiling at life and at God's glorious works, in happy ignorance of the future, men had already doomed me to live loathed and detested of all, like the venomous reptile against which every hand is lifted? Oh, shame, shame!"

"Despair carries you too far, Gerard," replied his father, with a sigh. "I appreciate your sufferings—too long have I endured the like; but, remember that the headsman's is a necessary office, and must be filled. God has allotted it to thee, and submission to His will is the Christian's duty. In resignation and humility wilt thou find peace."

"Peace!—have you found it, my father? Is it resignation that has laid you thus prematurely upon the bed of sickness? Were they from the springs of peace and contentment, those tears that during twenty long years you shed upon your son's head? You have had courage thus long to bear it; but I feel not such strength. Oh, that our souls might depart together, to find mercy and peace before the judgment-seat of the Most High! But no; I am young, and healthy, and grief does not kill,—at least not as fast as I would have it. But, praise be to heaven! the man who fears not death is ever master of his destiny!"

The headsman raised himself in his bed, and drawing his son towards him, embraced him tenderly, whilst a flood of bitter tears coursed over his cheeks, worn and wrinkled by sorrow rather than by years.

"O Gerard!" he said, "my beloved son, can you cherish thoughts of suicide, and delight in the sinful project? What! would you precede me to the tomb, leaving me to drag out in solitude my few remaining days of misery? Is this kind, Gerard?—is it generous, unselfish? Think of Him who for our sakes bore a cross, compared to which thine is of feather's weight. Bear it, in imitation of

Him, patiently and humbly. So shall we meet hereafter in that bright and blessed world where persecutors are not, and where the weary find rest!"

These touching and pious words made a deep impression upon Gerard. He reproached himself for his egotism, and his whole feelings underwent a sudden and total change. All that day and evening he had nursed thoughts of self-destruction, which he looked upon as an enviable lot compared to the long career of blood prescribed to him by the cruel laws of his country. And now, out of love to his dying father, he must abandon the idea, and cling to an existence he viewed with deepest loathing! It cost a severe effort, but generosity and filial duty finally prevailed, and he made up his mind to the sacrifice.

"Father!" he exclaimed, "forgive my senseless words—heedlessly and cruelly spoken. I forget not my duty to you; and, since such is your desire, I will ascend the scaffold and do my office firmly, horrible though it be. Let shame and scandal fall on those who force me to a work so repugnant to my nature. Fear not, my father, but that I will strike the blow with a veteran's coolness, and bathe my hands in my brother's blood, as calmly as ever butcher in that of unresisting lamb. I have said it; the sin is not mine, but theirs who compel me. Weep no more, father! thy son will become headsman; ay, and with a headsman's heart!"

Those who, hearing this bold speech, should have discerned in it a strong and sudden resolution, to be afterwards borne out by the deeds of the speaker, would have deceived themselves, even as Gerard deceived both himself and his father. It was but one of those fleeting flashes of determination, which persons wavering in an alternative of terrible evils sometimes exhibit. The resolution was dissipated with the sound of the words it dictated. These, however, answered their chief purpose, by carrying joy and consolation to the old man's heart.

[455]

"I am weary, my son," he said, "yet will I give thee brief word of advice, the fruit of long experience. To-morrow, when you mount the scaffold, look not at the mob; the ocean of eyes will confuse you, and make you falter. Fancy you are alone with the condemned man, and deal your blow steadily and carefully. If the head falls not at the first stroke, a thousand voices will cry haro on the bungling headsman: a thousand arms will be uplifted against him, and I shall never again behold thee alive. I will pray to God that He mercifully strengthen thee for the terrible task. Go, my son, and His blessing be upon thee."

Whilst the old man thus spoke, with a coolness resulting from long habit, all Gerard's apprehensions returned with redoubled violence, and he longed to throw himself on his knees before his father, to declare his inability to carry out his instructions, and to recall his promise of supporting the burthen of existence. But affection for his sole surviving parent, and fear of accelerating the fatal termination of his malady, stimulated him to self-restraint; and, after a last embrace, and a murmured "good-night," he retired to his chamber. There, however, he neither sought his bed nor found repose. The rays of the morning sun shone upon the unhappy youth sitting in the same place, almost in the very same posture, he had taken on entering his room—as mute, as motionless, and nearly as pale, as statue of whitest marble.

#### CHAP. IV—THE EXECUTION.

The execution of Hendrik the Mariner was fixed for six in the evening. Long before the appointed hour, crowds of people, eager to see the horrible spectacle, thronged through the St George's Gate, in the direction of the place of punishment. Nothing was more seductive to the populace of that day than the sight of a grisly head rolling upon the scaffold, and reddening the boards with its blood. The Antwerp burghers were not exempt from this horrible curiosity; and Headsman's Acre, as the field was called in which capital punishments then took place, was crowded with spectators of all ages and classes, including women, many of them with their children in their arms, urchins of tender age, and old men who, already on the brink of the grave, tottered from their easy chair and chimney corner to behold a fellow-creature expiate, by a premature death, his sin against society. Noisy and merry was the mob collected round the tall black gallows and the grim rusty wheel.

In the crowd, close to the scaffold, stood Lina, her heart beating quickly and anxiously, her tears restrained from flowing only by the reflection that she was there to give Gerard courage, and that weeping was the worst way to do it. Her brother Franz stood beside her, in holiday suit, his broad-leafed Spanish hat upon his head, and his brown cloak over his shoulder, according to the fashion of the time. Lina had represented to him, in lively colours, the frightful danger incurred by Gerard; and he, with his usual rough good-heartedness, swore to break the neck of the first man who threw a stone at the new headsman.

It was late, and the shades of evening fell upon the earth, before the executioner's varlets completed the necessary arrangements on the scaffold. At the moment these terminated, a cart pierced the throng amidst general stir and hum of curiosity. The criminal, attired in a black linen gown, sat with a priest in the hinder part of the vehicle. Gerard was on the foremost bench, his broad bright sword in his hand, and one of his assistants beside him. None could divine, from his countenance, what passed in his mind; his features were fixed and rigid; his eyes, bent upon the ground, avoided the people's gaze; and but for the weapon he bore, none could have told which of the two, he or Hendrik, was the condemned man. Unconscious of his own movements, he ascended the scaffold, so confused in spirit that he saw nothing, not even Lina, although Franz several times made signs to catch his attention.

[456]



And now the varlets would have removed the prisoner from the cart to the scaffold; but he pretended he had not finished his confession, which he wished now, for the first time, to make full and complete, seeing all chance of pardon gone. Perhaps he nourished a vague hope of escape in the darkness; for heavy clouds drifted across the sky, and night approached so rapidly that already those upon the outskirts of the crowd could scarcely distinguish what passed upon the scaffold. So that the people, fearing the increasing darkness would deprive them altogether of the show they coveted, began to clamour loudly for the execution of the sentence. The culprit, still resisting, and claiming delay, was brought upon the scaffold by force, and made to kneel down. The headsman's assistant bared the condemned wretch's neck, and pointed to it with a significant look, as if to say, "Master, strike."

At sight of the naked flesh into which he was to cut, Gerard started as from a heavy sleep, and his limbs trembled till the scaffold shook under him, and the broad-bladed sword fell from his hand. The varlet picked up the weapon and gave it back to his master, who clutched it convulsively, whilst the red rod of the superintending official gave the signal to strike. But Gerard neither saw the rod nor heard the voice of its bearer. Already a murmur arose amongst the crowd. "Quick, master! quick!" said the varlet, whose ear caught the ill-omened sound.

Summoning all the strength and courage his recent sufferings had left him, Gerard raised the sword, with the fixed determination to strike a bold and steady blow, when at that moment the victim turned his head, and at sight of the impending steel, uttered a lamentable yell. No more was wanting to upset Gerard's resolution and presence of mind. They left him on the instant: his arms lost their strength, and he let the sword fall on Hendrik's shoulder, but so feebly that it did not even wound him.

At the chill touch of the blade, the criminal's whole frame quivered with agony; but the next instant, feeling himself unhurt, and perceiving the advantage to be derived from his executioner's irresolution, he sprang to his feet, and stretching out his fettered arms to the people, implored help and pity, for that he was wilfully tortured.

At this appeal the fury of the mob burst forth with uncontrollable vehemence.

"Strike him dead!" was the universal cry; "strike the torturer dead!"

And stones flew about Gerard's head, but in no great number, since, fortunately for him, they were not plentiful on the field. The unhappy youth stood for a moment stunned by the uproar; then, folding his arms, he stepped forward to the edge of the scaffold with the air of one for whom death has no terrors.

"Wolves!" he exclaimed;—"wolves in the garb of men! ye came for blood—take mine, and slake your fiendish thirst!"

This rash defiance excited to madness the fury of the rabble. Women, children, and men of the better classes, fled in all haste from the field, leaving it occupied by the very dregs and refuse of Antwerp, who pressed fiercely forward to the scaffold, making violent efforts to seize the headsman, in spite of the resistance of the police and officials. The uproar and confusion were tremendous. Around Gerard a number of officers of justice assembled—less, however, for his protection, than to prevent the escape of the culprit, who made furious efforts to get rid of his manacles, and continued to appeal to the people and shout for assistance. At this moment of confusion, when scarcely anyone knew what his neighbour did, a man ascended the scaffold, and approached the executioner. It was Franz.

"Gerard," he said, "Lina conjures you, in God's name, and by your love for her, to speak to her for one moment. She is below; follow me!" And he leaped from the scaffold, on the side where the mob was thinnest. Gerard obeyed the charm of Lina's name. How gladly, he thought, would he bid his beloved one more farewell before encountering the death he deemed inevitable. In another second he stood by her side. At the same instant Franz, stripping off his cloak, muffled Gerard in its folds, pressed his broad hat over his eyes, and placing Lina's arm in that of the bewildered headsman, drew them gently from the spot.

[457]

"Go quietly and fearlessly through the crowd," he said, "and wait for me in the copse beyond the farthest gibbet."

And seeing that Lina obeyed his directions and led away Gerard, who followed passively as a child, Franz ran round to the other side of the scaffold, and set up such a shouting, that the mob, thinking he had seized the delinquent headsman, rushed furiously in that direction, leaving a free passage to the lovers. Franz continued to shout with all his might, and to affect the most violent indignation.

"Strike him dead!" he cried; "strike him dead! Down with the base torturer! Throw his carcass to the ravens!"

And he hurled stones at the scaffold, headed a charge on the police, and behaved altogether like a madman let loose. Favoured by this attracting of the attention from them, and under cover of the darkness, Lina succeeded in getting her lover away unrecognised, for Franz's cloak and hat completely concealed the headsman's well-known costume. But before they reached the thicket, the mob got possession of the scaffold, released the prisoner, and began ill-treating the officials, to compel them to confess what had become of the executioner. On finding that this latter personage, the cause of the whole tumult, had disappeared, a man, one of the lowest of the

people, who had seen Franz throw his cloak over Gerard's shoulders, and who had watched the direction taken by Lina and her disguised companion, guessed that the fugitive was no other than the headsman himself, and immediately started in pursuit. Before he could overtake them, Lina and Gerard disappeared amongst the trees. His suspicions confirmed by this mysterious conduct, the ruffian, blaspheming with exultation and fury, rushed upon the lovers; and, tearing off Gerard's cloak, beheld the headsman's livery. Thereupon, without word or question, he lifted a heavy cudgel, and struck the poor fellow violently upon the head. Gerard fell senseless to the ground. The murderer would have repeated his blow, but Lina, with the courage of a lioness defending her young, grappled him vigorously, and clasping her arms around his, impeded his further movements. The sight of her lover, stunned and bleeding at her feet, seemed to give her superhuman strength; and bethinking her that it was better to have one enemy to contend with than a hundred, she abstained from calling out, lest her cries should bring foes instead of friends. Fortunately the uproar of the mob drowned the imprecations of Gerard's assailant, who vociferated horrible curses as he strove, with brutal violence, to shake off the heroic girl. At the very moment when, her last strength exhausted, she was about to succumb, Franz entered the copse, and, seeing Gerard motionless on the ground and his sister struggling with a stranger, immediately guessed what had occurred. A cry of rage burst from his lips, and before Lina remarked his presence, his powerful hands were upon the shoulders of her antagonist, who lay, the next instant, upon the grass at his feet.

"Lina!" cried Franz, seizing the fallen man and dragging him in the direction of the scaffold, "hide Gerard in the bushes; if he still lives, he is rescued from all he most dreads. Quick! I will return."

With these words he hurried from the copse, dragging his prisoner after him so rapidly, that the prostrate man, his legs in Franz's iron grasp, his head trailing in the dust, and striking violently against each stock and stone, could make no effectual resistance. As soon as Franz was within earshot of the mob, he shouted, more loudly than ever—

"The headsman! here I have him—the headsman!"

"Death to the villain!" was re-echoed on all sides; and from all four corners of the field the mob, who had dispersed to seek the object of their hate, rushed towards Franz. When Lina's brother saw himself the centre of a dense crowd, howling and frantic for blood, he hurled amongst them the man whom he dragged by the feet, with the words—

"There is the headsman!"

"Death to him!" hoarsely repeated a hundred voices, and as many blows descended upon the shrieking wretch, whose expostulations and prayers for mercy were unheard in the mighty tumult, and whom the mob, blinded by fury, easily mistook in the darkness for the delinquent executioner. His cries were soon silenced by the cruel treatment he received; in a few minutes he was dead, his clothes were torn from his body, and his face was disfigured and mutilated so as to be wholly unrecognisable.

[458]

Leaving the mob to their bloody work, Franz returned to his sister, and found her weeping and praying beside the body of her lover, whom she believed dead. On examination, however, he found Gerard's pulse still beating. The violent blow he had received had stunned but not slain him. Fresh water thrown upon his face and chest restored him to consciousness, and to the caresses of his dear Lina, speechless and almost beside herself with joy at his recovery. When his strength returned, the trio crept stealthily from the copse, and safely reached the town, where Gerard concealed himself during the evening in the house of his mistress. When midnight came, and the streets of Antwerp were deserted, he betook himself, accompanied by Franz, to his own dwelling, and made his unexpected appearance in his father's chamber.

The old headsman, who lay broad awake upon his bed of sickness, weeping bitterly, and deploring the death of his unhappy son, deemed himself the sport of a deceitful vision when he saw the dead man approach his couch. But when convinced, by Gerard's voice and affectionate embrace, that he indeed beheld his child in solid flesh and bone, his joy knew no bounds, and for a moment inspired the young man with fears of his immediate dissolution.

"My son, my son!" he cried, "you know not half your good fortune. Not only have you miraculously escaped a cruel death, but you are also delivered from the horrible employment which has been mine, and was to be yours. The accursed obligation that weighed upon our race ceases with life, and you, my son, are *dead!*"

"And pure from the stain of blood!" joyfully exclaimed Gerard.

"Begone," continued the old man, "and dwell far from thine unjust brethren. Quit Antwerp, marry thy good Lina, be faithful and kind to her, and heaven bless thee in thy posterity! Thy sons will not be born to wield the axe, nor wilt thou weep over them, as I have wept over thee. The savings of thine ancestors and mine insure thee for ever from poverty; make good use of them and be happy!"

His voice grew weak with emotion, and died away in inarticulate benedictions. Gerard hung upon his father's neck, and stammered forth his thanks. The events of the day appeared to him like a dream. He could not realise the sudden transition from the depths of despair to the utmost height of happiness.

For many years after these incidents there lived at Brussels, under an assumed name, the son of the Antwerp headsman, and his beautiful wife Lina. The old man's blessing was heard, and when Gerard's turn came to quit a world of cares for a brighter and better abode, brave sons and fair daughters wept around the dying bed of the DOOMSTER'S FIRSTBORN.

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## A FEW WORDS ABOUT NOVELS—A DIALOGUE, IN A LETTER TO EUSEBIUS.

[459]

DEAR EUSEBIUS,—Whether it be a fable or not that the Lydians invented chess, to relieve themselves from pain and trouble, and were content to eat one day and play another, unquestionably amusement is a most salutary medicine to heal the "mind diseased," and even to mitigate hunger itself.

The utilitarian ant would not have had the best of the argument with the grasshopper,—*"dance now,"*—if the latter had not insisted on dancing too long—a whole summer. Even hunger would do its dire work in double-quick time, if left to fret incessantly on the mind as well as the fast failing substance. Avert the thought of it, and half a loaf will keep alive longer than a whole one, eaten together with cankering care. *"Post equitem sedet atra Cura,"* said the most amiable of satirists; but Care, the real "gentleman in black," won't always be contented to sit behind, but is apt to assume an opposite seat at the table, and, grinning horribly, to take away your appetite "quite and entirely." You may try, Eusebius, to run away from him, and bribe the stoker to seventy or eighty miles an hour, but Care will telegraph you, and thus electrify you on your arrival, when you thought him a hundred miles or so off. I have ascertained a fact, Eusebius, that Care is not out of one, but *in* one, and has a lodging somewhere in the stomach, where he sets up a diabolical laboratory, and sends his vile fumes up, up—and so all over the brain; and from that conjuration what blue devils do not arise, as he smokes at leisure his infernal cigar below! Charge me not, Eusebius, with being poetical—this is sober prose to the indescribable reality. Your friend has been hypochondriacal. It is a shameful truth; but confession is the demon's triumph, and so the sufferer is punished—mocked, scoffed at, unpitied, and uncured. The Lady Dorothea Dosewell had proposed a seventy-fifth remedy. My lady, I am in despair: I have not as yet completed the fifty-sixth prescription; the fifty-fifth has left me worse. The Curate, who happened to be present, laughed at me, as all do, and said, "No wonder—you are like the man who complained of inveterate deafness, had applied every recipe, and was cured by the most simple one—a cork-screw. Do set aside all your nostrums, and spend a week or two at the curacy, and I'll take care to pack in half-a-dozen novels, and you will soon forget your own in other folks' woes."

"I will go," I replied; "but I protest against any woes whatsoever. When young as you, Mr Curate, I could bear them, and sit out a tragedy stoically; but shaken nerves and increasing years won't bear the tragic phantasmagoria now. Sentimental comedy is too much, and I positively, with shame, cry over a child's book."

"I fear," quoth the Curate, "it is a sure sign your heart is hardening. The sympathy that should soften it is too easily and too quickly drawn off by the fancy to waste, and leaves the interior dry. Come to us, and alternate your feelings between fancy and active realities; between reading imaginary histories and entering practically and interestingly into the true histories of the many homes I must visit, and you will soon be fresh in spirit and sound again."

Let me, Eusebius, use the dialogue form, as in some former letters: suffice it only to tell you previously, that I took the Curate's advice and invitation, and for a time did my best to throw off every ailment, and refresh myself by country-air exercise, in the society of the happy Curate and his wife, at the vicarage of —, which you know well by description. And here we read novels. Even at the Curate's house did we read novels—those "Satan's books," as a large body of Puritans call them, whilst they read them privately; or, if seen, ostensibly that they may point out the wickedness in them, and thus forbid the use of them; as an elder of the demure sect excused himself when detected at a theatre, that he "came to see if any of their young folk were there." How often people do what is right, and defend it as if it was a wrong, and apologise for what gives them no shame! Thus the Curate commenced the defence of novel-reading:—

[460]

CURATE.—What is the meaning of the absurd cry against works of fiction? If it be true that "the proper study of mankind is man," is it not wise to foresee, as it were, life under all its possible contingencies? Are we not armed for coming events by knowing something of their nature beforehand? Who learns only from the world amid which he walks, learns from a master that conceals too much; and the greater portion of the lesson, after all, must come out of the learner's own mind, and it is a weary while before he has learnt by experience the requisite shrewdness. Life is too short to learn by a process so slow, that the pupil begins to decay before he has learnt one truth. The preparatory education is not amiss. The early tears that tales of fiction bid to flow scald not like the bitter ones of real sorrow; and they, as it were by a charm of inoculation, prepare the cheek for the after tears, that they burn not and furrow too deeply. I cannot conceive how people came to take it into their heads that plays and novels are wicked things necessarily. Your Lady Prudence will take infinite pains that her young people shall not contaminate even their fingers with the half-binding—and perhaps fail too—and for honest simplicity induce a practice of duplicity, for fiction will be read. It is the proper food to natural curiosity—an instinct given us to learn; and I dare to say that letters were invented by Cadmus purposely for that

literature.

AQUILIUS.—Say nothing of Cadmus, or the serpent's teeth will be thrown against your argument. Their sowing was not unlike the setting up a press; and your literary men are as fierce combatants as ever sprang from the dragon's teeth, and have as strong a propensity to slaughter each other.

CURATE.—Yes, and even in works of fiction we have had the conflict of authors. They write now as much against each other as formerly. Fielding proposed to himself to write down Richardson; and religious novelists of our days take the field against real or imaginary opponents. Richardson, able as he was, very cunningly set about his work—his *Clarissa*. By an assumed gravity, and well-managed affectation of morality, he contrived to render popular among prudes a most indecent work. The book was actually put into the hands of young people as an antidote to novels in general. This appeared to Fielding abominable hypocrisy, corrupting under disguise. And to this honest indignation are we indebted to him for his *Joseph Andrews*, the antidote to the very questionable morality, and unquestionable moral, of the virtue-rewarded *Pamela*.

AQUILIUS.—I was told the other day by a lady, that there are few kitchens in which *Pamela* is not to be found. She detected her own maid reading it, and was obliged to part with her, for setting her cap at her son, a youth just entered at College. The girl defended her conduct as a laudable and virtuous ambition, which the good author encouraged,—was not the title Virtue Rewarded? So much, for *Pamela*. You will not, however, surely defend the novel-writing system of nearly half a century ago—the sickly sentimentalities of the *All for Love* school—that restless progeny not allowed to rest on circulating library shelves till their rest was final—whose tendency was to make young persons of either sex nothing but fools.

CURATE.—And whose authors had the fool's mark set upon them, not unhappily, by Jenner, in his *Town Eclogues*:—

"Thrice-happy authors, who with little skill  
In two short weeks can two short volumes fill!  
Who take some miss, of Christian name inviting,  
And plunge her deep in love and letter-writing,  
Perplex her well with jealous parents' cares,  
Expose her virtue to a lover's snares,  
Give her false friends and perjured swains by dozens,  
With all the episodes of aunts and cousins;  
Make parents thwart her, and her lover scorn her,  
And some mishap spring up at every corner;  
Make her lament her fate with ahs and ohs,  
And tell some dear Miss Willis all her woes,  
Whilst now with love and now with grief she rages;  
Till, having brought her through two hundred pages,  
Finding at length her father's heart obdurate,  
Will make her take the squire, and leave the curate;  
She scales the garden-wall, or fords a river,  
Elopes, gets married, and her friends forgive her."

AQUILIUS.—And was it not whimsical enough that, in the presumption of their vanity, upstarted the Puritan school, who had ever declaimed against novels and dramas, to counteract the mischievous tendency of these silly love-tales, and wrote themselves much sillier, and quite as mischievous? [461]

CURATE.—Are you then audacious enough to pass censure upon *Cælebs*, and suchlike?

AQUILIUS.—"Great is Diana of Ephesus!" I abominate every thing Hannah More wrote—vain, clever, idolised, spoiled woman as she was—her style all riddle-ma-ree. Read her lauded *What is Prayer?* and you are reading a conundrum. An affected woman, she wrote affectedly, with a kind of unwomanly dishonesty. There was good natural stuff in her too, but it was sadly spoilt in the making up.

CURATE.—You will shock the good, or rather the goody folk, who will insist upon the religious and moral purpose of all her works.

AQUILIUS.—They may insist, for they are an obstinate race. What moral, or what religion, is inculcated in this—"A brute of a husband"—selfish, a tyrant, a gourmandiser—ill-treats an amiable wife. He scorns patient virtue, and is an infidel. He must be *converted*—that is the religious object. He must be metamorphosed, not after Ovid's fashion—there is the moral object. How is it done, do you remember? If not, you will never guess. By what latent virtue is he to be reclaimed? Virtue, indeed! would the indignant Puritan proclaim—what virtue is in poor human rags? He shall be reclaimed through his vice! Indeed, Madam Puritan, that is a novelty. So, however, it is. The man is a glutton. On his conversion-day he is gifted with an extraordinary appetite and discriminating taste. It is a pie—yes, a *pie*, that converts him to piety.

CURATE.—Oh, oh, oh! you are mocking surely. A pie!

AQUILIUS.—Yes, a pie. It is remarkably good—quite delicious. It puts the brute in good humour with himself and every body, and he grunts applause, and promises his favour to the cook. At this stage—this incipient stage of his conversion—a pathetic butler bursts into tears, and

affectionately sobs out the beautiful truth. The cook for the occasion was his mistress—the ill-treated wife. He becomes a perfect Christian on the instant; and with the conversion comes the moral metamorphosis, and the "brute of a husband" is, on a sudden, the best and most religious of men. Now, in what respect, Mr Curate, would you bid any of your flock to go and do likewise? Setting aside as worthless, then, to say the best of it, the moral, the set-up primness of the whole affair is so odious, that you long even for a little wickedness to set nature upon nature's legs, that we may at least acknowledge the presence of humanity.

CURATE.—We must ask Lydia to defend the writers of her sex. You are severe upon poor Hannah, who would have been good enough in spite of her extreme vanity, if the clique had let her alone. Her *Cælebs* was to be the novel *par excellence*, the model tale,—and with no little contempt for all others.

AQUILIUS.—Your Lydia has too much good sense, and too much plain honesty, to defend any thing wrong because it is found in woman. The utmost you can expect from her is not to object to the saintly Hannah, as was the charity of the Wolverhampton audience, when her play was acted there. Master Betty was hissed, and this impromptu was uttered, during a lull, from the gallery—

"The age of childhood now is o'er,  
Of folly and of whim—  
We dont object to Hannah More,  
But we'll *ha-na-more* of him."

CURATE.—Yet she is supposed to have done some good by her minor tales for the poor. Possibly she did—the object was at all events good.

AQUILIUS.—And here she was the precursor to a worse set, so bad that it can hardly be said of them that they are "daturos progeniem vitiosiore."

CURATE.—Yes, even wickedly religious. The scheme was, that the poor should teach the rich, and the infant the man. I remember reading some of these tales of Mrs Sherwood's. Is there not one where a little urchin, not long after he is able to run alone, is sent out on an errand,—an unconverted child,—commits the very natural sin of idleness, loiters by the way, and lies under a tree. There, you will suppose, sleep comes upon him—no, but grace. He rises a converted man-child, an infant apostle, goes home and converts his wicked grandfather, or great-grandfather. "Ex uno disce omnes." Great was the outcry against Maria Edgeworth's children's tales, because they did not inculcate religious dogmas. This was a great compliment to her genius, for it showed that every sect would have wished her theirs. She wisely left the catechism to fathers, mothers, and nurses, and preferred leaving to the parson of each parish the prerogative of sermonising.

[462]

AQUILIUS.—Some of you take your prerogative as a sanitary prescription, and sweeten your own tempers by throwing off their acerbities, *ad libitum*, one day in the week; abusing in very unmeasured terms all mankind, and their own congregation in particular—indeed, often in language that, used on week days, and by any other people, would be looked upon as nearly akin to what is called "cursing and swearing." So do extremes sometimes meet. A little thunder clears the air wonderfully; the *lightning may* not always be evident.

CURATE.—All writers, especially novelists and reviewers, assume this privilege of bitterness, without the restriction to one day out of seven; hence, to say nothing of the better motives in the other case, they are more practised in acerbity than amiability. Your medicine becomes the habit, not the cure. We must have civil tongues the greater part of our lives. Your literary satirist uses the drunkard's remonstrance—

"Which is the properest day to drink—  
Saturday, Sunday, Monday?  
Each is the properest day, I think;  
Why should you name but one day?"

AQUILIUS.—But to return to our subject. Novels are not objected to as they were; now that every sect in politics and religion have found their efficacy as a means, the form is adopted by all. And with a more vigorous health do each embody their principle. The sickly sentimentality school is sponged out—or nearly so. The novel now really represents the mind of a country in all its phases, and, if not the only, is nearly the best of its literature. It assumes to teach as well as to amuse. I could wish that, in their course down the stream of time, it had not taken the drama by the neck, and held it under water to the drowning.

CURATE.—You are wrong. The novel has not drowned the drama. It is the goody, the Puritan school, has done the work, and will, not drown, but suffocate, the noble art that gave us Shakspeare, by stopping up all avenues and entrance to the theatres—having first filled the inside with brimstone, or at least cautioned the world that the smell of brimstone will never quit those who enter. In discussing the subject, however, I would class the play and the novel together, under "works of fiction." Why, by the way, did the self-styled religious world that set up a crusade against novelists—and "fiction-mongers"—show such peculiar favour to John Bunyan, and his *Pilgrim's Progress*—the most daring fiction? I believe that very imaginative, nay, very powerful work, has gone through more editions than any other in our language: a proof at least that there is something innate in us all,—a natural power of curiosity to see and hear more than actual life presents to us—that sends all, from infancy to age, in every stage of life, either openly or secretly, to the reading tales of fiction. We all like to see Nature herself with a difference; and,

loving "to hold the mirror up to nature," we prefer that the glass should be coloured, or at least a shade deeper, and love the image more than the thing.

AQUILIUS.—Yes; and we indulge in a double and seeming contrary propensity—excitement and repose. We are safe in the storm—look out "from our loopholes of retreat," as Cowper calls them, on the busy world—and in our search after that equally evasive philosopher's stone, the "γυῶθι σεαυτοῦ," like to squint at our deformities in private, and, by seeing them in other folks, we learn our faults by deputy.

CURATE.—And what a wonderful and wisely-given instinct is there in us all, that we may learn to the utmost in one short life—an instinct by which we recognise as nature, as belonging strictly to ourselves, what we have never seen or experienced, and have only portrayed to us in works of fiction. All people speak of the extensive range of Shakspeare's genius—that he appears to have been conversant with every mode of life, with the sentiments and language appropriate to each—that he is at once king, courtier, citizen, and clown; yet what do those who so admire him for this universality know themselves, but through him, of all these phases of life? We recognise them by an instinct, that enters readily into the possibilities of all nature which is akin to us; and if this be so, the busiest man who is no reader, may, in his walk through life, see much more of mankind than the reader, but know far less. Who teaches to read puts but the key of knowledge into the scholar's hand. It was well said by Aristophanes, "Masters for children, poets for men."

[463]

AQUILIUS.—True; and if all literary fiction could be withdrawn and forgotten, and its renovation prohibited, the greater part of us would be dolts, and, what is worse, unfeeling, ungenerous, and under the debasing dominion of the selfishness of simple reason. It has always appeared to me that those who cautiously keep novels from young people mistake the nature of mind, thinking it only intellect, and would cultivate the understanding alone. Imagination they look upon as an *ignis fatuus*, to be extinguished if possible—an *ignis fatuus* arising out of a quagmire, and leading astray into one. There is nothing good comes from the intellect alone. The inventive faculty is compound, in which imagination does the most work; the intellectual portion selects and decides, but collects not the materials. All true sentiment, all noble, all tender feeling, comes not of the understanding, but of that mind—or heart, if we so please to call it—which imagination raises, educates, and perfects. Even feelings are to be made—are much the result of education. The wildest romances will, in this respect, teach nothing wrong. If they create a world somewhat unlike the daily visible, they create another, which is a reality to the possessor, to the romantic, from which he can extract much that is practical, though it may seem not so; for from hence may spring noble impulses, generosity and fortitude. It is not true that such reading enervates the mind: I firmly believe it strengthens it in every respect, and fits it for every action, by unchaining it from a lower and cowardly caution. Who ever read a romance that inculcated listless, shapeless idleness? It encourages action and endurance. We have not high natures till we learn to suffer. I have noted much the different effects troubles have upon different persons, and have seen the unromantic drop like sheep under the rot of their calamities, while the romantic have been buoyant, and mastered them. They have more resources in themselves, and are not bowed down to one thought nor limited to one feeling: in fact, they are higher beings.

CURATE.—The caution professes mainly to protect women; yet, among all the young women whom I have been acquainted with, I should say that the novel-readers are not only the best informed, but of the best nature, and some capable of setting examples of a sublime fortitude—the more sublime because shown in a secret and all-enduring patience. Who are they that will sit by the bed-side of the sick day and night, suffer privation, poverty, even undeserved disgrace, and shrink not from the self-imposed duty, but those very young women in whom the understanding and imagination have been equally cultivated, so as to render the feelings acute and impulsive?—and these are novel-readers. Love, it is said, is the only subject all novels are constructed upon; and such reading encourages extravagant thoughts, and gives rise to dangerous feelings. And why dangerous? And why should not such thoughts and feelings be encouraged? Are they bad? Are they not such as are requisite for wife and mother to hold, and best for the destiny of woman—best in every view—best if her lot be a happy one, and far best if her lot be an ill one? For the great mark of such an education is endurance—a power to create a high duty, and energy and patience where both are wanted. Women never sink under any calamity but blighted affection; and we love them not less, we admire them not less, that they do sink then, for their heroism is in the patience that brings and that awaits death.

[464]

AQUILIUS.—I have heard Eusebius say that he has made it a point, wherever he goes, to recommend earnestly to all young mothers to select no nurse for their children but such as have a good stock of nursery tales. He has often purposed to write an essay on the subject of the requisite education for nurses, asserting that there ought to be colleges for training to that one purpose alone; for, as the nurse gives the first education, the first impression, she gives the most important. The child that is not sung to, and whose ear has not been attentive to nursery tales, he would say, would be brought up to turn his father and mother out of doors, and deserve, if he did not come, to be hanged; and if such unfortunate child be a daughter, she would live to be a slut, a slattern, a fool, and a disgrace. He had no doubt, he said, believing that all Shakspeare's creations were realities, that Regan and Goneril were ill nursed, and no readers; and that Cordelia was in infancy well sung to, and being the youngest, was set to read romances to her old and wayward father,—

"Methinks that lady is my child Cordelia!"

How full are these few words of the old father's feeling, and reminiscent of the nursery, of songs,

of tales, wherein he had seen the growth of his "child Cordelia!" Eusebius would be eloquent upon this subject: I cannot tell you half of what he thought and vigorously expressed. He used to delight in getting children together and telling them stories, and invariably began with "once upon a time," which, he used to say, had, if any words could have, a magical charm.

CURATE.—Bad, indeed, was the change when story reading and telling ceased to be a part of education: and what was put in its place?—stuff that no child could understand or care about. The good old method once abandoned, there was no end to the absurdities that followed; and they who wrote them knew nothing about children, or what would amuse, and, by interesting, improve them. The false system of cramming them with knowledge, which it was impossible for them to digest, really stopped their intellectual growth, and checked the natural spring of their feelings. Wisdom-mongering went on upon the "rational plan," till the wise-heads, full-grown infant pumpkins, fatuated, empty of anything solid or digestible; and so they grew, and grew from night to morn, and morn to night, stolid boobies, lulled into a melancholy sleep by the monotonous hum of "Hymns in Prose."

AQUILIUS.—"Hymns in Prose!" Is not that one of Mrs Barbauld's books for children, I have often heard mothers say, "that is so very good?"

CURATE.—Oh yes! Here it is in Lydia's library.

AQUILIUS.—Open it—any where.

CURATE.—Well, now, I do not think the information given to the child here is quite correct in its order, for I think the parent of the mother must be the child's grandmother. "The mother loveth her little child; she bringeth it up on her knees; she nourisheth its body with food."

AQUILIUS.—A very unnatural parent if she did not. It is very new information for a child. Well, go on.

CURATE.—"She feedeth its mind with knowledge. If it is sick, she nurseth it with tender love; she watcheth over it when asleep; she forgetteth it not for a moment."

AQUILIUS.—A most exemplary and extraordinary mother—not a moment! Go on.

CURATE.—"She teacheth it how to be good; she rejoiceth daily in its growth." I do not see the connexion between the "teaching to be good" and the growth. "But who is the parent of the mother? Who nourisheth her with good things, and watcheth over her with tender love, and remembereth her every moment? Whose arms are about her to guard her from harm?"

AQUILIUS.—Stay a moment—whose arms? Why, the husband's to be sure; which the child may have seen, and need not have been told as a lesson.

CURATE.—"And if she is sick, who shall heal her?" Now, you would say, the apothecary, and so would the child naturally answer; but that would not be according to the "rational plan." The riddle is to have a religious solution—"God is the parent of the mother; he is the parent of all, for he created all."

[465]

AQUILIUS.—Shut the book! shut the book! or rather put it in the fire, or one of these days one of your own babes will be so spoon-fed. So these are hymns for children! Why, the children brought up on this "rational plan" have set up themselves for teachers, and in a line, too, sometimes quite beyond Mrs Barbauld's intention. I took up a book of prayers off a goody-table the other day, written by a boy of six years old, with a preface by himself, to the purport that his object was to improve the thoughtless world. At the end were some verses—all such cherub children love to "lisp in numbers." As well as I can remember, they ran thus—they are lines on the occasion of its father's breaking his leg, or having some accidental sickness—

"O Lord! in mercy do look down,  
And heal my dear papa;  
Or if it please thee not to cure,  
Do comfort dear mama!"

CURATE.—Well, I don't think there is a pin to choose between the hymn in prose and the hymn in verse, excepting that the infant versifier is rather more intelligible. I saw the little book a month or two ago at ----. I must have called after you; for I suspect some lines in pencil at the end were your work. Did you write these?—

"Defend me from such wretched stuff  
As children write and parents puff!  
Put the small hypocrites to bed,  
And whip the big ones in their stead!"

AQUILIUS.—At least I will write them in Lydia's, to protect the future. The child would have been better employed in reading Jack the Giant-killer. But what think you of Bible stories, adopted for those of somewhat more advanced childhood—a religious novel made out of the history of Joseph, price eighteenpence? I picked it up at the same house, and had permission to put it in my pocket. It is a curious story to choose, as the writer says, "to entertain my young reader without vitiating his mind." I mean not the genuine story, but such as the writer promises it to be; for he says in his preface, "I am not at all aware of having at all departed from the spirit of the text, nor from the rules of probability. I have, indeed, ventured upon a few conjectures and fictitious possibilities,

which some very grave reader may perhaps be offended with." The author professes his object to be, to make the Bible popular; so what the conjectures and fictitious possibilities that may offend very grave people may be, we must guess by the object—to make it fashionable. But the recommendation to the young on the score of love, and the "*letting down*" the Bible to the capacities of the young, must be given in the author's own words: "The sacred volume is fertile of subjects calculated both to please and instruct, when let down, by proper elucidation, within the reach of young capacities. And rather than one class of readers should want entertainment, let me tell them, that the Bible contains many histories of love affairs; perhaps this may tend more to recommend it to attention than all besides which I could say." You will not, however, conclude that I object to religious novels. It is a legitimate mode of enforcing doctrines by lives, and showing the pernicious effects of what is false, and the natural result of the good.

CURATE.—And will not the authority of parables justify the adoption? There may, it is true, be mischievous novels of the kind; but what is there that may not be perverted to a bad use? We had at one time irreligious and basely immoral novels; and there have been too many such recently from the Parisian press—blasphemous, immoral, seditious. The existence of such demands the antidote. You have, of course, read Miss Hamilton's "*Modern Philosophers?*" That work was well timed, and did its work well, so cleverly were the very passages from Godwin and others of that school brought in juxtaposition with their necessary results. It is a melancholy tale.

AQUILIUS.—Yes; but this quiet woman, whom, as I am told, if you had met her in society, you would never have suspected of power and shrewd observation, by her little pen scattered the philosophers right and left, and their works with them. I read the other day Godwin's "*St Leon*"— [466] a most tiresome, objectless novel; the repetitions, varying with no little ingenuity of language, of the expression of the feelings of *St Leon*, are tiresome to a degree. In his *Caleb Williams* the same thing is done; but there it agrees well with the nature of the tale, and well represents the movements of the persecuting Erinnys in the mind of the victim. I read it at a great disadvantage, it must be owned, for I had just laid down that tale of singular interest, the "*Kreutzner*" of Mrs H. Lee. There is a slight resemblance in some points to Godwin's style, especially to this expression of the feelings of the victim; but they are exactly timed to suspend the narrative just where it ought to stay. Too rapid a succession of events would have been out of keeping with that incessant persecution, which tracks more perfectly, because more surely and slowly. The true bloodhound is not fleet. Cassandra stayed her prophetic speech; but the pause was the scent of blood, and awful was the burst that followed. Know you the *Canterbury Tales*?

CURATE.—Oh yes; and well remember that strangely interesting and most powerful one of "*Kreutzner*." I have admired how, in every tale, the style is various and characteristic. I see, then, that you have taken to "light reading" of late.

AQUILIUS.—It is not very easy to say what light-reading is. I once heard a very grave person accused of light-reading, because he was detected with the "*History of a Foundling*" in his hand. He replied, "You may call it light-reading, but to me there is more solid matter in it than in most books. I find it all substance,—full weight in the scale of sense, common or uncommon, and will weigh down a library of heavy works. And yet you may pleasantly enough handle it—it fits so well, and the pressure is so convenient. You may even fancy it light too, for it imparts a vigour as you hold it. And so you can play with it for your health, as did the Greek king, in the Arabian tale, with the mallet and medicinal balls which the physician Douban gave him, with which he was lustily to exercise himself. It was all play, but the drugs worked through it. There may be something sanatory even in the '*History of the Foundling*.' There is a light-reading which is the heaviest of all reading: it comes with a deadly weight upon the eyelids, and then drops like lead from your fingers,—but then, indeed, it proves light enough in escaping." Fielding's novel is not of this kind: my grave friend always read it once a-year, and said he as often found new matter in it. Did you ever—indeed I ought not to ask the question—notice Fielding's admirable English? Our best writers have had a short vocabulary, and such was the case with Fielding; but he is the perfect master of it. The manners he portrays are gone by. Some of the characters it would be impossible now to reproduce, and yet we know at a glance that they were drawn from life.

CURATE.—Comparing that novel, and indeed those of that day, with our more modern, may we not say, that this our England is improved?

AQUILIUS.—I hope so: it is at least more refined. But there is a question, Is not the taste above the honesty? Some say, it is a better hypocrite. I do not venture an opinion, but take Dr Primrose's ingenious mode of prophecy, who, in ambiguous cases, always wished it might turn out well six months hence.

CURATE.—Now, indeed, you speak of a novel *sui generis*—that had no prototype. It stands now unapproachable and original as the *Iliad*. Yet I have often wondered by what art Goldsmith invested *such* characters with so great interest. That in every one he put something of himself, it has been well observed; hence the strong vitality, the flesh and blood life of all. I believe the great charm lies in its simpletonianism—I coin a word; admit it. There is scarcely a character that is not more or less of the simpleton; and the more this simpletonianism is conspicuous, the more are we delighted. Perhaps the reader, whether justified or not, is all along under the conviction that he has himself more common sense than any of the company to whom he is introduced, and with whom he becomes familiar. Simplicity runs through the whole tale—a fascinating simplicity, [467] distinct from, and yet in happy relation with, this simpletonianism. The vicar is a simpleton in more things than his controversy, and is the worthy parent of Moses of the spectacles. The eccentricity of the baronet, the over-trust and the mis-trust of mankind, at the different periods of



his life, are of the simpletonian school; and not the least so that act of injurious folly, the giving up his estate to a nephew, of whom he could have known no good. Mrs Primrose is a simpleton born and bred, and in any other hands but those of charitable Goldsmith must have turned out an odious character, for she has scarcely feeling, and certainly no sense. Simpletonianism reigns, whether at the vicarage or at Farmer Flamborough's. Yet is there not a single character in this exquisitely perfect novel that you would in any one respect wish other than as put before you. There is a great charm in this simpletonianism: the reader is in perfect sympathy with the common feelings of all, yet cognisant of a simpletonianism of which none of the *dramatis personæ* are conscious. He thus sits, as it were, in the conclave of nature's administrators, knows the secret that fixes characters in their lines; and is pleased to see the strings pulled, and the figures move according to their kind; is delighted with their perfect harmony, and looks on with complacency and self-satisfaction, believing himself all the while, though he may in reality be something of a simpleton, a person of very superior sagacity. Follies that do not offend, amuse—they are not neutral: we cheat ourselves into an idea that we are exempt from, and are so much above them, that we can afford to look down and laugh: we say to ourselves we are wiser. May not this in some measure be the cause that all, whether children of small or of bigger growth, of three feet or six, take pleasure in the jokes, verbal and practical, of the clown Mr Merryman, and pardon the wickedness of Punch when he so adroitly slips the rope round the neck of the simpleton chief-justice, who trusted himself within reach of the knave's fingers.

AQUILIUS.—Your theory is plausible; be the cause what it may, our best authors seem to have been aware of the charm of simpletonianism. Never was there a more perfect master of it than Shakspeare. And how various the characters—what differences between Shallow, Slender, Malvolio, and indeed all his troop of simpletons! None but he would have thought of putting Falstaff in the category. But let no man boast of his wisdom; we had laughed with him, but laugh too at him when simpletonianised in the buck basket. The inimitable Sterne, did he not know the value of simpletonianism, and make us love it, in the weak and in the wise, in the Shandean philosophy and the no-philosophy of the misapprehending gentle Uncle Toby, and the faithful Trim, taking to himself a portion of both masters' simpletonianism? Did not Le Sage know the value of this art?—Gil Blas retaining to the last somewhat of the simpleton, and, as if himself unconscious, so naïvely relating his failure with the Archbishop of Grenada. And have we not perfect examples in the delicious pages of Cervantes?—the grave, the wise, the high-minded simpletonianism of Don Quixotte; and that contrastingly low and mother-wit kind in the credulous Sancho Panza—ignorance made mad by contact with madness engendered of reading? The very Rosinante that carried madness partakes of the sweet and insane simpletonianism, and Sancho and his ass are fellows well met, well matched.

CURATE.—As he is the cleverest actor that plays the fool, so is he the wisest and ablest writer that portrays simpletonianism. I suppose it is an ingredient in human nature, and that we are none of us really exempt, but that it is kept out of sight, for the most part, and covered by the cloak of artificial manners; and so, when it does break out, the touch of human nature is irresistible; we in fact acknowledge the kinship. But the nicest painting is required; the least exaggeration turns all to caricature. Even Fielding's hand, though under the direction of consummate genius, was occasionally too unrestrained. His Parson Adams might have been a trifle more happily delineated; we see its error in the after-type, Pangloss. What a field was there for extravagance in Don Quixotte! but Cervantes had a forbearing as well as free hand. How could people mistake the aim of Cervantes, and pronounce him to be the Satirist of Romance? He was himself the most exquisite romancer. His episodes are romantic in the extreme, whether of the pastoral or more real life. Though it was not right in Avelanda to take up his tale, it must be regretted that Cervantes changed the plan of his story. What would the tournament have been? Some critics have thought all the after-part inferior: without admitting so much, he certainly wrote it in pique, and possibly might not have concluded the tale at all, if it had not been thus forced upon him.

[468]

AQUILIUS.—We must not omit to mention our own Addison. There is an air of simpletonianism running through all his papers, as one unconscious of his own wit, so perfect was he in his art; and as to character, the simpletonianism of Sir Roger de Coverley must ever immortalise the author—for the good eccentric Sir Roger is one of the world's characters, that can never be put by and forgotten. What nice touches constitute it!

CURATE.—Yes, great nicety; and how often the little too far injures! I confess I was never so charmed with some of the characters in Sir Walter Scott's novels, from this carrying too far. Even simpletonianism must not intrude, as did sometimes Monkbarrow and the Dominie: the "prodigious!" and absence of mind were beyond nature. Character should never become the author's puppets: mere eccentricity and catch phraseology do not make simpletonianism. Smollet, too, fell into the caricature. He sometimes told too much, and let his figures play antics. The fool would thereby spoil his part. There must be some repose every where, into which, as into an obscure, the mind of the reader or spectator may look, and make conjecture—some quiet, in which imagination may work. The reader is never satisfied, unless he too in a certain sense is a creator; the art is, to make all his conjectures, though seemingly his own, the actual result of the writing before him. "Master Shallow, I owe you a thousand pounds." How much does the mind accumulate at once, to fill up the history of those few words! There is no need of more—all is told; while the spectator thinks he is making out the history himself.

AQUILIUS.—It is a great fault in a very popular novel writer of the day, that he will not give his readers credit for any imagination at all; every character is in extreme. To one ignorant of the world, but through books, it would appear that there is not a common middle character in life: we

are to be acquainted with the minutest particulars, or rather peculiarities, of dress and manners. It is as if a painter should colour each individual in his grouping, in the most searching light. The inanimate nature must be made equally conspicuous, and every thing exaggerated. And it is often as forced in the expression as it is exaggerated in character. He has great powers, great genius, overflowing with matter, yet as a writer he wants agreeability: his satire is bitter, unnecessarily accumulated, and his choice of odious characters offers too frequently a disgusting picture of life.

CURATE.—The worst is, that, with a genius for investing his characters with interest, by the events with which he links them together, in which he has so much art, that he compels persons of most adverse tastes to read him,—he is not a good-natured writer, and he evidently, it might be almost said professedly, writes with a purpose—and that I think a very mischievous one, and one in which he is to a certain extent joined by some other writers of the day—to decry, and bring into contempt as unfeeling, the higher classes. This is a very vulgar as well as evil taste, and is quite unworthy the genius of Mr Dickens. And, what is a great error in a novelist, he gives a very false view of life as it is. There is too much of the police-office reporter in all his works. *Dombey and Son* is, however, his greatest failure, as a whole. You give him credit for a deep plot and mystery, ere you have gone far; but it turns out—nothing. Admirable, indeed, are some things, parts and passages of wonderful power; but the spring that should have attached them has snapped, and they are, and ever will be, admired, only as scenes. The termination is miserable—a poor conclusion, indeed, of such a beginning; every thing is promised, nothing given, in conclusion. Some things are quite out of possibility. The whole conduct of the wife is out of nature. Such a character should have a deep cause for her conduct: she has none but the having married a disagreeable man, out of pique, from whom she runs away with one still more odious to herself and every one, and assumes, not a virtue which she has not, but a vice which she scorns, and glories in the stigma, because it wounds her husband. Such a high and daring mind, and from the commencement so scorning contamination, could not so degrade itself without having a stronger purpose than the given one. The entire change of character in *Dombey* is out of all nature—it is impossible; nor does the extraordinary affection of the daughter spring from any known principle of humanity. The very goodness of some of the accessory characters becomes wearisome, as the vice of others is disgusting.

[469]

AQUILIUS.—After all, he is an uncomfortable writer: he puts you out of humour with the world, perhaps with yourself, and certainly with him as a writer. Yet let us acknowledge that he has done much good. He should be immortalised, if only for the putting down the school tyrannies, exposing and crushing school pretensions, and doubtless saving many a fair intellect from withering blight and perversion. He takes in hand fools, dolts, and knaves; but Dickens wants simpletonianism. He gave some promise that way in his *Pickwick Papers*, but it was not fulfilled. Turn we now to Mrs Trollope. What say you to her *Vicar of Wrexhill*? let it have a text, and what is it? I will not suggest a text—that is your province. I dare to say you would easily find one.

CURATE.—Why, I think Mrs Trollope was very unfairly dealt with. The narrative in that novel was a fair deduction from the creed of a sect; and if it does not always produce similar consequences, it is because men will be often better than their creeds. But that fact does not make her comment unfit for the text, that it told; I should judge from the abuse that has been heaped upon it—no, not upon it, but upon the authoress. Why was it not open to her to make this answer to other works of fiction, as she thought, inculcating evil? What Miss Hamilton did with the philosophers, she did with the Antinomians.

AQUILIUS.—It has been the fashion to call her a coarse writer—a vulgar writer. I see nothing of it in her best works. She takes vulgar and coarse people to expose them as warnings, and, if possible, to amend them. We cannot spare Mrs Trollope from our literature. I have been told by an eye-witness that her American "camp scene" is very far short of the truth, and that she could not give the details. He must surely be a bit of a bigot, who would hastily pronounce that even Grieve's *Spiritual Quixotte* is an irreligious work. There are too many people interested in decrying the novel of so powerful a writer as Mrs Trollope, to suffer her to be without reproach both for style and object. I should rather object to her that she writes too much—for she is capable, were she to bestow due time upon it, to write something better than has yet dropped from her pen; let her give up her fashionable novels. When I say better, yet would I except the *Vicar of Wrexhill*: for, however unpopular with some, it places her, as a writer, very high.

CURATE.—They who oppose themselves to any set of opinions must make up their minds, during the present generation at least, to receive but half their meed of praise. Was this ever proved more remarkably than in the publication of that singular novel, *Ten Thousand a-Year*? It is a political satire, certainly; but not only that—it has a far wider scope; but it was sufficiently so to set all the Whigs against it. And sore enough they were. But has there been any such novel since the days of Fielding? And it exhibits a pathos, and tone of high principle and personal dignity, that were out of the reach even of Fielding. This novel, and its precursor, the *Diary of a Physician* will—must—ever live in the standard literature of the country.

AQUILIUS.—And why not add *Now and Then*? One thing I cannot but greatly admire in Mr Warren—he is ever alive to the dignity of his profession. Hating law as I do, in all its courses, ways, contacts, and consequences, and officials, from the Lord Chief-Justice to the petty constable; and having a kind of envious dislike to the arrogation to themselves, by lawyers, of the greater part of the great profits and emoluments of the country; and seeing, besides, that most men of any station and property pay, in their course of life, as much to lawyers as in taxes, the one cried-up grievance; yet I confess that Mr Warren has put the noble portraiture of the profession, in all its dignity and usefulness, and in its high moral and intellectual acquirements and actions, so

[470]

vigorously before me, that I recant, and even venerate the profession—against my will, nevertheless.

CURATE.—How touching are the early struggles with his poverty, in the person of the young physician himself! with what fine taste and feeling of the gentleman and the scholar are they written! Perhaps no novel can show a more perfectly complete-in-itself character than his Gammon, in whom is the strange interweaving of the man of taste and sense—even, in some sense, better feeling—with the vile and low habits of knavery.

AQUILIUS.—The author differs from most novelists in this, that he does not make love, by which must be understood love-making or love-pursuing, the subject, but incidental to his subject. He sets up affection, rather, in the niche for his idolatry. Tenderness, and duty linked with it, and made sublime by it, is with him far more than the "passion," of love. It is life with love, rather than in the chase of it, that we see detailed in trial and in power.

CURATE.—It is so; and yet you do not, I presume, mean to blame other authors if they have made "the passion" their subject. We are only bound to the author's choice, be it what it may—love, ambition, or, any other—we must have every feature of life, every notice of action, pictured.

AQUILIUS.—Surely: but there is a masculine virtue, seeing that the one field has been so decidedly occupied, in making it less prominent; and where it is thus abstinely administered, there is often a great charm in the conciseness and unexpectedness. Let me exemplify Mr Southey's *Doctor*. There may be, strictly speaking, or rather speaking after the fashion of novels, but little love-making; there are, nevertheless, two little scenes, that are the most touchingly effective I ever remember to have read. The one is a scene between cousins—dependent and in poverty, I think, at Salisbury; the other, the unexpected and brief courtship of Doctor Dove himself. It is many years since I read *The Doctor*, yet these two scenes have often been conjured up, and vividly pictured to my imagination. I doubt if Southey could have told a love-tale in any other way, and few in any way would have told one so well.

CURATE.—Those who dwell too unsparingly on such scenes, and spin out their sentimental tales, and bring the loving pair incessantly before the eye, do for the most part the very thing which the nature of the passion forbids. Its whole virtue is in the secrecy. And though the writer often supposes a secrecy, by professing himself only the narrator and not the witness, yet the reader is not quite satisfied, seeing that he too is called in to look over the wall or behind the hedge; and the virtue he is willing to give the lovers is at some expense of his own, for he has a shrewd suspicion that both he and the writer are little better than spies.

AQUILIUS.—Surely you will admit something conventional, as you would the soliloquy on the stage—words must pass for thoughts. I find a greater fault with those kind of novels; they work, as it were, too much to a point, beyond which, and out of which aim, there is no interest. These I call melodramatic novels, in which the object seems to harrow up or continually excite the feelings, to rein the hasty course of curiosity, working chiefly for the denouement, after which there is nothing left but a blank. Curiosity, satisfied, cannot go back; the threads have all been taken up that lead out of the labyrinth—they will not conduct you back again. Novels of this kind have greater power, at first, than any other; but, the effect for which they labour fully produced, the effervescence is over; and though we remember them for the delight they have given, we do not return to them. Novels of less overstrained incident, full of a certain *naïveté* in the description of men and manners, from which the reader may make inferences and references out of his own knowledge, though they will not be read by so many, will be read oftener by the same persons. Perhaps there is more genius in the greater part of these novels, but the writers sacrifice to effect—to immediate effect—too much. Cooper's novels are somewhat of this kind; and may I venture to say that the Waverley novels, as they are called, assume a little more than one could wish of this character. Authors, in this respect, are like painters of *effect*—they strike much at first, but become even tiresome by the permanency of what is, in nature, evanescent. It is too forced for the quietness under which things are both seen and read twice. Generally, in such tales, when the parties have got well out of their troubles, we are content to leave them at the church door, and not to think of them afterwards.

[471]

CURATE.—Novelists, too, seem to think that, by their very title, they are compelled to seek novelties. I have to complain of a very bad novelty. The "lived together happy for ever after" is not only to be omitted, but these last pages of happiness are sadly slurred over; as if the author was mostly gifted with the malicious propensity for accumulating trouble upon his favourites, and with reluctance registered their escape into happiness. They do out of choice what biographers do out of necessity, the disagreeable necessity of biography, and for which—I confess the weakness—I dislike it. I do not like to come to the "vanitas vanitatum"—to see the last page contradict and make naught of the vitality, the energy, the pursuit, the attainment of years. It is all true enough—as it is—that old men have rheum, but, as Hamlet says, it is villanous to set it down. You have, of course, read that powerful novel *Mount Sorel*. You remember the last page—the one before had been "voti compos"—all were happy; and there it should have ended. Not a bit of it. Then follows the monumental scene. You are desired to look forward, to see them, or rather to be told of their lying in their shrouds, with their feet, that recently so busily walked the flowery path of the accomplishment of their hopes, upturned and fixed in the solemn posture of death.

AQUILIUS.—Yes, I remember it well, and being rather nervous, declined reading *Emilia Wyndham*, by the same author, because I heard it was melancholy, and feared a similar conclusion. I agree with you with respect to biography: and remember, when a boy, the sickening sensation when I read at school the end of Socrates. I wish biographers would know where to stop, and save us the

sad catastrophe. It is strange, that you must not read the life of a buffoon but you must see his tricks come to an end, and his whole broad farce of life suddenly drop down dead in tragedy. Whatever may be said of the biographer in his defence, I hold the novelist inexcusable.

CURATE.—I should even prefer the drop-scene of novel happiness to come quietly down before the accoucheur and the registrar of births make their appearance. Why should we be told of a nursery of brats—a whole quiverful, as Lamb says, "shot out" upon you? It is better to take these things for granted. Doubtless it is as true, that the happy couple will occasionally suffer—she from nerves, and he under dyspepsia; but we do not see such matters, nor ought they to be brought forward, although I doubt not the authors might obtain a very handsome fee from an advertising doctor for only publishing the prescriptions. If they go on, however, in this absurd way, it is to be feared they will go one step further with the biographers, and publish the will, with certificate of probate and legacy-tax duly paid.

AQUILIUS.—We are not, however, as bad as the French. If our novels do sometimes require an epitaph at the end, they do not make death at once a lewd, sentimental, frightful, and suicidal act—and that not as a warning, but as a French sublime act.

CURATE.—You have read, then, the *Juif Errant*. I am not very well acquainted with French novels, but have read some very pretty stories in the voluminous Balzac, most of which were not of a bad tendency. Did you ever read the Greek novels *Theagenes and Chariclea*, and the *Loves of Ismenias and Ismene*? Being curious to see how the Thessalonian archbishop, who lived in the times of Manuelis and Alexis Commenus, about the year 750, would speak the sentiments of his age on the passion of love, I lately took up his novel, the "*Loves of Ismenias and Ismene*." [472]

AQUILIUS.—I know it not; perhaps you will give me an outline, and select passages. I have great respect for the old Homeric commentator.

CURATE.—I remember a few tender passages, and graceful descriptions of gardens and fountains, and that he is not unmindful of his Homer, for he refers to the gardens of Alcinous as his model. I confess I am a little ashamed of the archbishop; but read with more than shame that Greek novel of Longus, written it is doubted whether in the second or fourth century, and to which, it is said, Eustathius was indebted for his novel. Longus's *Daphnis and Chloë* is a pastoral,—it would burn well. There are pleasing descriptions in both of garden scenery. Speaking of gardens and fountains reminds me of the richness of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, which I am surprised did not before come into our discussion. How strange is it that, though manners and scenes are so far from our usages and any known locality, we admit them at once within the recognised boundary of imaginative nature! They are indeed fascinating; yet have I not unfrequently met with persons who professed that they could not endure them.

AQUILIUS.—Were they young persons?—if so, they must be very scantily gifted with a conciliating imagination, though they may very possibly be the most reasonable of human beings. The charm that renders the *Arabian Nights* acceptable in all countries appears to me to arise from this—that vivid are the touches which speak of our common nature, and what is extraneous is less defined. Indeed, not unfrequently is great use made of the obscure—such obscure as Rembrandt, the master of mystery, profusely spread around the gorgeous riches of his pencil. There is here and there, too, a sprinkling of simpletonianism in a foreign shape, showing that all nations have something akin.

CURATE.—Besides, they have the charm of magic, and a magic which blends very skilfully and harmoniously with the realities of every-day life. They were evidently composed in a country where magic was a creed. Could such tales have been ever the product of this country, so different from any of our "fairy tales?" though perhaps none of ours, those that delighted us in our childhood, are of English origin. Magic of some kind or other must have been adopted in tale at a very early period. Ulysses' safety girdle, which he was directed mysteriously to throw behind him, and I believe not to look back, comes undoubtedly from some far land of faery, from whence the genius of Homer took it with a willing hand.

AQUILIUS.—Grecian fable is steeped in the charmed fountain. The power of the Medusa's head, and the black marble prince's metamorphoses, are nearly allied. And a Circe may be discovered in many places of Arabic enchantment.

CURATE.—Time converts everything into beauty. You smile, thinking doubtless that age has something to do with ugliness. Perhaps so, though it follows not but that there may be, personally speaking, to every age its own beauty, visible to eyes not human, whilst we are under earthly beauty's fascination, at any rate with regard to fact and to fable. Time unites them, as it covers the riven rock with lichen; so the shattered and ugliest idols of remotest ages doth Time hand over to Fable, to remodel and invest with garments of beauty or deformity, to suit every desire of the imagination. Strange as it may seem, it is true that there is in most of us, weary and unsatisfied with this matter-of-fact world, a propensity to throw ourselves into dream, and let fancy build up for us a world of its own, and, for a season, fit us with an existence for it—taking with us the beautiful of this, and charming what is plain under the converting influence of fiction. Who understood this as Shakspeare did? His *Tempest*, *Midsummer's Night Dream*, his *Merchant of Venice*, are built up out of the materials supplied by this natural propensity. [473]

AQUILIUS.—How beautiful are impossibilities when genius sets them forth as truth! Who does not yield implicit belief to every creation of Shakspeare? I prefer the utter impossibilities to improbabilities converted into real substantial fact. Let us have *Mysteries of Udolpho* uncleared

up; it is dissatisfying at the end to find you have been cheated. One would not have light let in to a mysterious obscure, and exhibit perhaps but a bare wall ten feet off. I had rather have the downright honest ghost than one, on discovery, that shall be nothing but an old stick and a few rags. The reader is put in the condition of the frogs in the fable, when they found themselves deluded into wonder and worship of an old log. I would not even clear up the darkness of ignorance respecting the Pyramids, and will believe that the hieroglyphics are the language of fables, that are better, like the mummies, under a shroud. Wherever you find a bit of the mysterious, you are sure to be under a charm. In *Corinne* of Madame de Stael, not the most romantic of authors, the destiny cloud across the moon you would not have resolved into smoke ascending from a house-top. Let the burial-place of Œdipus be ever hid. Imagination converts ignorance into a pleasure. There is a belief beyond, and better than that of eyes and ears.

CURATE.—Not at present; at this moment I will trust both. I hear the carriage, and here is Lydia returned from ——. I hope she has picked up the parcel of books which I gathered for our reading.

Now here, Eusebius, our dialogue broke off, and we greeted the Curate's wife. The box, it seems, had not reached the little town; so, with a woman's nice tact, Lydia, the Curate's Lydia, had brought us two novels to begin with. I therefore put my letter to you by, until we had read them, and I was enabled to say something about them. You perceive, Eusebius, that I have made some mention in the dialogue of you, and your opinions upon nursery *fabulous* education. Lydia says—for to her we mentioned your whim—that you must come and discuss it with her; and she will, to provoke you, bring you into company with some very good people, and very much devoted to education. She tells me she has a neighbour who burnt Gay's fables, which a godfather had given to one of her children; because, said she, it taught children lying, for her children looked incredulous as one day she told them that beasts cannot speak. The Curate's wife promises herself some amusement, you perceive, when you come; you must therefore be as provoking as possible. But now, Eusebius, we have read the novels brought to us. The first, *Jane Eyre*, has been out some time: not so the other, *Madame de Malguet*, which has only now made its first appearance. I do not think it fair, though it is a common practice with critics, to give out a summary of the tales they review—for this is sure to spoil the reading. I will resume, then, the dialogue, omitting such parts as may be too searching into the story.

LYDIA.—Well, I am glad we read *Jane Eyre* first, for I should have been sorry to have ended with tears, which she has drawn so plentifully; and not from my eyes alone, though both you men, as ashamed of your better natures, have endeavoured to conceal them in vain.

AQUILIUS.—It *is* a very pathetic tale—very singular; and so like truth that it is difficult to avoid believing that much of the characters and incidents are taken from life, though woman is called the weaker sex. Here, in one example, is represented the strongest passion and the strongest principle, admirably supported.

CURATE.—It is an episode in this work-a-day world, most interesting, and touched at once with a daring, yet delicate hand. In spite of all novel rules, the love heroine of the tale has no personal beauty to recommend her to the deepest affection of a man of sense, of station, and who had seen much of the world, not uncontaminated by it. It seems to have been the purpose of the author to show that high and noble sentiments, and great affection, can be both made subservient, and even heightened, by the energy of practical wisdom. If the author has purposely formed a heroine without the heroine's usual accomplishments, with a knowledge of the world, and even with a purpose to heighten that woman in our admiration, he has made no small inroad into the virtues that are usually attributed to every lover, in the construction of a novel. He, the hero, has great faults—why should we mince the word?—vice. And yet so singular is the fatality of love, that it would be impossible to find two characters so necessary to exhibit true virtues, and make the happiness of each. The execution of the painting is as perfect as the conception.

[474]

LYDIA.—I think every part of the novel perfect, though I have no doubt many will object, in some instances, both to the attachment and the conduct of *Jane Eyre*.

AQUILIUS.—It is not a book for Prudes—it is not a book for effeminate and tasteless men; it is for the enjoyment of a feeling heart and vigorous understanding.

LYDIA.—I never can forget her passage across the heath, and her desolate night's lodging there.

CURATE.—But you will remember it without pain, for it was at once the suffering and the triumph of woman's virtue.

AQUILIUS.—To my mind, one of the most beautiful passages is the return of *Jane Eyre*, when she sees in the twilight her "master" and her lover solitary, and feeling his way with his hands, baring his sightless sorrow to the chill and drizzly night.

CURATE.—But what think you of *Madame de Malguet*? In a different way, that is as unlike any other novel as *Jane Eyre*. This, too, is written to exhibit the character of woman under no ordinary circumstances.

AQUILIUS.—She reminds me of the Chevalier d'Eon, whose portrait I remember to have seen years ago in the *Wonderful Magazine*—half man, half woman. *Madame de Malguet* is perhaps an amalgamation of the Chevalier and Lady Hester Stanhope. These, after all, are not the beings to be exempt from the *tender passion*, but it is under the strongest vagaries. Love without courtship is the very romance of the passion; and such is there in the tale of *Madame de Malguet*. The

scene is laid in a little town, and its immediate neighbourhood, in France; and though a "Tale of 1820," carries back its interest, and much of the detail of the story, to the horrors of the first French Revolution. There is consequently a wide field for diversity of character, and for conflict of opinions, and their effects, as shown upon every grade of social life; and it is very striking that the deepest rooted prejudices, ere the conclusion, change sides, and are fitted upon characters to whom, at the commencement, they seemed but little to belong. The inborn aristocratic feelings, alike with the republican habits, meet their check; and I suppose it was the intention of the author to show the weakness of both.

CURATE.—I am not certain of that, for I think the innate is preserved even through the disguise of contrary habits. I know not which is the hero—the Buonapartean soldier or the English naval captain. There are some discussions on subjects of life interspersed, which show the author to be a man of a deeply reflecting mind, and endued with no little power of expressing what he thinks and what he feels.

AQUILIUS.—When I found fault with this wet blanket of happiness, the monumental termination of *Mount Sorel*, I did not so soon expect to meet with a repetition of this fault. I must pick a quarrel with the writer for unnecessarily putting his characters *hors-de-combat*. I think authors now-a-days need not be afraid of the fate of Cervantes—of having them taken off their hands, and made to play their parts upon any other stages than their own.

LYDIA.—You seem, both of you, to forget the real moral of the story—that a person endowed with a little more than common sense, general kindness, amiability, and energy of character, may be more useful in the world than the most accomplished hero.

CURATE.—You would have found him too a hero, if his actions had been within the sphere of heroism. I hope to meet with Mr Torrens again. He has very great powers, and his conceptions are original.

And now, Eusebius, having written you this account of our dialogue, and breathed country air, and witnessed happiness, I am, yours ever, and

"Precipue sanus, nisi cùm pituita molesta est."

AQUILIUS.

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## CONTINENTAL REVOLUTIONS—IRISH REBELLION— ENGLISH DISTRESS.

[475]

Seven months have barely elapsed since the throne of Louis Philippe was overturned, by a sudden and well-concerted urban tumult; and six have not expired since the fervour of revolution invaded the Germanic empire, and Italy, torn by the innovating passions, commenced a strife with the Austrian power. How marvellous have been the changes, how vehement the action, how powerful the reaction, since those events commenced! Involved in the whirlwind of anarchy, the greater as well as the lesser states of Germany seemed to be on the verge of destruction. Austria, tormented by diversity of lineage, race, and interest, seemed to be irrevocably broken up; and amidst the rebellion in Lombardy, the severance of Venice, the insurrection in Bohemia, and the fierce demand of the Hungarians for independence, it seemed scarcely possible to hope that the house of Hapsburg could maintain its existence, or the important element of Austria in the balance of European power be preserved. Torn by contending passions, a prey to the ambition of the republicans, the dreams of the socialists, and the indignation of the loyalists, France resembled a fiery volcano in the moment of irruption, of which the throes were watched by surrounding nations with trembling anxiety for their own existence. Italy, with Sicily severed from the throne of Naples; Rome in scarcely disguised insurrection against the Papal authority; Lombardy, Tuscany, and Venice in open revolt; and Piedmont, under revolutionary guidance, commencing the usual system of external democratic aggression, scarcely presented a spot on which the eye of hope could rest. Prussia, the first to be reached by the destructive flame, seemed so strongly excited, that it was hard to say whether its national unity or monarchical institutions would first fall to pieces. England, assailed by Chartism in the one island, and the approaching insurrection of the Irish in the other; oppressed with a debt to which its finances, under present management, seemed unequal—having borrowed £8,000,000 in a single year of general peace—seemed shaken to its foundation. The distress so generally diffused by the combined effect of free trade and a fettered currency, appeared at once to have dried up its material resources and overturned the wonted stability of the national mind: every thing seemed to be returning to chaos; and even the most sanguine advocates of human perfectibility, the most devout believers in democratic regeneration, looked on with trembling anxiety, and could hardly anticipate any other result from the disturbed passions of society, but a general and sanguinary war, terminating in the irresistible ascendancy of one victorious power, or possibly a fresh inundation, over the exhausted field of European strife, of northern barbarians.

But truth is great, and will prevail. There are limits imposed by the wisdom of nature to the madness of the people, not less than the strife of the elements. Extraordinary convulsions seldom fail to restore government, after a time, to a bearable form: the letting loose of the passions of nations ere long rouses the feelings and alarms the interests, which produce reaction, and

restore the subverted equilibrium of society. Men will not be permanently ruled by brutal force. Triumph reveals the latent tyranny of the multitude; power brings to light the selfishness and rapacity of their leaders. How strikingly have those truths—so often enunciated, so little attended to—been demonstrated by the events of the last summer! Six months only have elapsed, and what years, what centuries of experience have been passed during that brief period! How many delusions has it seen dispelled, and fallacies exposed; how many pretensions levelled, and expectations blasted; how many reputations withered, and iniquities detected! How much has the peril of inflammatory language been demonstrated, and the hollowness of revolutionary regeneration established! how quickly have words been blown into the air by deeds, and the men of eloquence supplanted by those of the sword! "Words," says Lamartine,<sup>[11]</sup> "set nations on fire; bayonets alone restore them to reason." Who has furnished such a commentary on these words as Lamartine himself?

[476]

Is it the doctrines of the French Revolution which were deemed seductive, its principles insinuating, its example dangerous? The Red Republicans, the insurrection of June, the slaughter of a greater number of men in a single revolt than has taken place in many a decisive battle, the withering agony of Parisian destitution, the ten thousand captives in its dungeons; the nightly transportation, for weeks together, of hundreds of deluded fanatics; the state of siege,—the prostration of freedom, a military dictatorship, rise up in grim and hideous array to dispel the illusion. Is it the *Io Pæans* of Italian regeneration which have caused the heart of the patriot to throb all over the world, and led the enthusiastic to anticipate a second era of Italian independence in the old age of its civilisation? The defeats on the Adige, the fall of Milan, the dispersion of the Lombard and Tuscan levies, tell us how miserable was the delusion on which such expectations rested, and how vain is the hope that a selfish and worn-out nation, destitute alike of civil firmness or military courage, can successfully establish its independence. Is it from Rome that this regeneration of society is expected to arise, and the reforming pope who is to be the Peter the Hermit of the new crusade in favour of the liberties of mankind? Behold him now trembling in his palace, bereft of authority, deprived of consideration; hated, despised, discrowned; waiting to see which of the Tramontane powers is to send a regiment of horse to receive the keys of the Eternal City, and give a lasting ruler to the former mistress of the world.

Is it Prussia that is to take the lead in the regeneration of the world, and from the north that a new Arminius is to issue, to assert the liberties of the great Teutonic family of mankind? Turn to Berlin, and see to what a pitiable degree of weakness revolutionary triumphs have reduced the monarchy of the Great Frederick. Behold its monarch and its army defeated by a band of students and shop-boys; its arsenal pillaged by an insurgent mob; and the power which withstood the banded strength of Europe, a century ago, and fronted Napoleon in the plenitude of his power, waging a doubtful and aggressive war with Denmark, a fifth-rate power, and paralysed by processions of apprentices, and the menaces of trades-unions, in the capital. Is it Ireland that is regarded as the sheet-anchor of the cause of revolution, and from the Emerald Isle that the bands of heroes are to issue who are to crush the tyranny of England, restore the freedom of the seas, and avenge the long quarrel of the Celt with the Saxon? It is in Boulagh Common that we must look for the exploits of the new Spartan heroes, and among the widow's cabbages we must search for the grave of a modern Leonidas! Is it in the energy, courage, and perseverance of the army of Tipperary, that we must find the realisation of the long-cherished hopes of Irish independence, and the demonstration of the solid foundation on which the much vaunted prospects of Hibernian success against British oppression is to be founded! It must augment the admiration which all the world must feel at the *gallant* conduct of the Irish, in this memorable struggle, to reflect that they owed their *success* to themselves alone; that none of their arms had been purchased, nor preparations made, with the wealth of the stranger; that they had spurned the charity of England as proudly as they had repelled its arms; and that, whatever could be cast up against them, this, at least, could not be said, that they had evinced ingratitude for recent benefits, or eaten the bread of their benefactor while they were preparing to pierce him to the heart!

Memorable, indeed, has been the year which has given these examples, and taught these lessons, to mankind. History will be sought in vain for a period in which, during so short a time, so many important political truths were unfolded, so many moral precepts taught, by suffering; or in which, after being for a season obscured by clouds, the polar star of religion and duty has shone forth with so bright a lustre. It is a proud thing for England to reflect on the exalted post she has occupied during this marvellous and trying time. While other nations, possessed of far greater military forces, were reeling under the shock, or prostrated by the treachery and treason of their defenders, she alone has repelled the danger by the constable's baton. She has neither augmented her army, nor increased her navy; she has not added a gun to her ships, nor a bayonet to her battalions. She has neither yielded to the violence of the Revolutionists, nor been guilty of deeds of cruelty to repress them. If her government is to blame for their conduct during the crisis, it is for having been too lenient—for having dallied too long with agitation, and winked at sedition till it grew into treason. A fault it undoubtedly has been, for it has brought matters to a crisis, and caused the ultimate outbreak to be repressed with far greater and more unavoidable severity than would have been required if the first merciful coercion had taken place. Had the Habeas Corpus Act been suspended in November, and the farce of Irish patriotism been hindered from turning into a burlesque tragedy, for one person whom it would have been necessary to imprison or transport, fifty must now undergo that punishment. Yet is this leniency or temporisation, misplaced as it was, and calamitous as it has turned out, a proud passage in England's story. It is some consolation to reflect that she conquered the revolutionary spirit, by which so many of the military monarchies of Europe had been prostrated, by moral strength

[477]

alone; that scarce a shot was fired in anger by her troops, and not a drop of blood was shed on the scaffold; and that undue forbearance and lenity is the only fault which, during the crisis, can be imputed to the government which braved the storm under which the world was reeling.

Nor is the moral lesson less striking, or less important, which France, during the same period, has read to mankind. She has not, on this occasion, been assailed by the Continental powers. No Pitt or Cobourg has stood forth to mar, by ensanguined hostility, the bright aurora of her third Revolution. No Louis Philippe has stepped in, to change its character or intercept its consequences, and reap for royalty the fruits of insurrection. No bands of Cossacks or plumed Highlanders have again approached the capital of civilisation, to wrest from Freedom the rights she has acquired, or tear from her brows the glory she has won. Whatever she has gained, or suffered, or lost, has been owing to herself, and herself alone. Europe has looked on in anxious, it may be affrighted, neutrality. Though undermined every where by the spirit of propagandism, though openly assailed in some quarters by scarcely disguised attacks, the adjoining powers have abstained from any act of hostility. Albeit attacked by a revolutionary expedition, fitted out and armed by the French government at Paris, Belgium has attempted no act of retaliation. Victorious Austria, though grievously provoked, has accepted the mediation of France and England: when Turin was at his mercy, the triumphant Radetsky sheathed his victorious sword at Milan, and sought not to revenge on Piedmont the unprovoked aggression which its revolutionary government had committed on the Imperial dominions in Italy. Russia has armed, but not moved; the Czar has left to the patriotism and valour of Denmark the burden of a contest with the might of revolutionised Germany. Revolution has every where had fair play; a clear stage and no favour has been accorded to it by all the surviving monarchies in Europe. The enthusiasm of Lamartine, the intrigues of Caussidière, the dreams of Louis Blanc, the ambition of Ledru Rollin, have been allowed their full development. Nothing has intercepted the realisation of their projects. If France has suffered beyond all precedent from her convulsion; if her finances are in a state of hopeless embarrassment; if forty-five per cent has been added to her direct taxes, and the addition cannot be levied from the public distress; if three hundred thousand men have been added to her regular army; if poverty and destitution stalk through her streets; if her jails teem with ten thousand captives, and thousands of families mourn a father or a brother slain on the barricades, or transported for civil war,—the cause is to be found in the Revolution, and the Revolution alone.

[478]

The terrible and tragic result of the strife in the streets of Paris in June, has done scarcely a less service to mankind, by opening the eyes of the world to the real nature of crimes which recent events had rendered popular, and restoring their old and just appellation to acts of the deepest atrocity, which the general delusion had caused to pass for virtues. Since the successful result of the Revolt of the Barricades in 1830, the ideas of men have been so entirely subverted, that no government was practicable in France but that of corruption or the sword; and treason and sedition appeared to have been blotted out of the list of crimes in the statute-book of England. So licentious had the age become, and so much was government paralysed by terror at the unprecedented turn which the public mind had taken, that, in Ireland especially, it can scarcely be said, for the last ten years, that, in regard to state offences, there has been any government at all. The Repeal agitation—the wholesale liberation of prisoners by Lord Normanby—the unchecked monster meetings,—the quashing of O'Connell's conviction by the casting vote of one Whig peer, in opposition to the opinion of the twelve judges of England—the unparalleled and long-continued violence of the treasonable press in Dublin—the open drilling and arming of the people in the south and west of Ireland—the undisguised announcement of an approaching insurrection, of which the time was openly fixed for the completion of harvest—were so many indications that Government had become paralysed, and ceased to discharge its functions, in the neighbouring island.

If matters were not as yet so menacing in England, it was not that the executive was more powerful or efficient in this country, but that the English mind was slower to take fire than on the other side of the Channel, and that more weighty interests required to be subverted among the Saxons than the Celts, before the institutions of society were overturned, and anarchy, plunder, and spoliation, became the order of the day. Yet even here there were many indications of Government having become paralysed, and lamentable proof that the public tranquillity was preserved, more by the moderation of its assailants than the strength of its defenders. The violence and general impunity of the trades-unions, in both England and Scotland; the open and undisguised preparations of the Chartists in both countries; the toleration in the metropolis, on two different occasions, of a Chartist Convention, which aspired at usurping the government of the country; the uniform and atrocious violence of the revolutionary press; the entire impunity with which, on every occasion, the most dangerous sedition was spouted on the platform, or retailed in the columns of the journals; the open preparation, at last, of treasonable measures; and the organisation of the disaffected in clubs, where arms were distributed, and projects of rebellion, massacre, and conflagration hatched—were so many indications, and that, too, of the most alarming kind, that matters were approaching a crisis in these islands; and that the paralysis and imbecility of a Government which had ceased to discharge its functions, might prove, as it did in France in the feeble hands of Louis XVI., the precursor of a dreadful and disastrous convulsion.

Thanks to the French revolution and Irish rebellion, this state of matters has met, for the time at least, with a decisive check. The eyes of men have been opened; things are called by their right name. We again hear of treason and sedition—words, of late years, so much gone into disuse that the rising generation scarcely knew what they meant. In France the heroes of the barricades



have ceased to be lauded as the greatest of men. Insurrection is no longer preached as the first of social duties. That which was the chief of civic virtues on the 24th February has become the greatest of civic crimes on the 24th June. The soldiers of treason no longer meet with an honoured sepulchre, nor, if surviving, are they fêted and caressed by royal hands. If killed, they are thrust into undistinguished graves; if taken alive, they are immured in dungeons or transported. Universal suffrage has done that which royalty was too indulgent or too timorous to do—it has ceased the dallying with treason. It has fought the Red Republic with its own weapon, and conquered in the strife. It has erected a military despotism in the great revolutionised capital. Industry, almost destroyed by, the first triumph of anarchy in France, is slowly reviving under the protection of absolute power. With suppression of the trade of the "journaliste," the "émeutier," and the "homme des barricades," other branches of employment are at length beginning to revive.<sup>[12]</sup>

[479]

Nor is the change less remarkable in Great Britain, where government have not only followed Mr Pitt's example of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland, but have passed a special statute, assimilating for two years the punishment of aggravated cases of sedition to what it was by the old common law of Scotland. Great was the abuse which the Whig writers for half a century bestowed on the Scotch Judges in 1793, for applying the punishment of the Scotch law to the sedition of 1793, and transporting Muir and Fische Palmer, for trying to force on a revolution by means of a national convention. The "Martyrs' Monument" in Edinburgh stands as a durable monument of their sympathy. Lord Campbell, in his *Lives of the Chancellors*, has in bitter terms exhaled their collected indignation. But scarcely was the ink of his lordship's lucubrations dry, when he saw fit, as a member of Lord John Russell's cabinet, to bring in a bill to *assimilate the punishment of sedition in Ireland to the old law of Scotland*; and under it Mitchell has been transported fourteen, and Martin ten years—the very punishments inflicted for similar offences on Muir and Fische Palmer. The difference is, that for one person transported or imprisoned under Mr Pitt's system of timely coercion and prevention, in 1793, in Great Britain and Ireland, a hundred will be transported or imprisoned under the Whig system of long temporisation and final repression, in 1848. So true it is, that undue weakness in the prevention of crime is the inevitable parent of undue sternness in its punishment, and that in troubled times government incur the reality of severity to avoid its imputation.

Not less important, to the final interests of mankind, is the exposure of the real designs and objects of the revolutionary party, over the world, which has now taken place. The days of delusion are gone past; words have ceased to mislead men as to the nature of things. For half a century, men have been continually misled by the generous and elevated language under which the democratic party veiled their real designs. The strength of revolution consists in the power it possesses of rousing effort by the language of virtue, to render it subservient to the purposes of vice. But its designs have now reached their accomplishment: men see what was intended under all this veil of philanthropic intentions. The revolutionists have been victorious in Paris; and immediately their projects of spoliation, anarchy, and plunder, were set on foot, and approached so near their accomplishment, that a desperate and last effort of all the holders of property became indispensable, to prevent the total ruin of society; and carnage to an unheard of extent for three days stained the streets of Paris, to avert the triumph of the Red Republic, and the return of the Reign of Terror. The cry for repeal turned into rebellion in Ireland; and a vast concentration of the forces of England was requisite to prevent the Emerald Isle becoming the theatre of general massacre, devastation, and ruin. For two hours the Chartists got possession of Glasgow, and instantly a general system of plunder and sacking of houses commenced. The Chartist Convention was long tolerated in England, and, in return, they tried to overturn the Government on the 10th April; and organised a general plan of plunder and conflagration, which was to have broken out in the end of August, and was only mercifully prevented by the designs of the conspirators having become known, and the timely vigour of Government having prevented their accomplishment. The ultimate objects of the enemies of society, therefore, have become apparent: deeds have told us what meaning to attach to words. Revolution in France means spoliation, and the division of property, at a convenient opportunity. Repeal in Ireland means the massacre of the Protestants, and the division of their estates at a convenient opportunity. Chartism in England means general plunder, murder, and conflagration, the moment there is the least chance of perpetrating these crimes with impunity.

[480]

Ireland has been, in an especial manner, the subject of these general delusions; and there is perhaps no subject on which foreigners, the English, and the Irish themselves, have for so long a period been entirely misled, as in regard to the real cause of the protracted, and apparently irremediable evils of that distracted country. The proneness of the English to believe, that all mankind will be blessed by the institutions under which they themselves have flourished and waxed great, and the virulence with which party ambition has fastened upon Ireland, as the battle-field on which to dispossess political opponents, and gain possession of power, are the main causes of this long-continued and wide-spread misconception. We have to thank the Irish for having, by their reception of the magnificent gift of England in 1847, and subsequent rebellion in 1848, done so much to dispel the general delusion. To aid in disseminating juster views on the subject, we shall proceed to disinter from the earlier volumes of this Magazine, an extract from the first of a series of papers on Ireland, published in 1833, immediately before Lord Grey's Coercion Act, and which might pass for an essay on present events. It affords a striking example, both of the justice of the views there enunciated, and of the pernicious and continual recurrence of those real causes of Irish suffering, which party spirit in both islands has so long concealed from the people of Great Britain.

"It is in vain to attempt to shake ourselves loose of Ireland, or consider its misery as a foreign and extraneous consideration with which the people of this country have little concern. The starvation and anarchy of that kingdom is a leprosy, which will soon spread over the whole empire. The redundancy of our own population, the misery of our own poor, the weight of our own poor-rates, are all chiefly owing to the multitudes who are perpetually pressing upon them from the Irish shores. During the periods of the greatest depression of industry in this country since the peace, if the Irish labourers could have been removed, the native poor would have found ample employment; and more than one committee of the House of Commons have reported, after the most patient investigation and minute examination of evidence from all parts of the country, that there is no tendency to undue increase among the people of Great Britain, and that the whole existing distress was owing to the immigration from the sister kingdom.

[481]

"Nature has forbidden us to sever the connexion which subsists between the two countries. We must swim or sink together. It is utterly impossible to effect that disjunction of British from Irish interests, for which the demagogues of that country so strenuously contend, and which many persons in this island, from the well-founded jealousy of Catholic ascendancy in the House of Commons, and the apparent hopelessness of all attempts to improve its condition, are gradually becoming inclined to support. The legislature may be separated by act of Parliament; the Government may be severed by Catholic revolts; but Ireland will not the less hang like a dead weight round the neck of England; its starving multitudes will not the less overwhelm our labourers; its passions and its jealousies will not the less paralyse the exertions of our Government. Let a Catholic Republic be established in Ireland; let O'Connell be its President; let the English landholders be rooted out, and Ireland, with its priests and its poverty, be left to shift for itself; and the weight, the insupportable weight of its misery, will be more severely felt in this country than ever. Deprived of the wealth and the capital of the English landholders, or of the proprietors of English descent; a prey to its own furious and ungovernable passions; ruled by an ignorant and ambitious priesthood; seduced by frantic and unprincipled demagogues, it would speedily fall into an abyss of misery far greater than that which already overwhelms it. For every thousand of the Irish poor who now approach the shores of Britain, ten thousand would then arrive, from the experienced impossibility of finding subsistence at home; universal distress would produce such anarchy as would necessarily lead the better classes to throw themselves into the arms of any government who would interfere for their protection. France would find the golden opportunity, so long wished for, at length arrived, of striking at the power of England through the neighbouring island; the tricolor flag would speedily wave from the Giant's Causeway to Cape Clear; and even if England submitted to the usurpation, and relinquished its rebellious subjects to the great parent democracy, the cost of men and ships required to guard the western shore of Britain, and avert the pestilence from our own homes, would be greater than are now employed in maintaining a precarious and doubtful authority in that distracted island.

"Whence is all this misery, and these furious passions, in a country so richly endowed by nature, and subjected to a Government whose sway has, in other states, established so large a portion of general felicity? The Irish democrats answer, that it is the oppression of the English Government which has done all these things; the editors of the Whig journals and reviews repeat the same cry; and every Whig, following, on this as on every other subject, their leaders, like a flock of sheep, re-echo the same sentiment, until it has obtained general belief, even among those whose education and good sense might have led them to see through the fallacy. Yet, in truth, there is no opinion more erroneous; and there is none the dissemination of which has done so much to perpetuate the very evils which are the subject of such general and well-founded lamentation. Ireland, in reality, is not miserable because she has, but because *she has not been conquered*; she is suffering under a redundant population, not because the tyranny of England, but the tyranny of her own demagogues, prevents their getting bread; and she is torn with discordant passions, not because British oppression has called them into existence, but because Irish licentiousness has kept them alive for centuries after, under a more rigorous Government, they would have been buried for ever.

"It is the more extraordinary that the popular party in both islands should so heedlessly and blindly have adopted this doctrine, when it is so directly contrary to what they at the same time maintain in regard to the causes of the simultaneous rise and prosperity of Scotland. That poor and barren land, they see, has made unexampled strides in wealth and greatness during the last eighty years: its income during that period has been quadrupled, its numbers nearly doubled, its prosperity augmented tenfold; they behold its cities crowded with palaces, its fields smiling with plenty, its mountains covered with herds, its harbours crowded with masts, the Atlantic studded with its sails; and yet all this has grown up under an aristocratic rule, and with a representative system from which the lower classes were in a great measure excluded. In despair at beholding a nation whose condition was so utterly at variance with all their dogmas of the necessity of democratic representation to temper the frame of government, they have recourse to the salutary influence of English ascendancy, and ascribe all this improvement to the beneficial influence of English freedom. Scotland, they tell us, has prospered, not because she has, but because she has not, been governed by her own

institutions: and she is now rich and opulent, because the narrow and jealous spirit of her own Government has been tempered by the beneficial influence of English freedom. Whether this is really the case, we shall examine in a succeeding Number; and many curious and unknown facts as to the native institutions of Scotland we promise to unfold; but, in the mean time, let it be conceded that this observation is well founded, and that all the prosperity of Scotland has been owing to English influence. How has it happened that the *same* influence at the *same* time has been the cause of all the misery of Ireland? The common answer that Scotland was always an independent country, and that Ireland was won and ruled by the sword, is utterly unsatisfactory, and betrays an inattention to the most notorious historical facts. For how has it happened that Ireland was conquered with so much facility, while Scotland so long and strenuously resisted the spoiler? How did it happen that Henry II., with eleven hundred men, achieved with ease the conquest of the one country, while Edward II., at the head of eighty thousand men, was unable to effect the subjugation of the other? How was it that Scotland, not once, but twenty times, expelled vast English armies from her territory, while Ireland has never thrown them off since the Norman standard first approached her shores? And without going back to remote periods, how has it happened that the same influence of English legislation, which, according to them, has been utterly ruinous to Ireland, has been the sole cause of the unexampled prosperity of Scotland? that the same gale which has been the zephyr of spring to the one state, has been the blast of desolation to the other? It is evident that there is a fundamental difference between the two states; and that, if we would discover the cause of the different modes in which the same legislation of the dominant state has operated in the two countries, we must look to the different condition of the people to whom it was applied.

"One fact is very remarkable, and throws a great light on this difficult subject—and that is, that at different periods opposite systems have been tried in Ireland, and that invariably the system of concession and indulgence has been immediately followed by an ebullition of more than usual atrocity and violence.

"The first of these instances is the great indulgence showed to them by James I. That monarch justly boasted that Ireland was the scene of his beneficent legislation; and that he had done more to its inhabitants than all the monarchs who had sat on the English throne since the time of Henry II. He established the boroughs; gave them a right of sending representatives to Parliament; and first spread over its savage and unknown provinces the institutions and the liberties of England. What was the consequence? Did the people testify gratitude to their benefactors? Did they prove themselves worthy of British freedom, and capable of withstanding the passions arising from a representative government? We shall give the answer in the words of Mr Hume.

"The Irish, everywhere intermingled with the English, needed but a hint from their leaders and priests to begin hostilities against a people whom they hated on account of their religion, and envied for their riches and prosperity. The houses, cattle, goods, of the unwary English were first seized. Those who heard of the commotions in their neighbourhood, instead of deserting their habitations, and assembling for mutual protection, remained at home, in hopes of defending their property, and fell thus separately into the hands of their enemies. After rapacity had fully exerted itself, cruelty, and the most barbarous that ever, in any nation, was known or heard of, began its operations. A universal massacre commenced of the English, now defenceless, and passively resigned to their inhuman foes. No age, no sex, no condition, was spared. The wife weeping for her butchered husband, and embracing her helpless children, was pierced with them and perished by the same stroke. The old, the young, the vigorous, the infirm, underwent a like fate, and were confounded in one common ruin. In vain did flight save from the first assault: destruction was every where let loose, and met the hunted victims at every turn. In vain was recourse had to relations, to companions, to friends; connexions were dissolved, and death was dealt by that hand from which protection was implored and expected. Without provocation, without opposition, the astonished English, living in profound peace and full security, were massacred by their nearest neighbours, with whom they had long upheld a continual intercourse of kindness and good offices.

"But death was the slightest punishment inflicted by those rebels: all the tortures which wanton cruelty could devise, all the lingering pains of body, the anguish of mind, the agonies of despair, could not satiate revenge excited without injury, and cruelty derived from no cause. To enter into particulars would shock the least delicate humanity. Such enormities, though attested by undoubted evidence, appear almost incredible. Depraved nature, even perverted religion, encouraged by the utmost license, reach not to such a pitch of ferocity, unless the pity inherent in human breasts be destroyed by that contagion of example, which transports men beyond all the usual motives of conduct and behaviour.

"The weaker sex themselves, naturally tender to their own sufferings, and compassionate to those of others, here emulated their more robust companions in the practice of every cruelty. Even children, taught by the example, and encouraged by the exhortation of their parents, essayed their feeble blows on the dead carcasses or defenceless children of the English. The very avarice of the Irish was not a sufficient

restraint of their cruelty. Such was their frenzy, that the cattle which they had seized, and by rapine made their own, were yet, because they bore the name of English, wantonly slaughtered, or, when covered with wounds, turned loose into the woods and deserts.

"The stately buildings or commodious habitations of the planters, as if upbraiding the sloth and ignorance of the natives, were consumed with fire, or laid level with the ground. And where the miserable owners, shut up in their houses and preparing for defence, perished in the flames, together with their wives and children, a double triumph was afforded to their insulting foes.

"If any where a number assembled together, and, assuming courage from despair, were resolved to sweeten death by revenge on their assassins, they were disarmed by capitulations and promises of safety, confirmed by the most solemn oaths. But no sooner had they surrendered, than the rebels, with perfidy equal to their cruelty, made them share the fate of their unhappy countrymen.

"Others, more ingenious still in their barbarity, tempted their prisoners by the fond love of life, to imbrue their hands in the blood of friends, brothers, parents; and having thus rendered them accomplices in guilt, gave them that death which they sought to shun by deserving it.

"Amidst all these enormities, the sacred name of RELIGION resounded on every side; not to stop the hands of these murderers, but to enforce their blows, and to steel their hearts against every movement of human or social sympathy. The English, as heretics, abhorred of God, and detestable to all holy men, were marked out by the priests for slaughter; and, of all actions, to rid the world of these declared enemies to Catholic faith and piety, was represented as the most meritorious. Nature, which, in that rude people, was sufficiently inclined to atrocious deeds, was farther stimulated by precept; and national prejudices impoisoned by those aversions, more deadly and incurable, which arose from an enraged superstition. While death finished the sufferings of each victim, the bigoted assassins, with joy and exultation, still echoed in his expiring ears that these agonies were but the commencement of torments infinite and eternal."

"This dreadful rebellion left consequences long felt in Irish government. Cromwell, the iron leader of English vengeance, treated them with terrible severity: at the storming of a single city, 12,000 men were put to the sword; and such was the terror inspired by his merciless sword, that all the revolted cities opened their gates, and the people submitted, trembling, to the law of the conqueror. The recollection of the horrors of the Tyrone rebellion was long engraven in the English legislature; and it produced, along with the terrors of religious dissension, the severe code of laws which were imposed on the savage population of the country before the close of the seventeenth century. A hundred years of peace and tranquillity followed the promulgation of these oppressive laws. That they were severe and cruel is obvious from their tenor; that they were in many respects not worse than was called for by the horrors which preceded their enactment, and followed their repeal, is now unhappily proved by the result.

"The next great period of concession commenced about the year 1772, soon after the accession of George III. The severe code under which Ireland had so long lain chained, but quiet, was relaxed; the Catholics were admitted to a full share of the representation; the more selfish and unnecessary parts of the restrictions were removed; and, before 1796, hardly any part of the old fetters remained, excepting the exclusion of Catholics from the Houses of Lords and Commons, and the higher situations in the army. Did tranquillity, satisfaction, and peace, follow these immense concessions, continued through a period of thirty years? On the contrary, they were immediately followed by the same result as had attended the concessions of James I. A new rebellion broke out; the horrors of 1798 rivalled those of 1641; and the dreadful recollection of the Tyrone massacre was drowned in the more recent suffering of the same unhappy country.

"The perilous state in which Ireland then stood, imperfectly known at the time even to the Government, is now fully developed. From the Memoirs of Wolfe Tone, recently published, it appears that 250,000 men were sworn in, organised, drilled, and regimented; that colonels and officers for this immense force were all appointed; and the whole, under the direction of the central committee at Dublin, only awaited the arrival of Hoche and the French fleet to hoist the tricolor flag, and proclaim the *Hibernian Republic* in close alliance with the Republic of France. With truth it may be said, that the fate of England then hung upon a thread. Napoleon, and the unconquered army of Italy, were still in Europe; a successful descent of the advanced guard, 15,000 strong, under Hoche, would immediately have been followed up by the invasion of the main body under that great leader; and the facility with which the French fleet reached Bantry Bay in February 1797, where they were only prevented from landing by tempestuous gales, proves that the command of the seas cannot always be relied on as a security against foreign invasion. Had 40,000 French soldiers landed at that time in Ireland, to organise 200,000 hot-headed Catholic democrats, and lend the hand of fraternity to their numerous coadjutors on the other side of St George's Channel, it is difficult to say what would have been the present fate of England.

"The rebellion of 1798 threw back for ten years the progress of the indulgent measures so long practised towards Ireland. But at length the spirit of clemency again resumed its sway; the system of concession was again adopted, and the last remnants of the Irish fetters removed by the liberal Tory administration of England. First, the Catholics were declared eligible to any situations in the army and navy; and at length, by the famous Relief Bill, the remaining distinctions between Catholic and Protestant were done away, and an equal share of political influence was extended to them as that of their Protestant brethren. What has been the consequence? Has Ireland increased in tranquillity since this memorable change? Have the prophecies of its advocates been verified, as to the stilling of the waves of dissension and rebellion? Has it proved true, as Earl Grey prophesied it would, in his place in the House of Lords,

Defluit saxis agitatus humor;  
Concedunt venti, fugiuntque nubes;  
Et minax (quod sic voluere) ponto  
Unda recumbit?

"The reverse of all this has notoriously been the case. Since this last and great concession, Ireland has become worse than ever. Midnight conflagration, dastardly assassination, have spread with fearful rapidity; the sources of justice have been dried up, and the most atrocious criminals repeatedly suffered to escape, from the impossibility of bringing them to justice. A universal insurrection against the payment of tithes has defied all the authority of Government, in open violation of the solemn promises of the Catholics that no invasion on the rights of the Protestant church was intended; and the starving clergy of Ireland have been thrown as a burden upon the consolidated fund of England. At this moment the authority of England is merely nominal over the neighbouring island; the Lord Lieutenant is less generally obeyed than the great Agitator, and the dictates of the Catholic leaders are looked up to in preference to the acts of the British Parliament. In despair at so desperate a state of things, so entirely the reverse of all they had hoped from the long train of conciliatory measures, the English are giving up the cause in despair; while the great and gallant body of Irish Protestants are firmly looking the danger in the face, and silently preparing for the struggle which they well know has now become inevitable.

"The result of experience, therefore, is complete in all its parts. Thrice, during the last two hundred years, have conciliatory measures been tried on the largest scale, and with the most beneficent intention; and thrice have the concessions to the Catholics been followed by a violent and intolerable outbreak of savage ferocity. The two first rebellions were followed by a firm and severe system of coercive government; as long as they continued in force, Ireland was comparatively tranquil, and their relaxation was the signal for the commencement of a state of insubordination which rapidly led to anarchy and revolt. The present revolutionary spirit has been met by a different system. Every thing has been conceded to the demagogues; their demands have been granted, their assemblies allowed, their advice followed, their leaders promoted; and the country in consequence has arrived at a state of anarchy unparalleled in any Christian state.

"What makes the present state of Ireland, and the democratic spirit of its inhabitants, altogether unpardonable is, the extreme indulgence and liberality with which, for the last fifty years, they have been treated by this country. During the whole war, Ireland paid *neither income-tax nor assessed taxes*; and the sum thus made a present of by England to her people, amounted at the very lowest calculation to £50,000,000 sterling. She shared in the full benefit of the war in consequence of the immense extent of the demand for agricultural produce which its expenditure occasioned, without feeling any of the burdens which neutralised its extension in this country. No poor's rates are levied on her landholders—in other words, they are levied on England and Scotland instead—and this island is in consequence overwhelmed by a mass of indigence created in the neighbouring kingdom, but which British indulgence has relieved them from the necessity of maintaining. The amount of the sums annually paid by the Parliament of Great Britain to objects of charity and utility in Ireland almost exceeds belief, and is at least five times greater than all directed to the same objects in both the other parts of the empire taken together. Yet with all their good deeds, past, present, and to come, Ireland is the most discontented part of the United Kingdom. She is incessantly crying out against her benefactor, and recurring to old oppression rendered necessary by her passions, instead of present benefactions, of which her democratic population have proved themselves unworthy by their ingratitude.

"Notwithstanding all the efforts of her demagogues to distract the country, and counteract all the liberality and beneficence of the English Government, Ireland has advanced with greater rapidity in industry, wealth, and all the real sources of happiness, during the last thirty years, than any other part of the empire. Since the Union, she has made a start both in agricultural and manufacturing industry, quite unparalleled, and much greater than Scotland had made during the first hundred years after her incorporation with the English dominions. It is quite evident that, if the demagogues would let Ireland alone—if the wounds in her political system were not continually kept open, and the passions of the people incessantly inflamed, by her popular leaders, she would become as rich and prosperous as she is populous—that,

instead of a source of weakness, she would become a pillar of strength to the united empire—and instead of being overspread with the most wretched and squalid population in Europe, she might eventually boast of the most contented and happy."

So far what we wrote in December 1832. We make no apology for the length of this quotation. So precisely is it applicable to the present time, that were we to write anew on the subject, we should certainly reproduce the same ideas, and probably, in a great degree, make use of the same words. It affords a remarkable proof of the manner in which Ireland has been influenced, in all periods of its history, by the same causes; and of the way in which all its natural advantages have been thrown away, by the indolence and want of energy in its inhabitants, joined to the unhappy extension to it, through British connexion, of the privileges, excitement, and passions, consequent on a free constitution, for which it was unfitted by its character, temperament, and state of social advancement.

Need it be said how precisely the same truths have been illustrated in later times, and, most of all, in the memorable year in which we now write? The melancholy tale is known to all: it is written in characters of fire in England's annals. Such was the state of excitement, anarchy, and licentiousness to which the Irish were brought under the Whig rule, by the combined operation of the Reform mania, and the Repeal agitation, that Lord Grey, albeit the most impassioned opponent of Mr Pitt's preventive policy, was compelled to adopt it; and the celebrated Coercion Bill of 1833 invested Government with extraordinary powers, and for a time superseded, by martial law, in some districts of Ireland, the ordinary administration of justice. The result, as much as the anarchy which had preceded it, demonstrated where the secret of Ireland's ills was to be found, and what was the species of government adapted for its unsettled, impassioned, and semi-barbarous inhabitants.<sup>[13]</sup> Instantly, as if by enchantment, the disorders ceased: midnight fires no longer illuminated the heavens, midnight murders no longer struck terror into the inhabitants. The savage passions of the people, growing out of the civilised license unhappily allowed them under British rule, were rapidly coerced, and, instead of Ireland exhibiting an amount of agrarian outrage and atrocity unprecedented in any Christian land, even her worst provinces returned to their usual, though yet serious and lamentable average.<sup>[14]</sup>

[486]

The evil days of conciliation and concession, however, soon returned. When Sir R. Peel assumed the helm for a brief period in 1835, he said, that his chief difficulty was Ireland. It was so in truth—not from the difficulties, great as they were, with which the administration of Ireland was surrounded, but from the monstrous delusions on the subject with which the Whigs, then possessed of the chief influence in the state, had imbued the public mind. So feeble was Government under his successors, from 1835 to 1841—so thoroughly had they drenched the people of Great Britain with the belief that severity of rule was the sole cause of the miseries of Ireland, and that conciliation and concession were their appropriate remedy—that powers the most disastrous, privileges the most undeserved, were bestowed on the Irish people. The very agitators were lauded, flattered, and promoted. O'Connell was offered a seat on the Bench; the whole, or nearly the whole, patronage of the country was surrendered into his hands. The greater part of the police were nominated according to the suggestions of himself or his party; the Orangemen of the north—the bulwark of the throne—were vilified, prosecuted, and discouraged; self-government became the order of the day; municipal reform was conceded; an ignorant, priest-led, half-savage people were intrusted with one of the highest duties of civilised citizens—that of electing their own magistrates. O'Connell, under the new municipal constitution, was elected Lord Mayor of Dublin; a majority, both of the constituency and members of Parliament, ere long became Repealers. The Whig system of governing Ireland, by yielding to its selfish passions and fostering its political vices, received its full development; Whig journals, reviews, and magazines, lauded the policy to the skies, and predicted from its effects the speedy removal of all the evils which had arisen from the Tory system of coercion and repression in the Emerald Isle.

The results were soon apparent. Assured of countenance and support from high quarters—cordially supported by the Popish hierarchy and priesthood—intrenched, beyond the power of assault, in almost all the boroughs—possessed of considerable support or connivance in the rural magistracy—backed, in many parts of the country, by the torch of the incendiary or the firelock of the assassin—wielding at once the delegated powers of Government, the daggers of desperadoes, the enthusiasm of the people, O'Connell proceeded with the step of a conqueror in the work of agitation. The Temperance movement, headed by Father Mathew, came most opportunely to aid its funds, by diverting the vast sums hitherto spent by the people on physical, to support the cause of mental agitation. Seventy temperance bands were soon established to head the temperance clubs; the uniforms of the musicians were so made, that, by being merely turned, they could be converted into the bands of so many regiments; the Rent flourished; whisky-shops were ruined; the grand Intoxicator demolished his inferior competitors; Conciliation Hall boasted of its three thousand pounds a-week! The distilleries were bankrupt. The simple, misled people of England believed that, under the combined influence of political agitation, municipal reform, and suddenly-induced sobriety, Ireland was to be effectually regenerated, and the Celt was at once to leap into the privileges of the Saxon, without going through his seven centuries of painful apprenticeship. Monster meetings became general. Assemblages said to consist of eighty or a hundred thousand, and which really contained twenty or thirty thousand persons, were held in the whole south and west of Ireland. Meanwhile industry was paralysed; capital shunned the agitated shores; labour was diverted from the field to the platform; the earnings of the poor were wrenched from them, by priestly influence and the terrors of purgatory, to aid in the great work

[487]

of dismembering the empire. Instead of attending to their business—instead of working at their lazy-beds or tending their cattle—instead of draining their bogs or reclaiming their wastes, the people were continually kept running about from one monster meeting to another, and taught to believe that they were to look for happiness, not through the labour of their hands, or the sweat of their brows, but in swelling seditious processions, listening to treasonable harangues, and extending the ramifications of a vast and atrocious Ribbon conspiracy throughout Ireland.

Society could not long exist under such a system; but it was long ere the Liberal party saw the error of their ways—when Sir Robert Peel's government, in 1843, at length became convinced that the evil had come to such a height that it could no longer be endured, and that society would be dissolved under its influence. The meeting, accordingly, at Clontarff was proclaimed down; O'Connell was prosecuted, and a conviction obtained. But the Whigs were not long of coming up to the rescue. A majority of three Whig law peers to two Conservative ones—Lords Lyndhurst and Brougham being in the minority—overruled the opinion of the twelve judges of England, and quashed the prosecution. Elated with this victory, agitation resumed its sway in Ireland; but it did so under darker auspices, and with more dangerous ends. Organisation, with a view to insurrection, was now avowedly set on foot; arms were purchased in large quantities; and the Whig Secretary of Ireland had the extreme imprudence to write a letter, which found its way into the public prints, and was soon placarded over Ireland, in which it was stated generally, and without qualification, that every Irishman was entitled to possess and carry arms. Nay, this was made the *cheval de bataille* between the two parties; and when Sir R. Peel was turned out in July 1846, it was on the question of the bill for prohibiting *the possession of arms in Ireland*. The Whigs came into power on the basis of the Irish peasantry being entitled to be armed. It covers, like charity, a multitude of sins in Sir R. Peel, that he left office on the same question.

But the laws of nature are more durable in their operation than the revolutions of statesmen. The effects of twenty years' agitation and disorder in Ireland ere long became apparent. The reign of murder, incendiarism, and terror, brought down an awful retribution on its authors. Agriculture, neglected for the more agreeable and gainful trade of agitation or assassination, had fallen into such neglect, that the land, in many parts of the country, had become incapable of bearing grain crops. Nothing would do but lazy-beds, in which often a wretched crop was raised in the centre of the ridge, on a third of the land, while the remaining two-thirds were under water. The potato famine came, in 1846, upon a country thus prepared for such a visitation—wasted by agitation, disgraced by murder, impoverished by the protracted reign of terror. Its effects are well known. Ireland, wholly incapable, from its infatuated system of self-government, of doing any thing for itself, fell entirely as a burden on England. Great part of Scotland was wasted by a similar calamity, and in regions—the West Highlands and Islands—far more sterile and barren than the south and west of Ireland. But Scotland had not been torn by political passions, nor palsied by repeal agitation. Scotland righted itself. It bore the visitation with patience and resignation. It neither sought nor received aid from England. Not a shilling was advanced by the Exchequer to relieve Scotch suffering. Ten millions were given by the nation to relieve that of Ireland: of this immense sum eight millions were borrowed, and remain a lasting charge on Great Britain. Hundreds of thousands, raised from the suffering and won by the labour of England and Scotland, followed in the same direction. In return, the Irish gave us contumely, defiance, and ingratitude. The *Nation* thundered forth weekly its fiendish vituperation against the people who had saved its countrymen. It was eagerly read by hundreds of thousands who owed their existence to British generosity. The beggar gave place to the bully. Great part of the funds, lavished with misplaced humanity on Irish suffering, was employed in the purchase of arms to destroy their benefactors; and the unparalleled munificence of England to Ireland in 1847, was succeeded by the unparalleled rebellion of Ireland against England in 1848.

[488]

He must be blind indeed who cannot read in this rapid summary the real causes of the long-continued misery and distraction of Ireland. It has arisen in a great degree from English connexion, but in a way which the Irish do not perceive, and which they will be the last to admit. It is all owing to a very simple cause—so simple that philosophers have passed it over as too obvious to explain the phenomena, and party-men have rejected it because it afforded no handle for popular declamation, and gave them no fulcrum whereon to rest the lever which was to remove an opposite party from power. It is not owing to the Roman Catholic religion,—for, if so, how have so many Roman Catholic countries been, and still are, great, and powerful, and happy? It is not owing to the confiscation of the land, for confiscation as great followed the establishment of the Normans in England, and the victories of Robert Bruce in Scotland; and yet, in process of time, the ghastly wound was healed in both these countries, and from the united effort of the Britons, Saxons, and North-men, have arisen the glories and wonders of British civilisation. It is not owing to the exclusion, from 1608 to 1829, of the Roman Catholics from Parliament; for, since they were admitted into it, the distractions of Ireland have gone on constantly increasing, and its pauperism and mendicancy have advanced in an accelerated ratio. It is entirely owing to this,—that *England has given Ireland institutions and political franchises, for the exercise of which it is wholly disqualified by temperament, habit, and political advancement*. We have put edged tools into the hands of children, and we are astonished that they have mangled their limbs. We have emancipated from necessary control the Bedouin or the savage, and we are disappointed he does not exercise his newly-acquired powers with the discretion of an Englishman or an American. We have plunged a youth of sixteen, without control, into the dissipation of London or Paris, and we are surprised he has run riot in excess. Thence it is that all the concessions made to Ireland have instantly and rapidly augmented its political maladies, and that the only intervals of rest, tranquillity, and happiness it has enjoyed for the last two hundred years, have been those in which it has for a brief period been coerced by the wholesome severity

of vigorous government. Thence it is that Whig solicitude, fastening on the grievances of Ireland as its battle-field, and winning for the inhabitants privileges for which they are not fitted, has in every instance so grievously augmented its wretchedness and crimes. This is the true key to Irish history. Viewed in this light, it is perfectly clear, intelligible, and consistent with what has occurred in other parts of the world. Without such guidance, its annals exhibit a chaos of contradictions; and Ireland must be considered as a *casus singularis*—an exception from the principles which elsewhere have ever regulated mankind.

The whole machinery of a free constitution—those institutions under which the Anglo-Saxons have so long flourished on both sides the Atlantic—are utter destruction to the semi-barbarous Celtic race to which they have been extended. Grand juries and petty juries, self-governments, municipalities, county and burgh elections, popular representatives, public meetings, hustings' declarations, platform exaggerations, a licentious press, and all the other attendants on republican or semi-republican institutions, are utterly destructive to the impassioned, priest-ridden, ignorant Celtic tribes in the south and west of Ireland. A paternal despotism is what they require.

[489]

We are far from wishing that despotism to be severe—on the contrary, we would have it beneficent and humane in the highest degree—we would have it give to Ireland blessings tenfold greater than it will ever earn for itself in senseless attempts at self-government. We would commence the work by the grant of sixteen millions of British money, to set on foot the chief arteries and railroads of the country!—that grant which, proposed by the patriotic wisdom of Lord George Bentinck, was defeated by the insane resistance of the Irish members themselves.

[15] We would in every imaginable shape stimulate the industry of Ireland, and aid the efforts of its really patriotic children, to extricate their country from the bottomless gulf into which selfishness, agitation, and the cry for repeal, have plunged it. But we would intrust little of this grant to the distribution of the Irish themselves. We would not again be guilty of the enormous error of committing a magnificent public grant to hands so unfit to direct it, that we know from the highest authority—that of the Lord-lieutenant himself—that great part of the fund was misapplied in private jobbing, and the remainder wasted in making good roads bad ones. We would execute the works by Irish hands, but distribute the funds, and guide the undertakings, by English heads. We would deprive the Irish, till they have shown they are fit to wield its powers, of the whole rights of self-government. We would commence with a rigorous and unflinching administration of justice, executed by courts-martial in cases of insurrection, and by judges without juries in ordinary cases. A powerful police, double its present strength, should give security to witnesses, who, if they desire it, should be provided with an asylum in the colonies at the public expense. "Every thing for the people, and nothing by them," which Napoleon described as the real principle of government at all times, should be applied to Ireland at least during the many years still to run of its national pupillage and minority.

[490]

The truth of these principles has been so signally demonstrated by the events of which Ireland has recently, and we lament to say is still, the theatre, that it has at length forced itself on the mind of the English people. Most fortunately, the Whigs being in power themselves, and having the responsibility and duties of government thrown upon them, have at length come to see the matter in its true light. The cry that all is owing to English misrule, is no longer heard in Great Britain. Its utter falsehood has been demonstrated in language too clear to be misunderstood. Even the Liberal journals, who have shown themselves most earnest in promoting the cause of reform and self-government in Great Britain, have come to see how utterly it is misapplied when attempted in Ireland. Hear the *Times* on this subject, one of the ablest journals which formerly supported the cause of parliamentary and municipal reform, as well in Ireland as in this country.

"The slowly gathering wrath of years has been concentrated to a point. John Bull was—as Jonathan would express it—"properly riled" at the behaviour of his once beloved fondling. He could put up with ingratitude; he could despise insolence; he could treat bravado with contempt. But here was the most wonderful combination of insolence, ingratitude, bravado, and cowardice, that history has recorded. Here were men belching out treason and fire and sword one day, and the next day sneaking between the bulwarks of a cabbage-garden, or through the loopholes of an indictment! For such, and on such, had he been expending, not only money, but care, anxiety, sympathy, and fear. He was fooled in the eyes of the world and his own! The only hope for Ireland is in rest, and a strong Government. Almost every Englishman who has regarded her with solicitude within late years, is convinced that what she and her people require, beyond all things, is discipline. Her gentry require discipline; her middle classes require discipline; her peasantry require discipline. They should altogether be disciplined in a rigid but just system, as the picked Irishmen have been who are distinguished as the best foremen in our factories, and the best non-commissioned officers in our army. Political privileges have been tried and misused; judicial forms have been tried and abused; Saxon institutions have been tried, and found not to harmonise with the Celtic mind. It cannot comprehend them; it does not appreciate them. It arrays liberty against law, and the technicalities of law against its spirit. It wants that moral sense, that instinctive justice and fairness, which have been the soul and the strength of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence. This it must be taught by a strong, an irresistible, and, if need be, a coercive authority. Duty must be impressed on it as a habit, and then it will be inanealed with its sympathies. The greatest boon to Ireland would be the rule of a benevolent autocrat, who would punish all classes and all parties alike for a breach of social and civil duties—the landlords for their cruelty, the tenants for their mendacity,



the priests for their neglect of their most momentous function. This boon Ireland will not get; but we can force upon her that which comes the nearest to it, the suppression of a vain, vapid, selfish, and suicidal agitation. If we do not do it while we may, we shall rue it with bitterness and humiliation hereafter."—*Times*, September 1847.

To the same purpose, it is observed in a late number of the *Economist*, also an able Liberal journal:

"Irish agitation has run its course, and shown its character. It has had 'rope enough' allowed to manifest what are its materials, and what it means—what are the objects it proposes, and of what stuff its leaders are made. It has displayed a mixture of ferocity, levity, and incapacity, which has covered with shame and confusion all its quondam sympathisers and admirers. Demagogism has been stripped naked, and has appeared as what it really is—a low, savage, dishonest enormity—an 'evil that walketh in darkness'—the epidemic malady of Ireland—an enemy which no concessions can conciliate, which no mildness can disarm, and with which, because of its dishonesty, no parley can be held.

"An open rebellion has been crushed at its first outbreak. A number of its leaders and organisers are in prison, and the Government, with a forbearance and adherence to routine ideas which verges on the simple, and almost approaches the sublime, intrusts their punishment to the slow and uncertain processes of the law—to the courage of Irish juries, and the integrity of Irish witnesses. The Government allows rebels who have appealed to arms, and been worsted in the conflict, to retreat behind the shelter of the law. It is content to meet an armament with an indictment; nay, more, it is content to submit this indictment to the judgment of men, half of whom are in the ranks of the rebel army, and the other half in its power. It may have been well to try this hazardous experiment; but the result of it could not long be doubtful. Accordingly, we find that convictions cannot be obtained. Rebels, whose guilt is as clear as the day, are dismissed from the dock because juries will not agree upon a verdict—and are to be kept safe till March 1849, then to be let loose to recommence their work of mischief with all the increased audacity which impunity cannot fail to generate. They have taken arms against the Government, and the Government will have proved impotent to punish them.

[491]

"We are not surprised that Irish juries will not convict Irish rebels. It is too much to expect that they should do so, even when fully convinced of, and indignant at, their guilt. It would be almost too much to ask from Englishmen. Government have a right to call upon jurors to do their duty, under ordinary circumstances and in ordinary times. In like manner, Government has a right to call upon all citizens to come forward, and act as special constables, in all cases of civil commotion. But it has no right to send them forth, unexercised and unarmed, to encounter an organised and disciplined force, provided with musket and artillery: that is the business of regular troops. In like manner, Government has no right to expect jurors to act at the hazard of their lives and property. The law never contemplated that serving on a jury should be an office of danger. When it becomes such, other agencies must be brought into operation.

"It will not suffice to the Government to have acted with such skill and spirit as to have rendered abortive a formidable and organised rebellion. It must *crush* the rebellious spirit and the rebellious power. This can never be done by the means of juries. Punishment, to be effectual, must fall with unerring certainty on every one concerned in the crime. They must be made to feel that no legal chicanery, no illegitimate sympathy, can avail to save them. The British nation, we are sure, will never endure that men who have been guilty of such crimes as the Irish felons should escape punishment, and be again let loose on society, to mock and gibe at the impotence of power. Any termination of the crisis would be preferable to one so fatal and disgraceful."—*Economist*, Sept. 12, 1848.

These articles, emanating from such sources, induce us to hope that the long-protracted distractions of Ireland are about to be brought to a close; and that, after having been for above half a century the battle-field of English faction, or cursed with Liberal English sympathy, and its inevitable offspring, Irish agitation and mendacity—the real secret of its sufferings has been brought to light; and that, by being governed in a manner suitable to its character and circumstances, it will at length take its place among the really civilised nations of the world, and become fit for the exercise of those privileges which, prematurely conceded, have proved its ruin.

One circumstance induces the hope that this anticipation maybe realised, and that is, the highly honourable part which the Irish enrolled in the police have taken in the late disturbances; the fidelity of all the Irish in the Queen's service to their colours; and the general pacific conduct which has, with a few exceptions, been observed by the numerous Hibernians settled in Great Britain during the late disturbances. The conduct of the Irish police, in particular, has been in all respects admirable; and it is net going too far to assert, that to their zeal, activity, and gallantry, the almost bloodless suppression of the insurrection is mainly to be ascribed. The British army does not boast a more courageous body of men than the Irishmen in its ranks; and it is well known that, after a time, they form the best officers of a superior kind for all the police establishments in the kingdom. Although the Irish in our great towns are often a very great burden, especially when they first come over, from the vast number of them who are in a state of

mendicity, and cannot at first get into any regular employment, yet when they do obtain it, they prove hardworking and industrious, and do not exhibit a greater proportion of crime than the native British with whom they are surrounded. The Irish quickness need be told to none who have witnessed the running fire of repartee they keep up from the fields with travellers, how rapid soever, on the road; their genius is known to all who are familiar with the works of Swift and Goldsmith, of Burke and Berkeley. Of one thing only at present *they are incapable, and that is, self-government*. One curse, and one curse only, has hitherto blasted all their efforts at improvement, and that is, the abuse of freedom. One thing, and one thing only, is required to set them right, and that is, the strong rule suited to national pupilage. One thing, and one thing only, is required to complete their ruin, and that is, repeal and independence. An infallible test will tell us when they have become prepared for self-government, and that is, when they have ceased to hate the Saxon—when they adopt his industry, imitate his habits, and emulate his virtues.

[492]

We have spoken of the French and the Irish, and contrasted, not without some degree of pride, their present miserable and distracted state with the steady and pacific condition of Great Britain, during a convulsion which has shaken the civilised world to its foundation. But let it not be supposed that France and Ireland alone have grievances which require redress, erroneous policy which stands in need of rectification. England has its full share of suffering, and more than its deserved share of absurd and pernicious legislation. But it is the glory of this country that we can rectify these evils by the force of argument steadily applied, and facts sedulously brought forward, without invoking the destructive aid of popular passions or urban revolutions. We want neither Red Republicans nor Tipperary Boys to fight our battles; we neither desire to be intrenched behind Parisian barricades nor Irish non-convicting juries; we neither want the aid of Chartist clubs, with their arsenals of rifles, nor Anti-corn-law Leagues, with their coffers of gold. We appeal to the common sense and experienced suffering of our countrymen—to the intellect and sense of justice of our legislators; and we have not a doubt of ultimate success in the greatest social conflict in which British industry has ever been engaged.

We need not say that we allude to the CURRENCY—that question of questions, in comparison of which all others sink into insignificance; which is of more importance, even, than an adequate supply of food for the nation; and without the proper understanding of which all attempts to assuage misery or produce prosperity, to avert disaster or induce happiness, to maintain the national credit or uphold the national independence, must ere long prove nugatory. We say, and say advisedly, that this question is of far more importance than the raising of food for the nation; for if their industry is adequately remunerated, and commercial catastrophes are averted from the realm, the people will find food for themselves either in this or foreign states. Experience has taught us that we can import *twelve millions* of grain, a full fifth of the national subsistence, in a single year. But if the currency is not put upon a proper footing, the *means of purchasing this grain are taken from the people*—their industry is blasted, their labour meets with no reward—and the most numerous and important class in the community come to present the deplorable spectacle of industrious worth perishing of hunger, or worn out by suffering, in the midst of accumulated stores of home-grown or foreign subsistence.

The two grand evils of the present monetary system are, that the currency provided for the nation is *inadequate* in point of amount, and *fluctuating* in point of stability.

That it is inadequate in point of amount is easily proved. In the undermentioned years, the aggregate of notes in circulation in England and Wales, without Scotland and Ireland, was as follows<sup>[16]</sup>.—

	Bank of England and Provincial Banks.	Population, England and Wales.
1814,	£47,501,000	13,200,000
1815,	46,272,650	13,420,000
1816,	42,109,620	13,640,000
1817,	43,291,901	13,860,000
1818,	48,278,070	14,100,000

[493]

Including the Scotch and Irish notes, at that period about £12,000,000, the notes in circulation were about £60,000,000, and the inhabitants of Great Britain 14,000,000; of the two islands about 19,000,000—or about £3, 4s. a head.

In the year 1848, thirty years afterwards, when the population of the empire had risen to 29,000,000, the exports had tripled, and the imports and shipping had on an average more than doubled, the supply of paper issued to the nation stood thus:—

NOTES.

	Aug.14, 1847.	Aug.12, 1848.	Increase.	Decrease.	Population.
Bank of England,	£18,784,890	£18,710,728	—	£74,162	England and Wales. 19,500,000
Private Banks,	4,258,380	3,520,990	—	737,390	
Joint Stock Banks,	2,991,351	2,479,951	—	511,400	

Total in England,	26,034,621	24,711,669	—	1,322,952	Great Britain and Ireland.
... Scotland,	3,455,651	3,035,903	—	419,748	
... Ireland,	5,097,215	4,313,304	—	783,911	
United Kingdom,	34,587,487	32,060,876	—	2,526,611	

Thus showing a decrease of £1,322,952 in the circulation of notes in England, and a decrease of £2,526,611 in the circulation of the United Kingdom, when compared with the corresponding period last year.<sup>[17]</sup>—*Times*, Aug. 29, 1848.

Thus, in the last thirty years, the population of Great Britain and Ireland has *increased* from 19,000,000 to 29,500,000; while its currency in paper has *decreased* from £60,000,000 to £32,000,000. Above fifty per cent has been added to the people, and above a hundred per cent to their transactions, and the currency by which they are to be carried on has been contracted fifty per cent. Thirty years ago, the paper currency was £3, 5s. a head; now it is not above £1, 5s. a head! And our statesmen express surprise at the distress which prevails, and the extreme difficulty experienced in collecting the revenue! It is no wonder, in such a state of matters, that it is now more difficult to collect £52,000,000 from 29,000,000 of people, than in 1814 it was to collect £72,000,000 from 18,000,000.

The circulation, it is particularly to be observed, is *decreasing* every year. It was, in August 1848, no less than £2,500,000 *less* than it was in August 1847, though that was the August *between* the crisis of April and the crisis of October of that year. And this prodigious and progressively increasing contraction of the currency, and consequent drying up of credit and blasting of industry, is taking place at the precise time when the very legislators who have produced it have landed the nation in the expenditure, in three years, of £150,000,000 on domestic railways, independent of a vast and increasing import trade, which is constantly draining more and more of our metallic resources out of the country! Need it be wondered at that money is so tight, and that railway stock in particular exhibits, week after week, a progressive and most alarming decline.

[494]

But, say the bullionists, if we have taken away one-half of your paper, we have given you double the former command of sovereigns; and gold is far better than paper, because it is of universal and permanent value. There can be no doubt that the gold and silver coinage at the Mint has been very much augmented since paper was so much withdrawn; and the amount in circulation now probably varies in ordinary times from £40,000,000 to £45,000,000. There can be as little doubt that the circulation, on its present basis, is capable of fostering and permitting the most unlimited amount of speculations; for absurd adventures never were so rife in the history of England, not even in the days of the South Sea Company, as in 1845, the year which immediately followed Sir R. Peel's new currency measures, by which these dangers were to be for ever guarded against. It is no wonder it was so; for the bill of 1844 aggravates speculation as much in periods of prosperity, as it augments distress and pinches credit in times of adversity. By compelling the Bank of England, and all other banks, to hold constantly in their coffers a vast amount of treasure, which must be issued at a fixed price, it leaves them no resource for defraying its charges but pushing business, and getting out their notes to the uttermost. That was the real secret of the lowering of the Bank of England's discounts to 3 and 2-1/2 per cent in 1845, and of the enormous gambling speculations of that year, from the effects of which the nation is still so severely suffering.

But as gold is made, under the new system, the basis of the circulation beyond the £32,000,000 allowed to be issued in the United Kingdom on securities, what provision does it make for keeping the gold thus constituted the *sole basis of two-thirds of the currency within the country*? Not only is no such provision made, but *every imaginable facility is given for its exportation*. Under the free-trade system, our imports are constantly increasing in a most extraordinary ratio, and our exports constantly diminishing. Since 1844, our imports have *swelled* from £75,000,000 to £90,000,000, while our exports have *decreased* from £60,000,000 to £58,000,000, of which only £51,000,000 are British and Irish exports and manufactures.<sup>[18]</sup> How is the balance paid, or to be paid? *In cash*: and that is the preparation which our legislators have made for keeping the gold, the life-blood of industry and the basis of two-thirds of the circulation, in the country. They have established a system of trade which, by inducing a large and constant importation of food, for which scarcely any thing but gold will be taken, induces a *constant tendency of the precious metals outwards*. With the right hand they render the currency and credit beyond £32,000,000 entirely dependent on keeping the gold in the country, and with the left hand *they send it headlong out of the country to buy grain*. No less than £33,000,000 were sent out in this way to buy grain in fifteen months during and immediately preceding the year 1847. They do this at the very time when, under bills which themselves have passed, and the railways which themselves have encouraged, £150,000,000 was in the next three years to be expended on the extra work of railways! Is it surprising that, under such a system, half the wealth of our manufacturing towns has disappeared in two years; that distress to an unheard-of extent prevails every where; and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been obliged to borrow £10,000,000, in the last and present session of Parliament, during general peace?

[495]

Let it not be supposed this evil has passed away. It is in full vigour at the present moment. It will never pass away as long as *free trade and a fettered currency* coexist in this country. The disastrous fact has been revealed by the publication of the Board of Trade returns, that while, during the first six months of this year, our imports have undergone little diminution, our exports have sunk £4,000,000 below the corresponding months in last year. In May alone, the decrease

was £1,122,000; in April, £1,467,000.<sup>[19]</sup> Beyond all doubt our exports, this year, of British produce and manufactures, will sink to £45,000,000, while our imports will reach at least £85,000,000! How is the balance paid? IN SPECIE! And still the monetary laws remain the same, and for every five sovereigns above £32,000,000 lent out, a note must be drawn in! It may be doubted whether a system so utterly absurd and ruinous ever was established in any nation, or persevered in with such obstinacy after its pernicious effects had been ascertained by experience.

The manner in which these disastrous effects resulted, necessarily and immediately, from the combined operation of the bills of 1819 and 1844, is thus clearly and justly stated by Mr Salt, in his late admirable letter to Sir R. Peel on the subject.

"The potato crop failed, and an importation of food became necessary; the food was imported at a cost not exceeding one half per cent on the national wealth. It might have been paid for in goods or in gold, and the limit of the loss would have been the amount paid—a sum too insignificant, compared to the national resources, to have been perceptible—and the national industry could have replaced it in a few weeks.

[496]

"But the bill of 1819 had made gold the basis of our whole system; and, therefore, when the gold was exported to pay for the food, the whole system was broken up; and the bill provides that this calamity shall in every case be added to that of a bad harvest; that the abstraction of an infinitesimal part of our money shall destroy our whole monetary system; that the purchase of a small quantity of food shall cause an immense quantity of starvation, by destroying the means of distributing the food, and employing labour. If this were the only evil of the bill, its existence ought not to be tolerated an hour.

"Instead of placing the national credit and solvency on the broad and indestructible basis of the national industry and wealth, you have placed all the great national interest on gold, the narrowest and most shifting, and therefore the most unfit, basis it was possible to choose. You could not have done worse.

"The gold being in quantity perfectly unequal to effect the exchanges needful for the existence of society, an immense and disproportioned superstructure of paper money and credit became a compulsory result, and a certain cause of perpetually recurring ruin.

"In framing the bill of 1819 you do not appear to have had a suspicion of this consequence; but in 1844, after an interval of a quarter of a century, this much seems to have dawned obscurely in your mind; but, alas! what was your remedy?—enlarging and securing the too narrow and shifting basis? Not at all; you crippled and limited the superstructure. You left us subject to the whole of your original error, and provided a new one!

"The bill of 1844 provides that, in proportion as the gold money shall disappear, the paper money shall disappear also! Out of the money thus doubly reduced, the unhappy people are compelled to pay unreduced taxes; and out of the inadequate remnant to discharge unreduced debts, and to provide for the unreduced necessities of their respective stations. So the leaven of the law works its way through all society. The payments cannot be made out of these reduced means, the loss of the credit follows the loss of the money; the means of exchange, employment, and consumption are destroyed, and the world looks with amazement on the consummation of your work—the wealthiest nation in the world withering up under the blight of a universal insolvency; an abundance of all things beyond compute, and a misery and want beyond relief.

[497]

"The sole aim of your bill has been to convert paper money into gold. I have shown how signally you have failed in this one object, always excepting your special claim of converting £48,000,000 of paper money into £15,000,000 of gold, for which mutation I suspect few will thank you. In all other respects, the whimsicality of your fate has been to establish a universal inconvertibility. Labour cannot be converted into wages, East India estates, West India estates, railway shares, sugar, rice, cotton goods, &c.; in short, all things are inconvertible except gold. There has been nothing like it since the days of Midas.

"The facts, sir, are of your creation, not of mine. I cannot alter or disguise them. You have had confided to your administration, by our illustrious sovereign, this most powerful state, of almost unlimited extent and fertility—a people unrivalled in their knowledge, caution, skill, and energy, possessed of unlimited means of creating wealth, and out of all these elements of human happiness your measures have produced a chaos of ruin, misery, and discontent. You can scarcely place your finger on the map, and mark a spot in this vast empire where all the elements of prosperity do not exist abundantly; you cannot point out one where you have not produced results of ruin. Every resource is paralysed, every interest deranged; the very empire is threatened with dissolution. The Canadas, the West Indies, and Ireland, are threatening secession, and England has to be garrisoned against its people as against a hostile force; the very loyalty of English hearts is beginning to turn into disaffection. Review once more these vast resources, and these wretched results, and I trust you will not make the fatal

opinion of your life the only one to which you will persist in adhering."

This is language at once fearless, but measured—cutting, but respectful, which, on such an emergency, befits a British statesman. There is no appeal to popular passions, no ascribing of unworthy motives, no attempt to evade inquiry by irony; facts, known undeniable facts, are alone appealed to. Inferences, clear, logical, convincing, are alone drawn. If such language was more frequent, *especially in the House of Commons*, the plague would soon be stayed, and its former prosperity would again revisit the British Empire.

In opposition to these damning facts, the whole tactics of the bullionists consist in recurring to antiquated and childish terrors. They call out "Assignats, assignats, assignats!"—they seek to alarm every holder of money by the dread of its depreciation. They affect to treat the doctrine of keeping a fair proportion between population, engagements, and currency, as a mere chimera. In the midst of the deluge, they raise the cry of fire; when wasting of famine, they hold out to us the terrors of repletion; when sinking from atrophy on the way-side, they strive to terrify us by the dangers of apoplexy. The answer to all this tissue of affectation and absurdity is so evident, that we are almost ashamed to state it. We all know the dangers of assignats; we know that they are ruinous when issued to any great extent. So also we know the dangers of apoplexy and intoxication; but we are not on that account reconciled to a regimen of famine and starvation. We know that some of the rich die of repletion, but we know that many more of the poor die of want and wretchedness. We do not want to be deluged with inconvertible paper, which has been truly described as "strength in the outset, but weakness in the end;" but neither do we desire to be starved by the periodical abstraction of that most evanescent of earthly things, a gold circulation. Having the means, from our own immense accumulated wealth, of enjoying that first of social blessings, an *adequate, steady, and safe currency*, we do not wish to be any longer deprived of it by the prejudices of theorists, the selfishness of capitalists, or the obstinacy of statesmen. Half our wealth, engaged in trade and manufactures, has already disappeared, under this system, in two years; we have no disposition to lose the remaining half. [498]

The duty on wheat now is only five shillings a quarter; in February next it will fall to one shilling a quarter, and remain fixed at that amount. The importation of grain, which was felt as so dreadful a drain upon our metallic resources in 1847, may, under that system, be considered as permanent. *We shall be always in the condition in which the nation is when three weeks' rain has fallen in August.* Let merchants, manufacturers, holders of funded property, of railway stock, of bank stock, reflect on that circumstance, and consider what fate awaits them if the present system remains unchanged. They know that three days' rain in August lowers the public funds one, and all railway stock ten per cent. Let them reflect on their fate if, by human folly, *an effect equal to that of three weeks' continuous fall of rain takes place every year.* Let them observe what frightful oscillations in the price of commodities follow the establishing by law a fixed price for gold. Let them ponder on the consequences of a system which sends twelve or fifteen millions of sovereigns out of the country *annually* to buy grain, and *contracts* the paper remaining in it at the same time in the same proportion. Let them observe the effect of such a system, coinciding with a vast expenditure on domestic railways. And let them consider whether all these dreadful evils, and the periodical devastation of the country by absurd speculation and succeeding ruin, would not be effectually guarded against, and the perils of an over-issue of paper also prevented, by the simple expedient of treating gold and silver, the most easily transported and evanescent of earthly things, like any other commodity, and making paper always payable *in them*, but *at the price they bear at the moment of presentment.* That would establish a *mixed* circulation of the precious metals and paper, mutually convertible, and allow an *increased* issue of the latter to obviate all the evils flowing from the periodical abstractions of the former. To establish the circulation on a gold basis *alone*, in a great commercial state, is the same error as to put the food of the people in a populous community on one root or species of grain. Ireland has shown us, in the two last years, what is the consequence of the one—famine and rebellion; England, of the other—bankruptcy and Chartism.

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## BYRON'S ADDRESS TO THE OCEAN.

[499]

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage undertakes an Idea—that of a proud spirit, born in a castle, self-driven from the bosom of home, seeking refuge, solace, renovation, from Nature, of sensibilities worn out with enjoyment. Or, he brings into play a neglected, unused sensibility—the joy of the Sublime and the Beautiful. We receive, as given, a mind gifted with extraordinary powers of will and understanding—by the favour of birth, nursed upon the heights of society—conversant with pleasure and passion; and, bearing all this constantly in mind, we must read the poem. From it large passages might be selected, in which the scorn, despite, bitterness that elsewhere break in, disfiguring beauty and sublimity, are silent; and the passion of divine beholding stands out alone. Is this the character—or what is the character, of the celebrated concluding Address to the Ocean? Few things in modern poetry have been more universally—more indiscriminately admired; be it ours now to recite with you the famous Stanzas—and here, sitting beneath the sea-fronting porch of our Marine Villa, indulge in a confabulatory critique.

The Wanderings are at an end. The real and the imaginary pilgrim, standing together upon Mount Albano, look out upon the blue Mediterranean. He has generously, honourably, magnanimously, thrown upon the ground the checkered mantle of scorn, anger, disappointment,

sorrow, and ennui, which had wrapped in disguise his fair stature and features; and he stands a restored, or at least an escaped man, gazing with eye and soul upon the beautiful and majestic sea rolling in its joy beneath his feet. He looks; and he will deliver himself up, as Nature's lone enthusiast, to the delicious, deep, dread, exulting, holy passion of—vary the word as he varies it—The Ocean.

Let us chant—with broken, though haply not unmusical voice—what may be called—the Hymn. That is a high term—let us not anticipate that it has been misapplied. Childe Harold, or Lord Byron—for it here little matters whether a grace of pleased fancy resolve the Two into One, or show the Two side by side, noble forms in brotherly reflection—here is at last the powerful but self-encumbered Spirit with whom we have journeyed so long in sunlight and in storm—delighted, sympathising, wondering at least, or confounded and angry when he will not let us wonder—here He is at last himself, in unencumbered strength, setting like the sun upon the sea he gazes on—the clouds broken through, dispersed, and vanquished, even if a half-tinge of melancholy remembrance hang in the atmosphere, radiant in majestic farewell.

"But I forget.—My pilgrim's shrine is won,  
And he and I must part—so let it be,—  
His task and mine alike are nearly done;  
Yet once more let us look upon the sea;  
The midland ocean breaks on him and me,  
And from the Alban Mount we now behold  
Our friend of youth, that Ocean, which when we  
Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold  
Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark Euxine roll'd

"Upon the blue Symplegades: long years—  
Long, though not very many, since have done  
Their work on both; some suffering and some tears  
Have left us nearly where we had begun:  
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run,  
We have had our reward—and it is here;  
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,  
And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear  
As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

"Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place  
With one fair Spirit for my minister,  
That I might all forget the human race,  
And, hating no one, love but only her!  
Ye Elements!—in whose ennobling stir  
I feel myself exalted—can ye not  
Accord me such a being? Do I err  
In deeming such inhabit many a spot?  
Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,  
There is society, where none intrudes,  
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:  
I love not Man the less, I but Nature more,  
From these our interviews, in which I steal  
From all I may be, or have been before,  
To mingle with the Universe, and feel  
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

"Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean!—roll!  
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;  
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control  
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain  
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

"His steps are not upon thy paths—thy fields  
Are not a spoil for him—thou dost arise,  
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields  
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,  
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,  
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray  
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies  
His petty hope in some near port or bay,  
And dashest him again to earth;—there let him lay.

"The armaments which thunderstrike the walls  
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,  
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,  
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make  
Their clay creator the vain title take  
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;  
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,  
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar  
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

"Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—  
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?  
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,  
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey  
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay  
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou,  
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—  
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—  
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

[501]

"Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form  
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,  
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,  
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—  
The image of Eternity—the throne  
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime  
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone  
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

"And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy  
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me  
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea  
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,  
For I was as it were a child of thee,  
And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here."

These Stanzas may be separated from the Poem—the feeling of readers innumerable so separates them—as a HYMN TO THE OCEAN. The passage, a great effort of a great poet, intends a final putting forth of all his power—it has been acknowledged and renowned as such; and, if it has failed, a critique showing this, and showing the ground of the failure, maybe useful to you, inexperienced yet in the criticism of poetry, though all alive to its charm.

We observe you delight in the first Four Stanzas—ay, you recite them over again after us—and the voice of youth, tremulous in emotion, is pathetic to the Old Man. He will not seek, by what might seem to you, thus moved, hypercritical objections to some of the words; but, pleased with your pleasure, he is willing to allow you to believe the stanzas entirely good in expression as in thought. For here the morbid disrelish of the sated palate is cleansed away. The obscuring cloud of the overwhelmed heart is dispersed. The joy of the wilderness here claimed is not necessarily more or other than that of every powerful and imaginative spirit, which experiences that solitude is, in simple truth, by a steadfast law of our nature, the condition under which our soul is able to wed itself in impassioned communion effectually to the glorious Universe—where, too, the subjugating footsteps of man, impairing the pure domain of free nature, are not. "Pathless," "lonely,"—of themselves bespeak neither satiety nor hostility: there is "society by the deep sea, and music in its roar!" all quite right. Here is a heart, in its thirst for sympathy, peopling the desert with sympathisers. Here is expansion of the heart; and the spirit that rejoices in the consciousness of life roused into creative activity. For an ear untuned and untuning, here is one that listens out harmonies which you, languid or inept, might not discern. "Pleasure!" "rapture!" "society!" "music!"—a chain of genialities!

"I love not man the less, but nature more,  
From these our interviews."

What will you require of kindest humanity from any poet, from any lover of nature, that is not here? The savage grandeur of earth and sea have their peril—the fleeing of human homes and haunts—the voluptuous banishment self-imposed—the caressing of dear fancies in secret invisible recesses inviolable—these tend all to engendering and nurturing an excessive self-delight akin to an usurping self-love; and the very sublimities of that wonderful intercourse, in which, upon the one part, stands the feeble dwarf Man, in his hour-lived weakness, and upon the other, as if Infinitude itself putting on cognisable forms, the imperishable Hills and the unchangeable Sea—that intercourse in which he, the pigmy, conscious of the divinity within him, feels himself the greater—he infinite, immortal, and these finite and vanishing—the power and exultation of that intercourse may well engender and nourish Pride. Self-love and Pride, tempting, deceiving,

[502]

bewildering, devouring demons of the inhuman Waste! But the self-reproved, repentant pilgrim has well understood these dangers. He knows that the delight of woods and waterfalls, of stars and storms, may alienate man from his fellow-man. He has guarded himself by some wise temperance. He has found here his golden mean. From thus conversing, he "loves not man the less, but nature more." Is this a young Wordsworth, beginning, in the school of nature, to learn the wisdom of humanity?

At all events, here is, for the occasion, the most express and earnest disclaimer of the mood of misanthropy; and we rejoice to hear the Pilgrim speak of interviews

"in which I steal  
From all I may be, or have been before."

From all! that is, from all the ungracious, the harsh, the unkind, the sore, the embittered, the angry, the miserable! Not, surely, from all the amiable and all the gladsome; and especially not from the whole personality and identity of his character. The picture he had given us of himself was that of a powerful mind, self-set at war with its kind, yet within an exasperated hate ever and anon unfolding undestroyed, sometimes hardly vitiated, some portion of its original ingenerate faculty of love. Here we behold him now as God made him, and no longer possessed by a demon. Change his rhyme into our prose—and you do not dislike our prose—and in sober and sincere sadness the Childe thus speaks—"I steal, under the power of these delicious, renovating, gladdening, hallowing influences, out of myself—out of that evil thing which man had made me—rather, alas! which I had made myself into;—and if long wandering, disuse of humanity, separation from the scene of my wrongs, and this auspicious dominion of inviolate nature have in these past years already amended me—if I have been worse than I am—even that worse and that worst these 'interviews' obliterate and extinguish." The soured milk of human kindness is again sweetened. Or, if that be too much to say, at least man, with all the dissonance that hangs by his name and recollections, is forgotten, suspended—for the time absolutely lost. If this be not the meaning, what is?

"And feel  
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal,"

is indeed powerless writing, and the stanza merited a better close. But the whole stanza protests, proclaims the glad healing power of the natural world over him. He has described this as well as he could, and sums up with saying that by him it is indescribable. "I derive from these communions a rapturous transformation—so great, so wondrous, that my ignorant skill of words is utterly unable to render it; but, at the same time, so self-powerful, that, in despite of this my concealing inability, tones of it will outbreak, make themselves heard, felt, and understood." Thus Byron sets the tune of his Address to the Ocean. The first Four Stanzas, therefore, be their poetry more or less, required, upon this account, enucleation; and further, dear Neophyte, inasmuch as they are particularly humane, they should take their effectual place among evidences which separate him personally from some of his poetical Timons.

You—dear Neophyte—have called the Four Stanzas beautiful,—that is enough for us,—and they recall to your heart—you say—the kindred lines of Coleridge—which we call "beautiful exceedingly."—

"With other ministrations thou! O Nature!  
Healest thy wandering and distemper'd child.  
Thou pourest on him thy soft influences,  
Thy sunny hues, fair forms, and breathing sweets,  
Thy melodies of woods, and winds, and waters,  
Till he relent, and can no more endure  
To be a jarring and a dissonant thing  
Amid this general dance and minstrelsy;  
But, bursting into tears, wins back his way,  
His angry spirit heal'd and harmonised  
By the benignant touch of love and beauty."

Thus—we repeat our words—"Byron sets the tune of his Address to the Ocean."

The poem, then, is an Address to the Ocean by a Lover of the Ocean. It seems reasonable, then, to ask, first, what is it natural to expect that such a poem should be? And if it proves to be something remarkably different, then to inquire whether any particular circumstance or condition has intervened which justifies the poet in following an unexpected course.

[503]

Now, for natural expectation, the theme is one of eulogy; and one may say, therefore, that praise customarily expresses itself in one or other of two principal ways—namely, directly or indirectly. We praise directly, for instance, when, moved by the contemplation of some great or interesting subject, we single forth, one after another, the qualities of its character, or the facts in its history, which have provoked our love, our admiration, our joy, our gratitude. Upon the other hand, we praise indirectly when we extol the subject of our eulogy by dispraising another foreign subject, which we oppose to the chosen one in the way of relief or foil; whether we establish mere comparison of contrast between the two, or cite an opposition of actual enmity between them—as if, in hymning Apollo, we should insist upon the horror and fury, the earth-pollution and the earth-affliction, of the monster Python.



A moment of reflection satisfies us that both ways are alike natural—both, with occasion, alike unavoidable; but it is impossible to help equally seeing that these two ways of eulogy differ materially from each other in two respects,—the temper of inspiration which dictates, animates, and supports the one or other manner of attributing renown, and the motive justifying the one eulogistic procedure or the other. The temper of direct praise is always wholly genial; that of lauding by illaudation has in it perforce an ungenial element. The motive to direct praise eternally subsists and is there, as long as the subject eulogised subsists and is there. This, then, is the ordinary method. If any thing has just happened that provokes the indirect way—as if Python has just been vanquished—then good and well; or if the poet, by some personal haunting sorrow, or by an unvanquished idiosyncrasy, must arrive at pleasure through pain, so be it: but this method is clearly extraordinary and exceptive to the rule; and the reason for using it must be prominent, definite, and flashing in all men's eyes. The other method never can require justifying—this does always; and if it fail conspicuously in aught, the very opposite effect to that intended is produced, and the eulogy is no laud. You may say, indeed, and say truly, that all eulogy shall be mixed—that naturally and necessarily every subject has its title to favour by sympathy and by antipathy. Which of the two shall predominate? We need scarcely answer that question. The mood of mind in which the Poet sings must be genial and benign, though he may have to deal in fierce invective.

Read then, dearest Neophyte, the first Four Stanzas—recite them again, for you have them by heart. It is not easy to imagine any thing more completely at variance with all that preamble for the hymn than the hymn itself. The poet, imbued, as we have seen, with the love of nature and of man, will breathe on both his benediction. He will glorify the Sea. And how does he attain the transported and affectionate contemplation of the abyss of waters? By the opposition of man's impotence to the might of the sea; by the opposition of the land subjected to man, mixed up in his destinies, and changeable with him, to the ocean free from all change, excepting that of its own moods, the free play of its own gigantic will. For though, philosophically speaking, the immense mass of waters is in itself inert and powerless; lifted into tides by the sun and moon; lifted into storm by raging and invisible winds; yet the poet, lawfully, and by a compulsion which lies alike upon all our minds, apprehends in what is involuntary, self-willed motion, wild changeable moods, a pleasure of rolling—sun, moon, and winds, being for the moment left utterly out of thought; and it may be that Byron here does this well. But, what is the worth, what the meaning of the first Four Stanzas—in which you have delighted, because in them the Bard you love had deliberately and passionately rejected all hostile regard of man, and reclaimed for himself his place among the brotherhood—when we see that hostile regard in all its bitterness, instantaneously return and become the predominating characteristic of the whole wrathful and scornful song?

[504]

Was his previous confession of faith utterly false and hollow? If sincere and substantial, what in a moment shattered it?

"Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean—roll!  
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee."

This is good in temper so far—nor in aught inconsistent with the spirit pervading the introductory Stanzas; if the ten thousand fleets are presented for the magnificence of the picture. But are they? No, already for spleen. The full verse is

"Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee—*in vain!*"

In vain! for what end in vain? Why for one that never was contemplated by them, nor by any rational being—that of leaving the bosom of the deep permanently furrowed by their wakes! This is a minuteness of thinking we shudder to put down—but mend the matter if you can. Try to imagine something great, if not intelligible—that the attempt which has failed was, in some titanic and mysterious way, to have established a dominion of man over the sea, to have yoked it like the earth under his hand, ploughed it, set vines and sown corn fields, and built up towered cities. But "that thought is unstable, and deserts us quite." "In vain," whatever it means, or if it means nothing—(and will no one tell us what it means?)—still proposes the sea in conflict with an adversary, and does not contemplate it for its own pure great self. The whole Hymn is founded on contrast, and therefore of indirect inspiration. To aggrandise the sea, Byron knows of no other way than to disparage the earth; and there is equally a want of truth, and of imagination and passion. If he had the capacity of worthily praising nature, if he had the genuine love and admiration for her beauty and greatness which he proudly claims, he has not shown this here; and we are induced to think that there were in his mind, faculties, intellectual and moral, stronger there than the poetical, and upon which the poetical faculty needed to stay itself—from which it needed to borrow a factitious energy—say wit and scorn, the faculties of the satirist.

"In vain," indeed! Imagination beholds ten thousand fleets sweeping over the ocean—or a hundred of them, or one—and man's exulting spirit feels that it was not in vain. The purposes for which fleets do sail—to carry commerce, to carry war, to carry colonies, to carry civilisation, to bring home knowledge, have triumphantly prospered; and, of course, are not in the meaning of the poet, although properly they alone are in the meaning of the word. But, perversely enough, the imagination of the reader accepts for an instant the pomp of the representation—"ten thousand fleets sweep over thee"—for good, as an adjunct of the ocean's magnificence; and in the confusion of thought and feeling which characterises the passage, this verse of mockery tells to the total resulting impression, in effect, like a verse of passion. The reverence which is not

intended—not the contempt which is intended—for these majestic human creations, is acknowledged at last. The poet, with his living fraternal shadow beside him, is sitting upon the Italian promontory—love and wonder look through his eyes upon that sea rolling under that sky—and he speaks accordingly,—

"Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean—roll!"

Roll thy gentle tides on, sweet Mediterranean Sea! to beat in murmurs at my weary feet! Roll, in thine own unconfined spaces, Atlantic Ocean! with placid swell or with mounting billows, from pole to pole! Roll, circumambient World-Ocean! embracing in thy liquid arms our largest continents as thine islands, and immantling our whole globe. A fair, gentle, sedate beginning; and at the very next step—war to the knife!

The confused, unstudied impression left upon you is that of a powerful mind moving in the majesty of its power. But it is not moving in the majesty of power, after one step taken straight forwards, at the second to wheel sharply round and march off in the opposite direction. How otherwise, Homer, Pindar, Milton! They walk as kings, heroes, bards, archangels. The first canon of great, impassioned, profound writing—that the soul, filled with its theme, and with affection fitted for its theme, moves on slowly or impetuously—with a glide, or with a rush, or with a bound—but that it ever moves consistently with itself, pouring out its affection, and, in pouring it out, displaying its theme, and so evolving its work from itself in unity—is here sinned against by movements owning no law but mere caprice.

[505]

How, then, is the glorification of his subject sought here to be attained by Byron? By means of another subject shown us in hostility, and quelled. Man, in his weakness, is put in contrast and in conflict with ocean's omnipotence. Man sends out his fleets, apparently for the purpose of ruining the ocean. He cannot: he can ruin the land; but on the land's edge his deadly dominion is at an end. There the reign of a mightier and more dreadful Ruler, a greater Destroyer, a wilder Anarch, begins. The sea itself rises, wrecks the timbered vessels, drowns the crews—or at least those who fall overboard—tosses the mariner to the skies and on to shore, and swallows up fleets of war.

Such is the first movement or strain. What is the amount relatively to the purport of the poem? Why, that the first point of glorification chosen, the first utterance of enthusiastic love and admiration from the softened heart and elevated soul of a poet, who has just told us that there is such music in its roar, that by the deep sea he loves not man the less, but nature more, is, "All hail, O wrathful, dire, almighty, and remorseless destroyer!"—surely a strange ebullition of tenderness—an amatory sigh like a lion's roar—something in Polyphemus' vein—wooing with a vengeance. All this, mark ye, dear neophyte, following straight upon a proclamation of peace with all mankind—upon an Invocation to Nature for inward peace!

Grant for a moment that Man is properly to be viewed as Earth's ravager, not its cultivator, and that "his control stops with the shore," is good English in verse for "his power of desolating, or his range of desolation, is bounded by the sea-shore;" grant for a moment that it is a lawful and just practical contemplation to view him ravaging and ranging up to that edge, and to view in contrast the glad, bright, universally-laughing Ocean beyond—unravaged, unstained, unfooted, no smoke of conflagration rising, only the golden morning mist seeming all one diffused sun. Grant all this—and then what we have to complain of is, that the contrast is prepared, but not presented; and that the natural replication to "Man marks the earth with ruin," is not here. Instead of picture for picture—instead of, look on this picture and on that—we have

"on the watery plain  
The wrecks are all thy deed."

That is to say, peace, happiness, beauty, nowhere! Man wrecks up to the shore. There the tables are turned upon him. There the sea ravages the land, and wrecks him in return. Merciful Heaven! nothing but wrecking; as if evil spirits only possessed the universe—as if the only question to be asked any where were, Who wrecks here?

Is not this a glaring instance of a false intellectual procedure arising out of a false moral temper? The unceasing call of the Hymn is for the display of the subject extolled. And here the beautiful, or the proud superiority of the "peaceful, immeasurable plain," or of the indignant, independent, thundrous sea, was imperiously suggested for some moments surely, if the Poem be one of glorification. But no! We may imagine for ourselves, if we please, the beauty, splendour, joy, tempestuous liberty of the unfettered waters; but the love of the ocean is not in the Poet's mind, as it ought to have been—only the hate of man.

As it ought to have been? Yea, verily. Had he not taken the pledge? To drink but of the purest spring of inspiration—the Fount of Love. And may he, without reproach, break it when he chooses, and we not dare to condemn? Of all promises, the promise made by poet of world-wide fame before the wide world, in his soul's best mood, and in nature's noblest inspiration, is the most sacred—to break it is a sin, and a sin that brings its appropriate punishment along with it,—loss or abeyance of the faculty divine. Byron had sworn to love man and nature, and to glorify their works, on the very instant he seeks to degrade and vilify. We listen to a religious overture—to the Devil's March. We are invited to enter with him a temple of worship—and praise and prayer become imprecations and curses. It is as if a hermit, telling his beads at the door of his cell, retired into its interior to hold converse with a blaspheming spirit. Fear not to call it by its right name—this is Hypocrisy.

[506]

So much as to the fitness of the mood; now as to the truth of the matter.

What is, justly considered, the relation of man to the sea? Is it here truly spoken? Certainly not. The Facts and the Songs of the world are all the other way. In history, the ocean is the giant slave of the magician Man—with some difficulty brought under thralldom—humorous, and not always manageable—mischievous when he gets his own way. But compare statistically the service and the detriment, for Clio must instruct Calliope and Erato. Passion that cannot sustain itself but by hiding that which has been, and accrediting that which has not been, is personal, not poetical—is mad, not inspired. The truth is, that the Ship is the glory of man's inventive art and inventive daring—the most splendid triumph of heroical art. And—for the history of man—the service of the sea to his ship has been the civilising of the earth. The wrecks are occasional—so much so that, in our ordinary estimate, they are forgotten. It would be as good poetry to say that all the inhabitants of the land live by wrecking.

In this first movement or strain, then, two great relations upheld by man are put in question,—his relation to the land, and his relation to the sea. The Basis of Song to the true and great poet is the truth of things—the truth as the historian and the philosopher know them. Over this he throws his own affection and creates a truth of his own—a poetical truth. But the truth, as held in man's actual knowledge, is recognisable through the transparent veil. Here it is distorted, not veiled. The two relations are alike falsified. For in order to bring man into conflict with the sea, where he and not the sea is to be worsted, he must first be made the foe of the earth! "Man marks the earth with ruin." Is this the history of man on the earth? Man has vanquished the Earth, but for its benefit as well as his own. He has displaced the forest and the swamp, the wild beast and the serpent. He has adorned the earth like a bride; as if he had made captive a wild Amazon, charmed her with Orphean arts, wedded and made her a happy mother of many children. Whatever impressive effect such verses may have on the inconsiderate mind, it has been illegitimately attained by a preposterous and utterly unprovoked movement of tempestuous passion, and by two utterly false contemplations of man's posture upon the globe, which two embrace about his whole mortal existence. Eloquence might condescend to this—poetry never.

Note well, O Neophyte! that the calm, contemplative, loving first line,

"Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean! roll!"

precludes all comparison with such sudden bursts as "Ruin seize thee, ruthless king!" &c., and "Quousque tandem abutère, Catilina," &c.; but it does not preclude, it invites the killing comparison with

"O Thou that with surpassing glory crown'd  
Look'st from thy sole dominion, like the God  
Of this new world,—at whose sight all the stars  
Hide their diminish'd heads, to thee I call,  
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,  
O Sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,  
That bring to my remembrance from what state  
I fell—how glorious once above thy sphere!" &c.

Where the speaker is fraught with personal, not as a poet with impersonal affection—where he comes charged with hate, not with love; and yet how slowly, how sedately, through how many thoughts, how much admiration, and how many verses, he reaches his hate at last, which is his object! But on *that* soliloquy, dear Neophyte, we must discourse another day.

[507]

We must go a little—not very much—into particulars; for otherwise, O Neophyte! believe thou, whatever wiseacres say, there can be no true criticism of poetry. Let us—and that which might have been expected will appear,—a detail of moral and intellectual disorder. The stanza of which we have been speaking begins well—as we have seen and said. Thenceforth all is stamped with incongruity, and shows an effect like power, by violently bringing together, in a most remarkable manner, things that cannot consist—by the transition from the Universal to the Individual, when for

"The wrecks are all thy deed,"

which shows us a thousand ships foundering in mid ocean, and the earth's shores all strewn with fragments of oak-leviathans, we have instantaneously substituted, as if this were the same thing,

"When for a moment, *like a drop of rain*,  
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown."

What has happened? What is meant? Is this literally the representation of some single human being actually dropping, as unfortunately happens from time to time, from a ship's side into the immensity of waters? And is this horrible game and triumph of Ocean, which threatened to annihilate the species, upon a sudden confined to "a man overboard?" Or are we to understand that, by a strong feat of uncreating and recreating imagination, this one man, dropped as if naked from the clouds into the sea and submerged, impersonates and impictures, by some concentration of human agony and of human impotence, that universally diffused annihilation of Man in his ships which was the matter in hand? We do not believe that any reader can give a

satisfactory explanation or account of the course of thinking that has been here pursued. Upon the face of the words lies that natural pathos which belongs to the perishing of the individual, which serves to blind inquiry, and stands as a substitute for any reasonable thinking at all; and thus a grammatical confusion between Man and a man makes the whole absolute nonsense.

Then look here:—

"Upon the watery plain  
The wrecks are *all thy deed*."

This is not only not true—it is false. If man, clothed in the thunder of war, is able to strew ruin upon the land, he, militant, by the same power, strews wreck and ruin upon the waters; and so the distinction pretended, whatever it might be worth, fails. And does not the swallowing of the unknelt and uncoffined, which is attributed to the sea as the victor of man, take place as effectually when beak or broadside sends down a ship with her hundreds of souls, when the great sea, willing or unwilling, appears merely as the servile minister of insulting man's hate and fury?

"Alike the Armada's pride and spoils of Trafalgar."

"Rule Britannia" rings in our ears, and gives that assertion the lie. Does Macaulay's Ode idly recount an ineffectual muster? Did the Lord High Admiral of England, with all his commodores and captains, do nothing to the Armada? With what face dared an English Poet say to the sea that on all those days "the wrecks were all thy deed?" The storms were England's allies indeed, from Cape Clear to the Orcades. But only her allies; and, much as we respect the storms and their services, we say to the English fleet, "The wrecks were all thy deed." At Trafalgar the storms finally sided with the Spaniards. "Let the fleet be anchored," said Nelson ere he died; and, had that been possible, it had been done by Collingwood. After the fight Gravina came out to the rescue—but the sea engulfed the spoils. Yet, spite of that, we say again to the English fleet, "The wrecks were all thy deed;" and the sea answers—and will answer to all eternity—"Ay, ay, ay!"

Byron, we verily believe, was the first Great Poet that owned not a patriot's heart. No pride ever had he in his Country's triumphs either on land or sea. It seems as if he were impatient of every national and individual greatness that, however far aloof from his sphere, might eclipse his own. He has written well—but not so well as he ought to have done—of Waterloo. The glory of Wellington overshadowed him; and, by keeping his name out of his verses, he would keep the hero himself out of sight. But there he is resplendent in spite of the Poet's spleen. *Verbum non amplius* for Trafalgar! not one for Nelson. Not so did Cowper—the pious, peace-loving Cowper—regard his country's conflicts. At thought of these the holy Harper's soul awoke. He too sung of the sea:—

[508]

"What ails thee, restless as the waves that roar,  
And fling their foam against thy chalky shore?  
Mistress *at least, while Providence shall please,*  
AND TRIDENT-BEARING QUEEN OF THE WIDE SEAS."

That is majestic—and this is sublime:—

"They trust in navies, and their navies fail—  
God's curse can cast away ten thousand sail."

Ay, then, indeed, "ten thousand fleets sail over Thee in vain." Had Byron Cowper's great line in his mind? The copy cannot stand comparison with the original.

If we will try the poet by his words, and know whether he has mastered the consummation of his art by "writing well," we may cull from several instances of suspicious language, in this stanza, the following—

"Nor doth remain  
A shadow of man's ravage *save his own*."

What is the meaning—the translation? "There is not on the ocean to be found a shadow of ravage in which man is the agent. The only ravage known on the ocean, in which man is concerned, is that which he suffers from the ocean." This, if false, is nevertheless an intelligible proposition. But "ravage" is a strange word—a shocking bad one—applied, as you presently find that it must be, to one drowning man being "ravaged" by being drowned; and even more strange still is the grammatical opposition of "his ravage," as properly signifying, the ravage which he achieves, to "his own ravage" as properly signifying the ravage which he endures!

Moreover, what is meant by "remain"? Properly, to linger for a moment ere disappearing. But the proposition is, that ruin effected by man has no place at all on the waters. The poet means, that as long as you, the contemplator, tread the land, you walk among ruins made by man. When you pass on to the sea, no shadow of such ruin any longer accompanies you,—that is, any longer *remains* with you.

One great fault of style which the Hymn shows is Equivocation. The words are equivocal. Hence the contradiction—as in this stanza especially—between what is promised and what is done. Weigh for a moment these lines—

"Upon the watery plain,  
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
A shadow of man's ravage save his own,  
When for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,"

&c., and tell us what they seem to describe. You will find yourself in a pretty puzzle. A ship? a fleet? myriads of ships lost? or one drowning man? Surely one drowning man. His own phrase,

"the bubbling cry  
Of some strong swimmer in his agony,"

here pre-appears. But he had bound himself quite otherwise. By his pledge he should, in contrast with man's wreck active upon shore, have given man's wreck passive upon the flood,—the earth strewn with ruin by man's hand, the sea strewn with ruin of man himself,—*magnis excidit ausis*.

The words "remain" and "man" have played the part here of juggling fiends,—

"They palter with us in a double sense,  
They keep the word of promise to the ear,  
And break it to our hope."

For lend us your ear for a few minutes. The word "remain" is originally and essentially a word of time, and means to "continue" in some assigned condition through a certain duration of time; as, for example, he "remained in command for a year." In this clause of Byron's, it has become essentially a word that has regard to space without regard to time. To see that it is so, you must begin with possessing the picture that has been set before you, and which is here the basis and outset of the thinking. This picture is—"man marks the earth with ruin." Realise the picture at the height of the words without flinching. For example, from the Atlantic eastward to the Pacific, man ravages. Here Napoleon—a little farther on Mahomet the Second—farther, the Crusaders—beyond these Khuli Khan or Timour Leng—lastly, the Mogul conquerors of the Celestial Empire,—a chain of desolation from Estremadura to Corea. Had land extended around the globe, it had been a belt of desolation encircling the globe. Corn fields, vineyards, trampled under foot of man and horse,—villages, towns, and great cities, reeking with conflagration, like the smoke ascending from some enormous altar of abomination to offend the nostrils of heaven—armed hosts lying trampled in their blood—the unarmed lying scattered every where in theirs; for man has trodden the earth in his rage, and before him was as the garden of Eden, behind him is the desolate wilderness. This is a translation of the hemistich,—"Man marks the earth with ruin,"—into prose. It is a faithful, a literal translation—Byron meant as much: and you, neophyte, in an instantaneous image receive as much—perhaps with more faith or persuasion, because leaden-pacing, tardy-gaited exposition goes against such faith; but some belief will remain if we, who have put ourselves in the place of the poet, have used colours that seize upon your imagination.

[509]

Well, then, if your imagination has done that which the summary word-picture of the poet required of you, you have swept the earth, or one of its continents, with instantaneous flight from shore to shore, and seen this horrible devastation—this widely-spread ravage. You have not staid your wing at the shore, but have swept on, driven by your horror, till you have hung, and first breathed at ease, over the Mid Pacific, over the wide OCEAN OF PEACE—over the unpolluted, everlasting ocean, murmuring under your feet—the unpolluted, everlasting heavens over your head. *Here* is no ravage of man's: no! nor the shadow of it—

—"Nor doth remain  
A shadow of man's ravage."

But how "nor doth remain?" The ravage has gone along with you from sea-marge to sea-marge. *At sea* it is no longer with you. Traversing the land it *remained* your companion. It *remained* the continual and loathed object of your eyes. Now no shadow of it is to be seen—it haunts your flight no longer. No shadow of it any longer accompanies your aerial voyage—any longer stays, abides, *remains* with you. If the word has not this meaning, it has no meaning here in this clause. In this clause it cannot mean this—"upon the ocean, the ravage made by man appears like a flash of lightning, seen and gone,—upon the ocean this ravage, or some shadow of this ravage, has a momentary duration, but no more than momentary, no abiding, no *remaining*." This cannot be the meaning, since of man it has been expressly said 'his control stops with the shore'—that is, ends there, is not on the ocean at all. Manifestly the question at issue is, not whether destruction effected by man lasts upon the waters, but whether it is at all upon the waters; and Byron's decision is plainly that it is not at all. For he has already said "upon the watery plain the wrecks are all thy deed." That is to say, any sort of wreck effected by man upon the flood at all has been twice rejected in express words; and this word "remain" must imperatively be understood consonantly to this rejection.

Byron, then, we see, in denying that wrecks made by man "remain" upon the "watery plain," takes a word which properly sets before you an extending in time, and uses it for setting before you an extending in space. The ravage of which man is the agent does not extend over the "watery plain"—no, not a shadow of it.

But pray attend to this—no sooner does the sequent clause "save his own," take its place in the verse, than the word "remain" shifts its meaning back, from the signification accidentally forced

upon it as has been explained, and reverts to its original and wonted power as a word of time! The force of the united clauses now stands thus—"upon the water there cannot be found a trace of the ruin executed by man. But of the ruin suffered by him there is an apparition, a vestige, a *shadow*, a vanishing display, namely—

"When for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
He sinks into thy depths, with bubbling groan,  
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd and unknown."

He plunges, and all is over. The "bubbling groan" is the momentarily *remaining* notice of his extinction.

Now this first equivocation has an immediate moral consequence—namely, a reaction upon the feelings of the poet. "Remain," as an "extending in space," acts upon the imagination expansively here, if it were suffered to act—and if room were given it to act upon the imagination—inasmuch as "nor doth remain," as a word of extending in space, marks or helps to mark out the two great regions into which his lordship divides the terraqueous globe—ravaged land and unravaged water. But "remain," as an "extending in time," acts here contractively; and "nor remain" means now "does not outlive the moment!" and in this manner an entirely new direction or tenor is given to thought and feeling—for the zeal of diminishing seizes on the imagination of the writer. He is led to making man insignificant by the momentariness of his perishing! He has contracted, by power of scorn, and by the trick of a word, the seventy years of man into an instant. That is one diminution, and another follows upon it. The Fleets, wrecked whenever they fight against the water, vanish from his fancy, as in the shifting of a dream; and he sees, amidst the troubled world of waters—*one* man perishing! One mode of insignificance admitted, induces another. With the shrinking of time to a moment goes along, the shrinking of multitude to one!

The same double-dealing takes place with the word "Man." Man signifies the individual human being—or the race. "Of man's first disobedience"—mankind's. "Man marks the earth with ruin"—mankind does so. "Nor doth remain a shadow of man's ravage"—of mankind's ravage. "When for a moment, like a drop of rain, *he* sinks into thy waves"—that is now the single sailor, whom a roll of the ship has hurled from the topmast into the waters; or, when the ship has gone down, some strong swimmer who has fought in vain upon the waters, and, spent in limb and heart, sinks. And thus the reader, after stumbling for two or three steps in darkness and perplexity, within a moment of having left mankind in the annihilating embrace of Ocean, upon a sudden finds himself set face to face with one man, we shall suppose "The last man," drowning!

In the Stanza now commented on, there was a struggle depicted, a question proposed between Man and the Ocean—which shall be the Wrecker? The Ocean prevails; Man is wrecked. In the succeeding Stanza there is, it would seem, another question moved between the same disputants. No, it is the same. Let us examine well. A moment before, Man appeared as treading the earth as a Destroyer, his proud step stayed at high water-mark. Now he appears upon the earth as a traveller and a reaper—by implication or allusion—by the figure of "not."

"His steps are *not* upon thy paths, thy fields  
Are *not* a spoil for him."

He walks and reaps the earth; he does not walk and reap the ocean. This is plainly the process of the "worthy cogitation;" and unquestionably the assertion is true—true to the letter, but only to the letter. For, standing on Mount Albano, or on the Land's End, or here sitting beneath the porch of our Marine Villa fronting the Firth of Forth, we are poets every one of us, and we will venture beyond the letter;—

"His steps are not upon thy paths!"

—reply—chaunter of Man's Hope, and of England's Power,—

"Thy march is o'er the mountain wave,  
Thy home is on the deep."

There is a dash of sea-craft for you; and, "cheered by the grateful sound, for many a league old ocean smiles."

And for the sickle! What! must the net and the harpoon go for nothing? No harvests on the barren flood! What else are pearl-fisheries, herring-fisheries, cod-fisheries, and whale-fisheries? "The sea! The deep, deep sea!" Why, the sea cannot keep its own; cannot defend the least or the mightiest of its nurselings from the hand of the gigantic plunderer Man.

—"thy fields,  
Are not a spoil for him."

The fields of earth are not. For he ploughed and sowed ere he reaped, and earned back his own. But on *thy* fields, no ploughing, no sowing—all reaping! Sheer spoil. Poor, helpless, tributary, rifled, ravaged Ocean!

Then follows a very eminent instance of the fault which has been urged as radical in these Stanzas—forced, unnatural, wilful, or false sequence of thought; a deliberate intention in the mind of the writer, taking the place of the spontaneous free suggestion proper to poetry. We have

had man trying to produce ruin on the ocean, and wrecked, swallowed up. Now, man tries to walk and reap the ocean. The poet has outraged mother earth, and her vengeance is upon him. He has wrongfully and wilfully brought in the Earth, for its old alliance with man to hear hard words; and he suffers the penalty. Cease, rude Boreas, blustering railer, for you are out of breath. Mere mouthing is not command of words; the sound we hear now is but the echo of the last stanza, and the angry Childe is unwittingly repeating himself,—

——"Thou dost arise  
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields  
*For earth's destruction* thou dost all despise,  
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,  
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray,  
And howling, to his gods, where haply lies  
His petty hope in some near port or bay,  
And dashest him *again to earth—there let him lay!*"

Here is again the contest, again the ruining upon earth,—nay, he destroys the earth itself—again the wrecking of the ship. Surely there is great awkwardness in stepping on from the proof of man's impotence in the sinking of his ship, to the proof of man's impotence in the sinking of his ship. "Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies" may be a vigorous verse, though we doubt it; but if the ship outlive the storm, which many a ship has done many a thousand times, it can be turned against the ocean, who has done his worst *in vain*. What is man's "*petty hope?*" and what means "*again to earth?*" Is it again from the skies—or back to the earth from which he embarked? Not one expression is precise; and so, with some scorn of man's old ally, who now so roughly receives him,—"*there let him lay!*" There is something very horrible indeed in insulting a dead man in the Cockney dialect.

In all this there is no dignity, no grandeur; Byron does not well to be angry—it is seldom that any man or poet does—for, though anger is a "short madness," it is not a "fine frenzy." Such *Te Deum* true Poetry never yet sang, for true Poetry never yet was blasphemous—never yet derided Man's Dread or Man's Hope, when sinking in multitudes in the sea, which God holds in the hollow of his hand.

Go on to the next Stanza—

"The armaments which thunderstrike the walls," &c.

Why, here is another shipwreck—only now a fleet of war—before, one merchant-ship perhaps. The Earth, too, is again implicated, and we have the same scornful antithesis of Earth and Ocean. Earth with her towery diadem—Earth, the nurse of nations, trembles at the approach of armaments, which the ocean devours like melting snow. There has been, then, a certain progression in the three stanzas. A drowning man—a merchant-ship tossed and stranded—an armada scattered and lost. Three striking subjects of poetical delineation, each strikingly shown with some true touches, mixed with much false writing. One may understand that in consequence from out the whirlwind and chaos of the composition, resembling the tumult of the sea, there will remain to the reader who does not sift the writing an impression of power—of some great thing done—of Man and his Earth humbled, and the Ocean exalted. In the mean time, the way of the thoughts, the course of the mind, by which this ascent or climax is obtained, is extremely hard to trace, if traceable. The critic may extricate such an order from the disorder: but observe, that the ascent or climax can be attained only by neglecting certain strong indications that go another way. Thus, in the first stanza—

"Upon the watery plain  
The wrecks are all thy deed,"

includes all that is or can be said more of ship or fleet. Again, in the next stanza—

"Thou dost arise  
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields  
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise"—

Here is again said *all* that is possible to be said. "Thou dost arise and shake him from thee" being perhaps the strongest expression obtained at all; and the "vile strength" being precisely the Armadas described immediately afterwards with so much pomp and pride. Thus there is really confusion and oscillation of thought—mixed with a progress a standing still—and this characteristic of much of Byron's poetry comes prominently out—Uncertainty. Impulses and leaps of a powerful spirit *are* here; but self-knowing Power, a mind master of its purposes, disciplined genius, Art accomplished by studies profound and severe, lawful Emulation of the great names that shine in the authentic rolls of immortal Fame, the sanctioned inspiration which the pleased Muses deign to their devout followers, are *not* here.

The strength of Man, proved in contest with Ocean and found weakness, is disposed of. The Earth, as bound up with Man and his destinies, came in for a share of rough usage. Now she takes her own turn—in connexion with Man, but now principal. Here the pride of the words is great—the meaning sometimes almost or quite inextricable. Recite the Stanza, beginning

"Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee,"

and when the sonorous roll has subsided, try to understand it. You will find some difficulty, if we mistake not, in knowing who or what is the apostrophised subject. Unquestionably the World's Ocean, and not the Mediterranean. The very last verse we were afar in the Atlantic. "Thy shores are empires." The shores of the World's Ocean are Empires. There are, or have been, the British Empire, the German Empire, the Russian Empire, and the Empire of the Great Mogul—the Chinese Empire, the Empire of Morocco, those of Peru and Mexico, the Four Great Empires of Antiquity, the French Empire, and some others. The Poet does not intend names and things in this very strict way, however, and he will take in all great Monarchies, nor will he grudge us the imagining the whole Earth laid out in imperial dominions.

Well then—we again, dear Neophyte, bid you try to understand the Stanza, and tell us what it means. What rational thought is there here? With what propriety do we consider the whole Earth as the shores of the Ocean—when *shore* is exactly the interlimitation of land and sea? Is this a lawful way of celebrating the Ocean, to throw in the whole of the lately despised Earth as its brilliant appendage? The question rises, how far from the shore does the shore extend—and whether inwards or outwards?

But there is a meaning and a good one in a way. Ἀριστον μὲν ὕδωρ. The water civilises the land. 'Tis an old remark—but how? By ships. Here, then, are the tables turned. Lately the sea did nothing with ships but destroy them. Now it patiently wafts them, and by commerce and colonies the Sea civilises the Globe! Surely this is poetical injustice. The first glory of the Sea was, that Man could not sail upon its bosom. The second glory of the Sea is, that, by offering its bosom to be furrowed by Man's daring and indefatigable keels, it—ministerially then—civilises the World. The Sea is the civiliser of the Land—Man is—the Destroyer merely.

Pray, what is the meaning of saying that the Roman and the Assyrian Empires are shores of the Sea: and changed, excepting that the same waters wash the same strands? The deep inland Empires recede too much from the sea-shore to allow any hold to the relation proposed in the words, "changed in all save thee." We know the Sea as their limit—an accident, rather than as a part of their being. The meeting of sea and land being the limit of an empire, the limit remains whilst the Imperial State has withered from the land. Does the immobility of the limit belong more to one element than to the other? And is the Roman Empire, O Neophyte, more unchanged *in* the Mediterranean and Atlantic than it is *in* the Apennines, and Alps, and Pyrenees, and Helvellyn?

[513]

Every clause that regards Earth is, in one way or in another, intolerable—small or tortured. "Thy waters wasted them while they were free," means either "swallowed up their ships, or—*ate away their edges!*" Alas! that most unhappy meaning is the true one—and what a cogitation to come into a man's—an inspired Poet's head! "Thy waters fretted away the maritime littoral edges of the Assyrian, the Grecian, the Roman, the Carthaginian Empires, whilst those Empires flourished!" And this interesting piece of geographical, and geological, and hydrographical meditation makes part in a burst of indignant spleen which is to go near to annihilating Man from the face of the Globe! Was it possible to express more significantly the imbecility of Old Ocean? And has he not been fretting ever since? And are not the limits the same, as we were told a minute ago? Old Ocean must be in his dotage if he can do no more than that—and we must elect him perpetual President of the Fogie Club.

Such wretched writing shows, with serious warning, how a false temper, admitted into poetry, overrules the sound intellect into gravely and weightily entertaining combinations of thought which, looked at either with common sense or with poetical feeling, cannot be sustained for a moment. How many of Lord Byron's admirers believe—and, in spite of Christopher, will continue to believe—that in these almost senseless stanzas he has said something strong, poignant, cutting, of good edge, and "full of force driven home!"

"Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—  
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now."

We accept the image; let us grant that the Personification is a fine one. Nevertheless it does not entirely satisfy the imagination. And why? Because the thought of the azure brow, on which time writes no wrinkles, suggests for a moment the thought of the white brow—the brow of man or woman—the human brow, on which Time does write wrinkles along with the engraver, Sorrow. For a moment! but *that* is not the intended pathos—and it fades away. The intended pathos here belongs to the wrinkles Time writes on the brow of the Earth—while it spares that of the Sea. But Time deals not so with our gracious Mother Earth. Time keeps perpetually beautifying her brow, while it leaves the brow of Ocean the same as it was at Creation's Dawn. How far more beautiful has the Dædal Earth been growing, from century to century, over Continent and Isle, under the love of her grateful children! The Curse has become a Blessing. In the sweat of their brow they eat their bread; but Nature's self, made lovelier by their labour of heart and hand, rejoices in their creative happiness, and troubled life prepares rest from its toil in many a pleasant place fair as the bowers of Paradise.

We approach the next Stanza reverently, for it has a religious look—an aspect "that threatens the profane."

"Thou glorious Mirror, where the Almighty's Form  
Glasses itself in tempests," &c.



Suitably recited! let it be suitably spoken of—fearlessly, in truth. The vituperating spirit has exhausted itself—is dead; and all at once the Poet becomes a worshipper. From cherished exasperation with the Creature—from varying moods of hate and scorn—he turns to contemplation of the Creator. Such transition is suspicious—can such worship be sincere? Fallen, sinful—yet is man God's noblest work. In His own image did He create him; and to glorify Him must we vilify the dust into which He breathed a living soul? Let the Poet lament, with thoughts that lie too deep for tears, over what Man has made of Man! And in the multitude of thoughts within him adore his Maker—in words. But he who despises his kind, and delights, in heaping contumely on the race of man throughout all his history on earth and sea—how may he, when wearied with chiding, all at once, as if it had been not hindrance but preparation, dare to speak, in the language of worship, of the Almighty Maker of Heaven and of Earth?

[514]

The Stanza, accordingly, is not good—it is laboured, heavy, formal, uninspired by *divine afflatus*. There is not in it one truly sublime expression. Nothing to our mind can be worse than "where the Almighty's *Form* glasses itself &c.—" The one word "Form" is destructive, in its gross materialism, alike of natural Poetry and natural Religion. If it be not, show us we are wrong, and henceforth we shall be mute for ever. "In all time, calm or convulsed, in breeze, or gale, *or storm*," is poor and prosaic; and "or storm," a pitiable platitude after "in tempests." And the conversion of a Mirror into a Throne—of the Mirror too in which the Almighty's "*Form* glasses itself," into the Throne of the "*Invisible*"—is a fatal contradiction, proving the utter want of that possession of soul by one awful thought which was here demanded, and without which the whole stanza becomes but a mere collocation and hubbub of big-sounding words. "Even from out thy slime, the monsters of the deep are made," is violently jammed in between lines that have no sort of connexion with it, and introduces a thought which, whether consistent with true Philosophy or abhorrent from it, breaks in upon the whole course of contemplation, such as it is,—to say nothing of the extreme poverty of language shown in the use of such words as "monsters of *the deep*" made out of the slime *of the sea*.

The strain—such as it is—ceases suddenly with this Stanza; and the Poet having thus got done with it, exclaiming "and I have loved thee, Ocean," proceeds forthwith to a different matter altogether—to the pleasure he was wont to enjoy, when a boy, in swimming among the breakers. The verses are in themselves very spirited; but we must think—and hope so do you—very much out of place, and a sad descent from the altitude attempted, and believed by the Poet himself to have been attained, in the preceding Stanza about the Almighty.

Why, listening Neophyte, recite both Stanzas, and then tell us whether or no you think they maybe improved by being put into—our Prose. We do not seek thereby to injure what Poetry may be in them, but to bring it out and improve it.

"Thou glorious Mirror, in which, when black with tempests, Fancy might conceive Omnipotence imaged in visible reflection!—Thou Sea, that in all thy seasons, whether smooth or agitated, whether soft or wild wind blow, in all thy regions, icy at the Pole, dark-heaving at the Equator, ever and every where callest forth our acknowledgment that Thou art illimitable, interminable, sublime; that Thou art the symbol of Eternity—(like a circle by returning into itself;) that Thou art the visible Throne of the Invisible Deity—Thou whose very dregs turn into enormous life—Thou who, possessing the larger part of every zone, art thus a King in every zone; Thou takest thy course around the Earth,—great by thine awfulness, by thine undiscoverable depth, by thy solitude!

"And I, thy Poet, was of old thy Lover! In young years my favourite disport was to lie afloat on thy bosom, carried along by Thee, passive, resigned to Thy power, one of Thy bubbles. A boy, Thy waves were my playmates, or my playthings. If, as the wind freshened, and they swelled, I grew afraid, there was a pleasure even in the palpitation of the fears, for I lived with Thee and loved Thee, even like a child of Thine, and believed that Thy billows would not hurt me, and laid my hand boldly and wantonly on their crests—as at this instant I do, here sitting upon the Alban Mount—*and making (as they say) a long arm.*"

HA! THE DINNER-GONG!

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#### FOOTNOTES:

- [1] The anaglyph was peculiar to the Egyptian priests—the hieroglyph generally known to the well educated.
- [2] LUCIAN, *The Dream of Miccyllus*.
- [3] *Remains of the Rev. Richard Cecil*, p. 349.
- [4] *Principles of Political Economy, with some of their applications to Social Philosophy*. By JOHN STUART MILL. 2 vols.

- [5] "Mais d'abord va-t-on désigner cet ordre particulier d'investigations par le nom d'économie politique? Quoi donc! Économie politique, économie de la société,—c'est à dire—production, distribution, consommation des richesses? Mais c'est se moquer; on ne traduit pas avec une liberté pareille. Il ne faut qu'ouvrir le premier dictionnaire venu pour voir," &c.—DUNOYER, *De la Liberté du Travail*.
- [6] The discussions upon the income tax reveal a lamentable state of public feeling on this subject. That this tax might have been more equitably adjusted, every one but a Chancellor of the Exchequer will admit. Those who have to insure their lives, or otherwise save a fund out of their income for survivors, ought not to pay the same tax as those who can enjoy the whole of their income. But no such modification as this would have pacified discontent. One often heard it said that the tax should fall exclusively on realised property. The prosperous tradesman, with his income of some thousands a-year, was to pay nothing; the poor widow, who draws her sixty pounds per annum from her property in the funds, she was to pay the tax. Mr Mill, in noticing this very equitable proposition, says—"Except the proposal of applying a sponge to the national debt, no such palpable violation of common honesty has found sufficient support in this country during the present generation to be regarded within the domain of discussion. It has not the palliation of a graduated property-tax, that of laying the burthen on those best able to bear it; for 'realised property' includes almost every provision made for those who are unable to work, and consists, in great part, of extremely small fractions. I can hardly conceive a more shameless pretension than that the major part of the property of the country, that of merchants, manufacturers, farmers, and shopkeepers, should be exempted from its share of taxation; that these classes should only begin to pay their proportion after retiring from business, and if they never retire, should be excused from it altogether."—(Vol. ii. p. 355.)
- [7] In a work entitled, *Over-Population and its Remedy*.
- [8] From the report to the Governor of California by the Head of the Mission, in reference to the attacks by the American mountaineers.
- [9] Indian expression for a free gift.
- [10] Since the time of which we speak, Kit Carson has distinguished himself in guiding the several U. S. exploring expeditions, under Frémont, across the Rocky Mountains, and to all parts of Oregon and California; and for his services, the President of the United States presented the gallant mountaineer with the commission of lieutenant in a newly raised regiment of mounted riflemen, of which his old leader Frémont is appointed colonel.
- [11] Lamartine, *Histoire des Girondins*, i. 83.
- [12] The Prefect of Police had published an account of the situation of Paris during the last ten days, in which he states that the most perfect tranquillity prevailed in the capital; that confidence was beginning to revive on every point; that a slow but incontestible progress manifested itself in every branch of industry; and that at no former period, and under no previous regimen, did Paris offer more respect for persons or more security for property. Orders were arriving from the departments. The manufacture of articles of luxury and jewellery partook of that resuscitation, as appears from the returns of the inspector-general of the hall-mark at the mint of Paris. The articles of jewellery completed and ordered during the last five months produced the following receipts:—in April, 9,000f.; May, 11,000f.; June, 17,000f.; July, 19,000f.; August, 36,000f. The number of workmen reduced by distress to reside in lodging-houses had considerably diminished. In the preceding bulletin their number was 31,480; it is now 27,308—17,977 of whom were employed, and 9,331 unoccupied. The houses of confinement contained nearly the same number of ordinary prisoners, and only 4,058 insurgents of June; 2,909 of the latter had been liberated since the 26th of July, and 1,005 conveyed to Havre between the 28th of August and the 4th of September. From the 26th of August to the 5th of September, nine persons committed suicide.—*Times*, Sept. 11, 1848.
- [13] We mean those in the south and west. The other, of Ulster, are of British descent, and undistinguished from the rest of the Anglo-Saxon race.
- [14]

#### CRIME IN IRELAND.

	Serious Crimes.
Last Quarter of 1829. Catholic Emancipation passed in March,	300
Do. of 1830. Do.	499
Do. of 1831. Reform Agitation,	814
Do. of 1832. Reform and Repeal Agitation,	1513

By the Coercion Act the Serious crimes were reduced at once to a *fourth* of their number. See *Hansard, Parl. Debates*, Feb. 9, 1834.

- [15] "It was not so much through the hostility of the English members, as through the desertion and hostility of the Irish members, (many of them Repealers,) that in February 1847, Ireland lost the opportunity of obtaining a loan of sixteen millions of English gold at £3, 7s. 6d. per cent, to stimulate the construction, by private enterprise, of railways in your country.

"Unanimous in Palace Yard, on one Tuesday in favour of the proposition I then brought forward, on the Thursday se'ennight the same sixty gentlemen, having seen the prime minister at the Foreign Office in the interval, voted two to one in the House of Commons against giving railways to Ireland.

"Out of a hundred and five representatives which Ireland possesses, twenty-eight only, if my memory serves me correctly, would vote for that loan to Ireland. Two-thirds of the Irish representatives present declined the measure—the rest took care to be *non est inventus* at the division, which was the hour of Ireland's need.

"Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the division list, and you will find many more true friends of Ireland, on that occasion, among the supporters of the Union than among the Repealers.

"Is it surprising that, where Irish representatives voted two to one against the acceptance of that measure, and when but twenty-eight, out of Ireland's hundred and five, could alone be found to say 'ay,' that a majority of Englishmen could not be found willing to make a sacrifice of English interests, to force upon Ireland a boon which the majority of Irish members rejected?

"It is not Repeal of the Union that Ireland wants; she wants men to represent her, who, understanding her material and substantial interests, are able and willing to promote and maintain them; and will not, on the other hand, to gain the shouts of the mob, divert public and parliamentary attention to phantom reforms, that have no substantial virtue in them—or, on the other hand, sell their votes to win the smiles, or may be something more valuable in the gift of the minister of the day.—I am, Sir your humble servant,

"G. BENTINCK."

[16] ALISON's *Europe*, xx., Appendix.

[17] Small as these numbers are, the amount of notes in circulation is daily still further decreasing. For the week ending 9th September 1848, the amount of notes in circulation of the Bank of England was only £17,844,665. It is no wonder the same journal adds—"The Railway Market was *more depressed than ever* this afternoon; and prices of all descriptions experienced a considerable fall. London and North Western were done at 105; Great Western stand at 18 to 20 *discount*."—*Times*, 10th Sept. 1848.

[18]

	Exports, Declared Value.	Imports, Official Value.
1844,	£58,584,292	£75,441,565
1845,	60,111,681	85,284,965
1846,	57,786,576	75,958,875
1847,	58,971,106	90,921,866
		— <i>Parl. Returns</i> .

[19]

EXPORTS.

	First half of 1847.	First half of 1848.	Increase.	Decrease.
Butter	£62,879	£71,576	£8,697	—
Candles	22,155	26,475	4,329	—
Cheese	15,149	11,089	—	£4,060
Coals and culm	432,497	517,925	85,420	—
Cotton manufactures	9,248,835	8,023,825	—	1,225,010
Cotton yarn	2,628,616	2,214,031	—	414,185
Earthenware	429,387	365,382	—	64,005
Fish, herrings	37,883	31,220	—	6,663
Glass	153,746	124,121	—	29,625
Hardwares and cutlery	1,096,956	939,523	—	157,433
Leather, wrought & unwrought	163,515	119,921	—	43,594
Linen manufactures	1,502,770	1,413,819	—	88,951
Linen yarn	315,196	236,076	—	79,120
Machinery	541,403	398,770	—	142,633
Metals—Iron and steel	2,462,954	2,545,650	82,696	—
Copper and brass	849,751	546,648	—	303,103
Lead	100,620	57,331	—	43,289
Tin, unwrought	72,882	73,477	595	—
Tin, plates	235,771	259,950	24,179	—
Salt	141,195	115,757	—	25,438
Silk manufactures	494,806	263,798	—	231,008
Soap	76,686	74,166	—	2,520
Sugar, refined	203,628	212,298	8,670	—
Wool, sheep or lambs'	95,412	58,256	—	37,156
Woollen yarn	444,797	291,985	—	152,812
Woollen manufactures	3,564,754	2,578,470	—	986,284
	£25,394,243	£21,571,939	£214,585	£4,036,889

The entire decrease of exports during the half-year is thus shown to be £3,822,304.

IMPORTS.

	Imported.		Taken for Home Consumption.	
	1847.	1848.	1847.	1848.
Grain of all descriptions, qrs.	2,195,579	1,548,464	2,547,938	1,436,463
Indian corn, qrs.	2,082,038	652,788	2,082,369	647,470
Flour and meal, cwts.	3,382,959	459,797	3,860,187	433,759
Provisions—Bacon, pork, &c., cwts.	176,319	234,398	Free.	Free.
Butter and cheese, cwts.	298,568	291,713	342,170	312,394
Animals, No.	61,989	52,345	Free.	Free.
Eggs, No.	41,299,514	48,791,793	41,276,990	48,786,604
Cocoa, lbs.	2,540,298	2,407,034	1,764,590	1,542,119
Coffee, British, lbs.	6,394,508	10,227,072	13,545,147	15,158,187
Ditto, Foreign, lbs.	5,395,669	7,704,282	6,092,252	3,900,457
Total coffee	11,790,177	17,931,354	19,637,399	19,058,644
Sugar—West India, cwts.	1,288,138	1,091,375	994,163	1,212,726
Mauritius, cwts.	884,699	568,475	617,681	470,410
East India, cwts.	683,901	679,279	710,514	669,196
Foreign, cwts.	1,110,948	621,301	622,284	427,542
Total sugar	3,967,686	2,960,430	2,944,642	2,779,874
Tea, lbs.	30,999,703	32,788,914	23,101,975	24,365,380
Rice, cwts.	676,130	497,038	Free.	—
Ditto, qrs.	32,343	31,410	Free.	—
Spirits, galls	4,328,426	4,525,729	2,282,072	2,069,720
Wines, galls	3,332,866	3,380,826	3,264,521	3,114,158
Opium, lbs.	103,708	83,693	27,208	36,985
Tobacco, lbs.	11,100,328	10,822,184	13,419,830	13,416,118
Fruits—Currants, figs, and raisins, cwts.	189,844	107,644	194,951	236,918
Lemons and oranges, chests	209,647	281,362	206,058	261,302
Ditto, at value, £	773	2,961	12,449	8,463
Spices, lbs.	2,250,664	3,460,497	1,564,612	1,632,833

#### Transcriber's Notes:

Obvious spelling and punctuation errors were repaired, but period or regional spellings and grammatical uses were retained (inuendo, substract, Sphynges, etc.). Both administrador and administrator, hardworking and hard-working, sun-burned and sunburned, were used in this text, in separate articles.

P. 390: "had once eaten a pea"; original reads "had once eat a pea."

P. 429: "savanna is covered"; original reads "savana."

P. 476: "eaten the bread"; original reads "eat the bread."

"A head"(P. 439; "a head of the cavallada") and "a-head"(P. 435) were changed to "ahead" as in P. 439 ("figure ahead suddenly").

P. 511: "proof of man's impotence in the sinking of his ship, to the proof of man's impotence in the sinking of his ship." This repetition is faithful to the original.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE,  
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