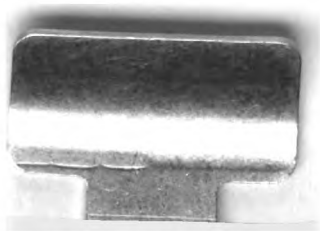






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**GEORGE W. CABLE**  
**HIS LIFE AND LETTERS**



*From a photograph by Katherine McClelland.*

GEORGE W. CABLE.

# GEORGE W. CABLE HIS LIFE AND LETTERS

BY  
HIS DAUGHTER  
LUCY LEFFINGWELL (CABLE) BIKLE

ILLUSTRATED

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS  
NEW YORK / LONDON  
1928

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155.8

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**TO  
MY MOTHER**

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## G. W. C.

He was a small man, in height barely five feet six; in weight, at best, one hundred and ten pounds; wearing, oftenest, a gray suit, with crimson necktie and soft hat of gray felt. Slight of build; wiry; nervous of movement; agile: taking the steps of a stairway preferably two at a time or walking as briskly as any boy of ten, even when he was five or six times that age. His eyes alert to catch any outward aspect of the scene about him, yet his thoughts so incessantly busy that his absent-mindedness was almost a by-word among those who knew him best, and often a matter of concern to himself. The oval of his face was emphasized by an unusual width and height of brow and by a trim, pointed beard—during the 'eighties his beard and mustache had been full and long—and from beneath the wide brow his gray eyes looked out, keen, thoughtful, quizzical.

The youth of his physical appearance belied the maturity of his years. On his forty-fourth birthday, being away from home on a reading-tour, he wrote my mother: "Forty-four and not a gray hair except in my beard and mustache; *they* are lying scoundrels!" At fifty-four and even at sixty-four, though other gray hairs had appeared, his youth seemed indomitable. Though he was my father, he never, until the very last years of his long life, seemed to me old. Yet for all his youthfulness, he never seemed truly young. Greatly as he enjoyed the companionship of his children and devoted as he was to their happiness, his endeavor, conscious or unconscious, was always to lift them toward the level of his own mind rather than to bend down to theirs.

In conversation quick, responsive, and very much in earnest, he would often flash a sudden spark of humor that not only lightened the seriousness but fairly illuminated the thought. I remember his saying, on reading some



inimitable verses by Oliver Herford: "There are two kinds of wit: one that makes you say, 'Good! I've thought of that myself,' and another that makes you say, 'Delightful! I never in the world should have thought of that.' Herford's is like that." His own was, too, as a rule. Speaking of a certain friend—a brilliant woman, of merry speech and unexpected ways—he once said: "I never met so odd a person who was so even." His talk never seemed studied, though it was always drawn from a fund of thought. While his children were growing up around him, his anxiety was keen to give them the mental training that he was continually giving himself, and if a word was spoken at the family table that was unfamiliar to any one, out came the dictionary and the word was looked up and thoroughly studied by the whole family.

In the early 'eighties, while he was still living in New Orleans, a friend one evening brought to his study some botanical specimens gathered in the Louisiana swamps, and together they examined and dissected them. "The first," wrote this friend, "was a white clover, which sent him into rapturous delight, as the magnified flowerets revealed intricacies and beauties unsuspected." And he adds: "Every technical term was followed to its root, Mr. Cable declaring that he could not retain what he only half knew."

Half-knowledge was abhorrent to him always, in any form, whether of facts, of events, or of people. It was not mere curiosity, but a genuine interest in human contact that he evinced when he said one time that he would not be content to live on a street where he was not on intimate terms with all his neighbors. This was in New Orleans, where the warm Southern temperament and the many months of outdoor life would naturally foster such an attitude; but he carried that attitude to New England.

When he was asked, there, how he managed to find time, in a life so full of absorbing creative work as his, to interest himself so largely in the life of the community, he replied: "To use a homely parallel, the milkman who sells only

cream makes as much money as the one who sells all his milk; the one lets the milk stand till the cream rises and sells the smaller quantity and better quality for the same money. So with literary work: produce the cream and sell that, instead of giving your entire life and strength to larger production and mediocre quality. Let an author first *live*; let him live in extended relations with men and do his part in social progress."

It was this conviction that led him, when he was choosing a home in the North—in spite of the seeming paradox—to avoid the large cities. "I should have liked," he said, "to settle in Hartford; but I could not have given the necessary time to fulfil the social obligations required in such a place." It was this feeling also that prompted him, shortly after he had made his home in Northampton, to evolve the idea of the Home-Culture Clubs—a philanthropy that brought him into direct contact with every stratum of society in that New England community. His belief was that an author, since his work is largely of the closet, should go into the world and mix with his fellow-men. He was everybody's personal friend. In one of his fitfully kept diaries he once wrote: "Even if these pages should ever be looked over by a publisher they must pass first through a discreet editor's hands. But why should I wish that? I wish I could—I wish it were best—as I know full well it is not—that I should be known through and through by all my kind."

Like his own Curé of Carancro, in "Bonaventure," he was essentially "a man of the domestic sympathies." "Home is such a harbor!—such a harbor!" he once wrote, when travelling in the Far West on a reading-tour. Even in his busiest working-hours he was not inaccessible to his family; though the rule was that he should not be disturbed unless it was necessary. He always took pleasure in telling one of his daughters that, as a very small girl, she had "helped him write 'Dr. Sevier'" by sitting on his knee for hours at a time while he was at work. Nothing made him happier

than to gather his friends and neighbors into his home for an evening of pleasant talk and perhaps of reading and singing. I can see him now, as I often used to see him, bending over his guitar and singing in his clear tenor voice some quaint song in the soft African-Creole patois, or perhaps an English or Scotch folk-song, or something remembered from the days of his youth. And when by good chance there was a singer in the small circle around him, his pleasure was heightened, in sharing the programme or in exchanging songs.

"He is fond of music," wrote Col. Geo. E. Waring, Jr., in the early eighties, "and has a more than ordinary knowledge of it. He is especially given to working out the score of the songs of his favorite birds, having succeeded, after many efforts, in recording the roulade of an oriole that sings in his orange-tree." His music was always a delight to him, from the days of his youthful soldiering when he "sang to the young ladies" who had dressed his wound and nursed him in their home, to his later years when he composed the airs for the songs in "The Cavalier" and in "Gideon's Band."

In New Orleans, back in 1878, when he and Lafcadio Hearn were together collecting a number of African-Creole folk-songs, my father wrote out the notation entirely by ear, after hearing them sung by the old negroes. At the time of his first readings in Boston, in 1883, on being urgently requested to sing some of these on the platform, he wrote to the editor of a Boston newspaper: "If you will confine your musical critic under lock and key and deposit the key in bank, or furnish any other absolute guarantee that he is either literally or figuratively chained up, I will intersperse next Tuesday's reading with half a dozen mere snatches of African-Creole songs, rendered with sufficient native skill to enable any studious ear to pick out the tune."

He never voluntarily made the songs a part of his public programme, for his singing voice was quite untrained, except as he had taught himself how to use it. And when he

did this it was not without some trepidation. But at home they were almost a part of the daily—or the evening—life; and in church, whether in New Orleans or Simsbury or Northampton, he would unconsciously lead the entire congregation through the hymns every Sunday. After a visit to New Orleans, Joel Chandler Harris once wrote Robert Underwood Johnson: "Did you ever hear George Cable sing? I heard him in his own beloved Presbyterian church, and I shall never forget it. It was worth a visit to New Orleans."

Sometimes in those evenings at home, with his friends or with only his family to listen, he would read aloud. And whether the book was Sir Thomas Malory's "Morte d' Arthur" or "Tartarin of Tarascon" or "Cranford" or the "Nonsense Rhymes" of Edward Lear, he never failed to infuse his own delight into every one of his hearers. Because of his interrupted schooling and of the work that had filled his days since his boyhood, there were odd gaps in his own reading, which all his life he was trying to fill. His pleasure in the discovery, sometime in his fifties, of "Alice in Wonderland" was of the keenest, and was unforgettable to those who witnessed it. From that time on, its nonsense and its fanciful humor were a part of the stock-in-trade of the family fun, and always called forth a delighted response from him.

Life had early become for him a serious matter, and he was impatient of any one who failed to perceive and appreciate its seriousness. Yet not to its seriousness alone, but also to its richness, its beauty, its capabilities for happiness was he acutely sensitive. He was never intolerant of any expression of opinion honestly arrived at, but he could not endure laziness of mind or slovenliness of thought. For all that, his philosophy of life was a sunny one. "I believe in beauty and in joy" was more than once his written and spoken creed. "It is not easy," he wrote at one time, "to keep one's due sense of appreciation up to all that is lovely in this life of ours. The world is so beautiful to look

upon to-day, so sweet to smell and hear; so full of peace, safety and abundance, so ready for almost any two human beings to exchange kindnesses and joys." "Keep glad!" he used to say. "It's the best way of serving God that ever was revealed."

In his later years, whether working or at leisure, his happiest hours were spent in his beloved garden. Not one foot of ground, not one flower or twig of shrub or of tree escaped his vigilance as he walked about, inspecting, planning, pruning, directing or giving himself up to the enjoyment of its loveliness. "What recreation—re-creation—the garden is to me!" he once wrote. "When I left the study at 4.30 I felt like a lost thing in a desert; now I am ready for to-morrow's work."

In the woods he knew the trees so well that, as he often said, he could walk there after dark and name every tree by a touch of the hand. After he had begun the work of making these woods a part of his garden, he built close beside them a red-tiled, red-roofed study, with a gray stone chimney against its outer front wall and the higher branches of the neighboring pines outspread above its roof as if in friendly guardianship. Indeed, so intimately did the little house stand among the trees that its occupant would at times have to work with drawn curtains, because of the distraction of the woodland scene. Often the only sign of his presence there was a plume of blue smoke curling and rising from the chimney-top to the pine-boughs above.

For twenty years and more my father did his literary work in this outside study. But up to the time it was built he had always used a room of the house; and, now that he is gone, it is there that I like best to picture him, in the Northampton home that he called "Tarryawhile," sitting at work, surrounded by the books whose shelves completely covered the lower half of all four walls of the room. Never at his desk: that was kept strictly for correspondence, business or otherwise; but in a low-backed rocking-chair, one knee thrown over the other, a writing-pad upon

his lap and a sharp pencil in hand—his left hand, if it was the first draft, for he was naturally left-handed—so absorbed in thought that nothing less than a domestic cataclysm could disturb him.

It was here and in this manner that he wrote the following passage, which I quote because in it he puts into concrete form his conception of the relations between life and literature:

“The wise story-teller, though not bound to *tell* the whole truth and nothing but the truth, is bound to reverence it above all things; substituting in place of the actual the harmoniously supposable; yet only in so far as the actual is less effective for his ends—the ministry of right emotions. . . . It makes nigh all the difference between life and death whether we have or have not the power and sanity of imagination daily to turn the dull intervals and ugly and commonplace things of life end on to the heart’s vision and take broadside those that are strong for discipline or fine for delight.”

L. L. C. B.

PHILADELPHIA,  
20th May, 1928.

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**GEORGE W. CABLE**  
**HIS LIFE AND LETTERS**

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CHAPTER I  
BIRTH AND PARENTAGE: BOYHOOD  
(1844-1858)

*"Happy they  
Who in the fresh and dawning time of youth  
Have dwelt in such a land."*

HENRY ALFORD.

In a part of New Orleans which at that time was practically a suburb, occupied by the homes of planters and their families, there stood in the year 1844 a low-built, long-roofed, two-storied house, which had once been the "Big House" of a colonial plantation. A wide *galérie* across its entire front and along one side was massed with roses and passion-flowers, while broad-spreading live-oaks, hung with Spanish moss, shaded the lawns.

"The house's garden and grounds were bounded four-square by an unbroken line—a hedge, almost—of orange-trees, in which the orchard-oriole sang by day and the mocking-bird all night. Along the garden walks grew the low, drooping trees of that kindest—to good children—of all tree-fruits, the fig. The house stood, without any special history of its own, on a very small fraction of the lands given to [the French Jesuit Fathers] by the French king. In front of it is Annunciation Square, from whose northern gate one looked down a street of the same name.

"From New Orleans' earliest days, Annunciation Street was a country road, fronted along its western side by large colonial villas standing in their orangeries and fig-orchards, and looking eastward, from their big windows, across the Mississippi River. Though they stood well back from the river-bank, they were whole squares nearer it than they are, or would be, now: the river has moved off

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sidewise. . . . Now, instead of the planter's carriage toiling through the mire, one meets, in granite-paved Annunciation Street, the cotton-float, with its three- or four-mule team and its lofty load of bales going to or from the 'compress.' ”<sup>1</sup>

Here, on October 12 of that year of 1844, was born George Washington Cable, the fifth child and second son of George Washington Cable and his wife, Rebecca Boardman; in a land of sunshine and flowers, in a home of comfort and culture and happy family affection. The family consisted, at the time, of the boy's father and mother and his two elder sisters, Mary Louise and Frances Antoinette; two children, the eldest son and the eldest daughter, had died of scarlet fever in early childhood, and another boy, James Boardman, was born two years later.

The father was a man full of energy and enterprise, of unusual height and commanding presence. “I can see him now,” wrote one of his daughters, many years later, “at the age of thirty-six—five feet eleven inches and carrying well his weight of 194 pounds—imposing in full regiments as *aide-de-camp* to General Tracy, when the ‘Eighth of January’ brought out the Militia in grand parade, to celebrate the battle of New Orleans.”<sup>2</sup> His uniform was of dark blue with white facings and stripes, and with epaulettes at the shoulders; his tall hat, pointed front and back, was surmounted with a high tuft of the drooping white cock-plumes, with a shorter fringe of bright red feathers turning downward over the white; and his long sword hung down over the saddle-blanket of dark blue studded with white stars.”

Born in Winchester, Virginia, February 28, 1811, he belonged to a family of Cables who for more than one hundred years had claimed Virginia as their home. But

<sup>1</sup> “New Orleans,” by George W. Cable: *St. Nicholas*, November, 1893.

<sup>2</sup> The great victory over the British fleet, at the close of the War of 1812—January 15, 1815.

while he was still a child, his father and mother, George and Mary Stott Cable, left their Virginia home and settled in the southern part of Pennsylvania. Here they agreed between themselves to free their negroes, because of their prejudice against the holding of slaves. Then, when their son and only child was about twenty-one years of age, they once more moved their home, this time into the new State of Indiana, where they settled permanently in the town of Lawrenceburg, in Dearborn County.

Among the "older residents" of Dearborn County were Amos Boardman and his wife, Sylvia Noble, who some twenty-odd years before had moved from Cayuga County, New York, to Indiana, at the time of the "New Purchase" of that region from the Indians and while it was still called Indiana Territory. Their daughter Rebecca, born in Wilmington, Dearborn County, November 20, 1813, the sixth of their brood of ten children, here met the young George Cable, shortly after he and his parents had come to make their home in Indiana; and on January 9, 1834, these two were married in the home in Ripley County, to which Amos Boardman had moved his family. For a few years they lived in Lawrenceburg, but only to be caught in the financial crash of 1837. "He, however," wrote his son years later, "rallied promptly from his disaster and desiring to try his powers in a wider field, removed with his wife and their first child, an infant, to New Orleans. Their second child was born during the journey down the Mississippi. In New Orleans he entered into business, making a specialty of the furnishing of supplies to steamboats, and soon made what was counted in those days a fortune. He became also an owner of steamboats on Lake Pontchartrain and the Mississippi River, and of a lumbering and brickmaking enterprise on the Tchefuncta River, some forty miles from New Orleans beyond Lake Pontchartrain."

Of the mother, born in Indiana, but descended through both her father and her mother from New England

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Puritans, her son wrote, at the time of her death at the age of seventy-six: "To her indomitable energy she added an unconquerable buoyancy of spirits, an intellectual ambition, a keen relish for social relations and a moral austerity naturally to be looked for in a descendant of the Pilgrims. Her supreme and constant characteristic was an heroic spirit. This feature belonged to the quietest hours and simplest tasks as much as to the greatest emergencies. She had at all times so emphatic a preference for the best way rather than the easier way of doing things, that often she almost seemed to choose the more difficult method because of its difficulty. She pursued all her tasks with a positive gaiety of temper. She had no such intolerance for anything else in life as she had for a spirit of indolence, whether it leaned toward ease or pleasure. She had many features of the artistic temperament: abhorrence of all ungeniuneness and an intense love of the beautiful. She had a passion for flowers, and in the days of prosperity these were her most cherished wealth, and in the times of her severest adversity, when almost her whole means of livelihood depended upon her own diligence, she more than once not only surrounded herself with flowers where she had found none, but by the glad contagion of her energy set her whole neighborhood to gardening."

Without one exception these traits of character were inherited by her son. Years earlier, in his very young manhood, he had written to her: "All I am, in mind, in morals, in social position, in attainments, or in any good thing, I owe mainly to my noble mother."

From his father came other traits: a pervasive sense of humor, a buoyant acceptance of adverse fate, and a genial warmth of nature that was a clear heritage from his Southern forebears. One of his sisters thus recalls, in some fragmentary reminiscences, the gay, rollicking father when he would make his evening visit to the nursery, "getting down on all fours to play bear with us, or

when, throwing aside the cares of business, he took up his flute and danced around to his own music. Joyousness," she adds, "was the ruling note in his character and it never lost its cheery ring through the years of adversity that followed not long afterward."

As for the literary genius of their son, it would seem, like most genius, to have had no ancestry; yet the personality which directed it in its well-restrained channels was plainly the result, in him, of the Cavalier spirit of Old Virginia and the duty-bound conscience of his English Puritan ancestors. To these two strains was added the fact of his birth in flower-laden New Orleans, and the balance swung in favor of the South. "This world seems to me"—he thus expressed his own philosophy—"as definitely for joy as for use or discipline. Both its joy and our own are one of the debts we daily owe it."<sup>1</sup>

His childhood and early boyhood passed as quietly and as happily as those years should; perhaps, too, with the added happiness that belongs to that land of semi-tropical sunshine. "Children love New Orleans!" he has written. "I have seen a great many large cities but I cannot think I have ever seen one so green with trees or so full of song-birds and flowers."<sup>2</sup> And elsewhere he wrote: "Well-nigh every house had its garden, as every garden its countless flowers. . . . And out of every garden came that blessedest sound on earth—the voices of little children at play."<sup>3</sup>

One never-failing source of entertainment, during those care-free years, was the daily "going to market," of which his sister thus makes mention in her reminiscences: "[My father] preferred to select his own meats, almost everything else being raised on the place, and for that purpose it was necessary to be early at the open-air market—all the children accompanying him, followed by Martha, a slave girl, with Jimmy in her arms—and all expect-

<sup>1</sup> "My Philosophy," *Good Housekeeping*, June, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> "New Orleans," *St. Nicholas*, December, 1893.

<sup>3</sup> "Dr. Sevier."

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ing a five-cent treat apiece of some sort." And he himself once wrote, in an article addressed to children :

"Any early-rising New Orleans boy or girl will promise to be good, if father or mother will take him or her along when going to market before breakfast. There is always a delightful uproar in these places in the hour of dawn ; a bewildering chatter of all the world talking at once, mostly in German and French : a calling and hallooing, a pounding of cleavers, a smell of raw meat, of parsley and potatoes, of fish, onions, pineapples, garlics, oranges, shrimp and crabs, of hot loaves, coffee, milk, sausages and curds, a rattling of tins, a whetting of knives, a sawing of bones, a whistling of opera airs, a singing of the folk-songs of Gascony and Italia, a flutter of fowls, prattling and guffawing of negroes, mules braying, carts rumbling—it is great fun!

"Most of these market-houses have some part of their flagged floor left without roof ; and here, in pathetic contrast with all this hurry and noise, one may almost always find, squatting on the flags among the baskets of their own weaving, a few Indian women and children : gentle, silent, grave, bareheaded, barefooted, and smelling sweet of the bay-leaves, sassafras root and medicinal herbs they pile before them for sale."<sup>1</sup>

"In the first twelve years of my life my strongest impulse was for making things. I had a constant yearning for the water, also. To have seen my hands you never would have thought so ; somehow I did not seem to have that yearning seriously in my hands ; but then, neither has a sailor. On a very small scale I was early a ship-builder, and my mother often let me walk alone across the city, to the riverside, to stand and gaze at the great sailing-ships that lay moored against the wharves as far up and down the stream as my sight would carry—three, four, even five abreast. I loved to study the spars, blocks and ropes of their beautiful and stately rigging.

<sup>1</sup> "New Orleans," *St. Nicholas*, December, 1893.



“There, also, were the piles of stones which these wanderers of the ocean had brought from all the corners of the earth as ballast, and thrown out that they might take in cotton. . . . I fancy one reason why I had no pets until I was near my teens was that these ballast piles were so interesting, lying in a land where there is never a rock or stone native to the soil. I always came away from them with such a cabinet of mineral wonders distending my pockets that they made my legs sore to the touch.”<sup>1</sup>

Of another of his youthful occupations he has written thus: “It is the cotton-compress whose white cloud of steam and long, gasping roar break at frequent intervals upon the air, signifying, each time, that one more bale of the beautiful fleece has been squeezed in an instant to a fourth of its former bulk, and is ready to be shipped to New or Old England, to France or Russia, for the world’s better comfort or delight. I could tell you of a certain man who, when a boy, used to waste hours watching the negro ‘gangs’ as, singing lustily and reeking to their naked waists, they pressed bale after bale under the vast machinery.”

Then there was fishing. “The New Orleans boy,” he wrote, “rarely fishes in the Mississippi. ‘Pot-fishers,’ that is, men who fish for a living, catch its ugly buffalo-fish, and the huge fish of three, four and five feet length named ‘blue-cats’ and ‘mud-cats.’ But New Orleans boys have other fishing-grounds. With one’s father or uncle along, Harvey’s Canal, the Company Canal, Lake Salvador, are good, better, best. On a pinch, there are plenty of fun and quite enough fish still nearer by; for in all the suburban regions, where the live-oaks spread their brawny, moss-draped arms, or the persimmon drops its yellow fruit, the plain is criss-crossed with draining-ditches of all sizes, most of them untainted by sewage. And in their sometimes clear, sometimes turbid waters are the sun-perch, the warmouth, and other good fish.

<sup>1</sup> “Some of My Pets,” *The Youth’s Companion*, September 5, 1901.

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"I once knew a boy to catch five pretty sun-perch in one of these big ditches, pack them alive in some fresh Spanish moss well wetted, put them into a covered tin bucket, carry them three miles in the hot summer weather, turn them into a tiny pond at his home, and keep them there—I forget how long, but for more than a year."<sup>1</sup>

As to more serious occupations than dreaming or fishing, "I took great interest in the things we find in books.<sup>2</sup> History was a delight. At ten I had read Hume's 'England.' I cannot remember when I first knew the Revolutionary history of America, but at nine I was memorizing the Declaration of Independence under a mother's promise of an American flag for reward." About this time he committed to memory also—with somewhat more pleasure, perhaps, but with no less toil—the larger part of Scott's "Lady of the Lake," from which all through his life he loved to quote. Such reading, in the intervals of his school work, combined with the wise admonitions of his parents, early developed in the boy a sense of the seriousness of life; though fortunately it never dulled his keen sense of humor or his passionate love of beauty and joy. There was, however, no allowance made for novel-reading of any sort; novels, indeed, were strictly forbidden, among old as well as young. It was not until years later, when the mature man was able to think clearly for himself, that he rid his mind of that mistaken prejudice. Then it was the reading of George MacDonald's "Annals of a Quiet Neighborhood" which changed his convictions and banished his inherited scruples.

In 1854 the mother with her four children left home for a visit in Columbus, Indiana, among some of her kindred and the following letters were exchanged between

<sup>1</sup> "New Orleans," *St. Nicholas*, December, 1893.

<sup>2</sup> At three years of age, so runs family tradition, he was studying physical geography with his mother; and by the time he was nine, as he himself once said, he had determined to write a book, and had so confided to his father; "although," he added, "I had no idea what I should write about."

the nine-year-old boy and his father—the boy's being written first on his slate and copied by his mother at the end of her own letter to her husband:

(“George as usual has a letter on the slate for you, and begs me to copy; so I must do it exactly in his own words.”)

**MY DEAR FATHER**

I have long wished to write to you but could not, however being still as anxious I will attempt it I would like very much to know what business you are in also when you are coming after us for we are so lonely without you that it makes us very unhappy if you were here I would feel perfectly contented, but as you are not here I am far from happy, Do you ever see Henry Potter I would like to write to him, I believe I have nothing more to write, Please excuse this, my first attempt,

Yours till Heaven takes me away

GEORGY

*From George W. Cable, Sr., to George W. Cable, Jr.*

**MY DEAR, DEAR SON:**

New Orleans, April 2, 1854.

I received your kind letter of — date, which gave me extreme pleasure as the first letter from my *dear boy*.

Enclosed I send you four \$1 gold pieces, one for each of your sisters, one for yourself and one for my sweet boy Jimmy. He says I have forgotten him. Tell him, *No*. Forget Jim? Never can I forget either of you. George, you are older than Jim; I know you are a good boy. Now, you can influence Jimmy for good or for evil. My request is that you should give him good examples—treat him kindly and above all things, be governed by your Mother.

George, I look forward to the time when you will (by your good conduct) be an honour to your parents; try

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not to disappoint my expectations. . . . Oh, how I want to see you all! I can't write on this subject, so I subscribe myself  
Your Affectionate Father

G. W. CABLE, *sen'r.*

To G. W. Cable, *jun'r.*

*From George W. Cable, Jr., to George W. Cable, Sr.*

MY DEAR FATHER

I rec'd your kind letter with great joy, it was an agreeable surprise as we were not expecting one for a week or two.

You enclosed us each a gold dollar, for which we all return grateful thanks

You bid me treat my brother kindly,

Yes, Pa, I can and will do it, You also say that you look forward to the time when I by my good conduct shall be an honour to my parents that shall be my first aim, for by so doing I may secure happiness to myself, and then all will be happy! oh! Pa how glad we would have been could you have come, as you anticipated but we hope the time is not far off that you will be with us, Jimmy says he wishes he could say something to Pa, I would tell you about my studies but have not space,

I remain your affectionate Son

GEORGE W. *Jun.*

Four years later, when the boy, not yet having reached his fifteenth birthday, was about to be graduated from the high school, there came a sudden, cruel change in the fortunes of the family. In 1849, for the second time, disaster had wrecked the father's business, when two Mississippi River steamboats into which he had put a great deal of money were burned, with their cargoes, to the water's edge. Then the beloved home on Annunciation Square had been exchanged for a house on Constance Street, which, though larger, had no such extent of grounds or of gar-

den; the father's health gradually gave way under the strain of misfortune, and his physical condition became such as to seriously disqualify him for repairing his losses. In 1859—on February 28, his forty-eighth birthday—he died, leaving his wife and four children completely without resources.

“It was under these conditions,” wrote his son years afterward, “that the full force and quality of his wife's character were brought into play. By exertions that seemed like a daily and nightly self-destruction, prolonged through years, she cared for her husband through his failing days and kept her children clothed, sheltered and in school, until one by one they reached an age where it was proper that they should lean no longer upon her untiring aid.”

CHAPTER II  
SUPPORTING THE FAMILY: A SOLDIER  
OF THE CONFEDERACY  
(1859-1865)

*"That earliest shock in one's life which occurs to all of us;  
which first makes us think."*

DISRAELI

Immediately upon the death of his father, George found work, and together with his sister Mary Louise, assumed the support of the entire family. School-days were suddenly at an end, but not so studying; for from then on throughout his life he carried on a self-training that amounted to more than many a university graduate brings with him from his college class-rooms. A few words of his concerning another American man of letters are particularly apposite in his own case: "He was endowed by nature with many of those traits which it is often only the final triumph of books and institutional regimen to establish in character, and a double impulse toward scholarship and citizenship showed its ruling influence with a precocity and an ardour which gave every day of systematic schooling many times its ordinary value."<sup>1</sup>

George soon obtained a place in the custom warehouses, —where his father had once worked— and was set the task of stamping boxes until, when the Civil War came on, these warehouses were put to less peaceful uses. The one in which he worked was turned into a sword-bayonet factory, and he was forced to seek employment elsewhere. Even in the high school he had shown his ability to write, and a marked talent for mathematics as well; so that the

<sup>1</sup> "William Cullen Bryant," *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

duties of a counting-room clerkship seemed the natural work for him. His commercial life began in the employ of Violet & Black, commission merchants, and there continued through the brief period up to the spring of 1862. Then trade became silent and one by one the stores were closed and, to quote his own words, "the queen of Southern commerce, the city that had once believed it was to be the greatest in the world, was absolutely out of employment."<sup>1</sup>

Then, "there came a sound of drums. Twice on such a day, once the day before, thrice the next day, till by and by it was the common thing. High-stepping childhood, with laths and broom-handles at shoulder, was not fated, as in the insipid days of peace, to find, on running to the corner, its high hopes mocked by a wagon of empty barrels rumbling over the cobble-stones. No; it was the Washington Artillery, or the Crescent Rifles, or the Orleans Battalion, or, best of all, the blue-jacketed, white-legged, red-breeched, and red-fezzed Zouaves; or, better than the best, it was all of them together, their captains stepping backward, sword in both hands, calling '*Gauche! gauche!*' ('Left! left!') 'Guide right!'—'*Portez armes!*' and facing around again, throwing their shining blades stiffly to belt and epaulette, and glancing askance from under their abundant plumes to the crowded balconies above. Yea, and the drum-majors before, and the brilliant-petticoated *vivandières* behind!

"What pomp! what giddy rounds! Pennons, cock-feathers, clattering steeds, pealing salvos, banners, columns, ladies' favors, balls, concerts, toasts, the Free Gift Lottery—don't you recollect?—and this uniform and that uniform, brother a captain, father a colonel, uncle a major, the little rector a chaplain; . . . the levee covered with munitions of war, steamboats unloading troops, troops, troops, from Opelousas, Attakapas, Texas; and a

<sup>1</sup>"New Orleans Before the Capture," *The Century Magazine*, April, 1885.

supper to this company, a flag to that battalion, farewell sermon to the Washington Artillery, tears and a kiss to a spurred and sashed lover, hurried weddings,—no end of them,—a sword to such a one, addresses by such and such, serenades to Miss and to Mademoiselle. . . .

“By and by they began to depart. How many they were! How many, many! We had too lightly let them go. And when all were gone, and they of Carondelet Street and its tributaries, massed in that old gray, brittle-shanked regiment, the Confederate Guards, were having their daily dress parade in Coliseum Place, and only they and the Foreign Legion remained; when sister Jane made lint, and flour was high, and the sounds of commerce were quite hushed, and in the custom-house gun-carriages were a-making, and in the foundries big guns were being cast, and the cotton gunboats and the rams were building, and at the rotting wharves the masts of a few empty ships stood like dead trees in a blasted wilderness, and poor soldiers’ wives crowded around the ‘Free Market,’ and grass began to spring up in the streets,—they were many still, while far away; but some marched no more, and others marched on bleeding feet, in rags; and it was very, very hard for some of us to hold the voice steady and sing on through the chorus of the little song:—

‘Brave boys are they!  
Gone at their country’s call.  
And yet—and yet—we cannot forget  
That many brave boys must fall.’

Oh, Shiloh, Shiloh!

But before the gloom had settled down upon us it was a gay dream.”<sup>1</sup>

Nearer and more near came the war, and the boy watched, with a wistful regret at his own too youthful stature, all the older clerks go from their desks to the

<sup>1</sup> “Dr. Sevier.”



ranks of the Confederate Army; then a former school-mate came back "with the stains of camp and battle on him from head to foot." "Everybody wanted to know of everybody else, 'Why don't you go to the front?' Even the gentle maidens demanded tartly, one of another, why each other's brothers or lovers had not gone long ago. Whereas, in truth, the laggards were few indeed. The very children were fierce. For now even we, the uninformed, the lads and women, knew the enemy was closing down upon us. . . . There was little laughter. Food was dear; the destitute poor were multiplying terribly. . . . There was little to laugh at.

"I shall not try to describe the day the alarm-bells told us the city was in danger and called every man to his mustering-point. The children poured out from the school gates and ran crying to their homes, meeting their sobbing mothers at their thresholds. The men fell into ranks. I was left entirely alone in charge of the store where I was employed. Late in the afternoon, receiving orders to close it, I did so, and went home. But I did not stay. I went to the riverside. There, until far into the night, I saw hundreds of drays carrying cotton out of the presses and yards to the wharves, where it was fired. The glare of those serpentine miles of flame set men and women weeping and wailing thirty miles away on the farther shore of Lake Pontchartrain. But the next day was the day of terrors. During the night fear, wrath and sense of betrayal had run through the people as the fire had run through the cotton. You have seen a family fleeing with lamentations and wringing of hands out of a burning house; multiply it by thousands upon thousands: that was New Orleans, though the houses were not burning. . . .

"Whoever could go was going. . . . I stood in the rear door of our store, on Canal street, soon after reopening it. The junior of the firm was within. I called him to look toward the river. The masts of the cutter *Washington* were slowly tipping, declining, sinking—down she went.

The gunboat moored next her began to smoke all over and then to blaze. My employers lifted up their heels and left the city—left their goods and their affairs in the hands of one mere lad—no stranger would have thought I had reached fourteen—and one big German porter. I closed the doors, sent the porter to his place in the Foreign Legion, and ran to the levee to see the sights. . . . ‘Are the Yankee ships in sight?’ I asked of an idler. He pointed out the tops of their naked masts as they showed up across the huge bend of the river. They were engaging the batteries of Camp Chalmette—the old field of Jackson’s renown. . . .

“About one or two o’clock in the afternoon came a roar of shoutings and imprecations and crowding feet down Common Street. ‘Hurrah for Jeff Davis! Hurrah for Jeff Davis! Shoot them! Kill them! Hang them!’ I locked the door on the outside and ran to the front of the mob, bawling with the rest, ‘Hurrah for Jeff Davis!’ About every third man there had a weapon out. Two officers of the United States Navy were walking abreast, unguarded and alone, looking not to right or left, never frowning, never flinching, while the mob screamed in their ears, shook cocked pistols in their faces, cursed and crowded and gnashed upon them. So, through the gates of death, those two men walked to the City Hall to demand the town’s surrender. It was one of the bravest deeds I ever saw done.”<sup>1</sup>

Was it any wonder that, after such preparation, he eagerly took advantage of the first opportunity offered and, for once blessing his boyish height and appearance, slipped out of the captured city in the company of his two elder sisters as their “little brother,” when they were sent away for refusing to take the oath of allegiance to the Federal Government? “My sisters,” he says, “two harmless girls of twenty-two and twenty, registered as ‘enemies

<sup>1</sup>“New Orleans Before the Capture,” *The Century Magazine*, April, 1885.

of the United States,' intimidated by vague threats of imprisonment against all who did not either do this or swear allegiance to the national government. For this they were banished into the starving Confederacy, almost absolutely penniless. I looked so incapable of military duty that I was allowed to accompany them."<sup>1</sup>

But once "beyond the lines," he claimed every year of his age—he was within three days of his nineteenth birthday—and enlisted in Col. Wilburn's 4th Mississippi Cavalry, a component part of a division left to protect the railroads of Mississippi after the fall of Vicksburg. He is said to have been a good soldier, "scrupulously observant of discipline, always at his post, and always courageous and daring."<sup>2</sup>

*To his brother, James B. Cable*

DEAR BRO. JIM:

Jackson, Miss., Nov. 26th, 1864.

I have been quite anxious about you of late, but I hear at last that Lay's Invincibles are safe at Liberty. I expect to hear that you are there safe too. I cannot help thinking that you are cold or hungry or something else. What sort of a clerk do you make? Can you tell a Special Requisition from a morning report? I have a Yankee overcoat at Mr. Montgomery's for you, & also a jacket. I've been all over creation since last I wrote you, to Holly Springs, Oxford, Grenada, Canton, and Jackson, and maybe you won't believe it but I have been to the moon, I have. There was a rumor that the Yankees had captured Lay's Reg't, but I knew that the Yankees were never made that could capture Lay's blood-thirsty champions of Southern liberty. I have a pair of gloves at Mr. M's for you, and I wish you could get them. However, Jim, if you should get permission to come and get them I don't suppose you would stay any longer away from your com-

<sup>1</sup> "My Politics," an unpublished manuscript.

<sup>2</sup> "George W. Cable": Col. Geo. E. Waring, Jr., *The Century Magazine*, February, 1882.

mand than you could help, as it is not the way to be a good soldier. It makes your chances smaller for a furlough too. I had to pass right by Mr. M's yesterday without stopping to see our dear mother and sister Nettie, and I will have to go back the same way. So Jim, take care of yourself, study army regulations, *read your Bible, say your prayers without fear of comment*, write to us often, keep up your spirits, don't fall in love nor the enemy's hands, and let cards alone. Now I know you don't need this kind of advice from me, but you must just allow me to let off steam this way now & then.

His own story of his well-loved cavalry-horse, "Sandy," gives a picture of his life as a cavalryman: "For months after joining the service I had had no better beast than a wee, slim, white-footed bay pony, all hair and dandruff and bones. But at last one morning, about the end of January, 1864, word came to every detached body of men throughout the State of Mississippi to report at the front, and our front was then on the east bank of the Big Black, in the rear of Vicksburg. That great stronghold had been lost to us the summer before, and now Sherman's army was pouring out of it with sword drawn and torch blazing."<sup>1</sup> . . . Sandy, "a young, light animal, nearly fourteen hands high, well-born, stanch, and nimble," had been taken from his native plantation by one of a band of Federal scouts, who mounted him and rode him in over the Big Black. On the next day he went into battle, and his rider was shot dead in the saddle; Sandy became the property of a Confederate scout and was engaged in more than one hard battle, coming safely through the conflict, however, with only "a scratch on each front hoof and two locks clipped out of his mane."

Then one day, the Confederate scout, being challenged by vedettes, was called upon to surrender. "But he whirled about and showed Sandy's heels. The vedettes fired, but

<sup>1</sup> "Some of My Pets," *The Youth's Companion*, September 5, 1901.



GEORGE W. CABLE AT NINE YEARS OF AGE.  
1853.



AT NINETEEN. IN 1863, THE YEAR HE JOINED  
THE CONFEDERATE ARMY.

Sandy and his rider swept around the turn in the road, and vanished in the woods. At nine o'clock that night a Confederate captain and I, trying to reach our command just as this scout had been doing, came along that road alone. . . . We came into the woods where Sandy and his rider had disappeared. Although there was a bright moon, the way was dark. All at once we both exclaimed in a whisper, 'A horse—without his rider!' Both of us spurred forward and seized him as he stood with his head to the ground, in the middle of the road, eating a bit of corn fodder. That horse was Sandy. . . .

"I should like to recount how, on his back, leading my poor pussy-cat of a pony, I stole by the enemy, so close to them once that I could see the faces of the men cooking food at their camp-fires; how the captain and I reached our command only at the end of the next day; how that evening we cast lots for our booty, and the horse fell to me and the saddle and the bridle to him; how Sandy and I had all our adventures together through the whole of Sherman's great 'Meridian Raid'; especially how, one afternoon, as our squadron charged down a lane upon some ambushed Illinois infantry, I was shot, his third rider within thirty-three days; how, again astride of him, as it chanced, I heard one day the sad story of his earlier master whom the Federals had mortally wounded at Breckenridge's breastworks; heard it from the women who nursed him and closed his dying eyes; heard it as they dressed my wound in the same house. . . . We were homeless, roofless, bedless together, sometimes aching weary or staggering sleepy or starving hungry together; we went share and share alike in all the few dangers we had the honor to incur in a lost cause—once we were near to being drowned together. No creature of his sort stands in my memory between Sandy and me."<sup>1</sup>

It was in February, 1864, during Sherman's march to Meridian, Mississippi, that the young cavalryman was

<sup>1</sup> "Some of My Pets," *The Youth's Companion*, September 5, 1901.

shot,<sup>1</sup> receiving a wound in the left armpit, and barely escaping from the skirmish with his life. He recovered from the wound without much delay, but had hardly returned to service when his horse was stolen from him. Being unable to remount himself—a necessity with the Confederate cavalryman—he applied to be transferred to the artillery and while awaiting his transfer, became attached as clerk to the field staff of Major-General Wirt Adams; afterward for a short time to the field staff of Lieutenant-General Forrest.<sup>2</sup>

“This connection with headquarters,” he once wrote, “brought me much into contact with men of choice intelligence.” He was, like Richard Thorndyke Smith in “The Cavalier,” “hungry for the gentilities of camp; to be where Shakespeare was part of the baggage, where Pope was quoted, where Coleridge and Byron and Poe were recited, Macaulay criticized, and ‘Les Miserables’ lent round; and where men, when they did steal, stole portable volumes, not currycombs.”<sup>3</sup> For he had carried books with him in the saddle and had made use of his leisure moments to continue the studying that had always been his natural impulse and his delight—in the higher branches of mathematics, in a critical study of the Bible and in keeping up his knowledge of Latin grammar.

“Always fond of debate,” he says, “I now began at last, at nineteen, nearly twenty, to have thoughts and convictions of my own. One morning when we had had a very slight brush with the enemy and were marching again, a group of us, messmates, fell to chatting over a bit of headquarters gossip. The rumor was that Toombs and others, of Georgia, were threatening their State’s seces-

<sup>1</sup> This was the second time he was wounded; the first wound was received the day after he had joined his command, according to an old soldier comrade, who wrote to him many years later: “I remember the day you joined us, and it was I who picked out the Belgian rifle for you to shoulder, and the very next day you were wounded.”

<sup>2</sup> J. A. Wyeth, in his “Life of General Forrest,” states that Mr. Cable, while thus acting as secretary to Forrest, drew up, for him, the papers of manumission whereby Forrest freed some of his own slaves.

<sup>3</sup> “The Cavalier.”

sion from the Confederacy. My silence was remarked and I was 'bantered'—as the Mississippians say—to speak. 'This shows me,' I replied, 'that we are fighting to establish a scheme of government that will work our destruction as sure as we succeed. We shall go to pieces as soon as we are safe from outside enemies.' 'Then why do you fight for it?' 'Because I am a citizen of this government, a soldier by its laws, sworn into service and ordered, not to think, but to fight.'"<sup>1</sup>

*To his mother*<sup>2</sup>

MY DEAR MOTHER: Jackson, Miss., March 4th, 1865.

I am sorry to hear by Jim Cox that you and Nettie misunderstood me to promise that I would return from L'g'ton by Mr. M'g'y's. If I had, I would have done so, but I never from the start expected to stop with you except on my way out. My being so near home has almost demoralized me. How I did wish for two or three more days last week that I might pay you a visit. There is no place in the world where I would rather be than near you. If I can get up the road next week, I will spend the whole time with you. Good night my darling mother. Pray that your sons may be sustained with strength equal to their days. May the time come when we may both part from you every night with the good-night kiss.

As ever your loving son,  
GEO. W. CABLE

*To the same*

In Camp near West Point, Miss.,  
March 30th, 1865.

DEAR MOTHER:

I write every time now from some new place. We left Macon, Miss., on last Monday morning & after floundering through a great deal of mud and water, arrived in camp this morning. I pushed on in company with Messrs. Lin-

<sup>1</sup> "My Politics."

<sup>2</sup> His mother and sisters were making their home, between 1863 and 1865, with friends in Mississippi.



## 22 GEORGE W. CABLE: HIS LIFE AND LETTERS

ton, Everman & Green yesterday evening & arrived in W. P't at sunset. About eight o'clock I found Pompey<sup>1</sup> who had come up on the cars from L. Sp'gs to see me. You will know there is little reason to be anxious about me when I remind you that E'n & I have a tent to ourselves. I have been in all the hard rains that have fallen by daylight of late, but the wagons being well covered, I have always been able to put on dry clothes at night. Gen'l Forrest is not here. He left here for some unknown region three days ago. Jim returned to Lauderdale this morning. He takes quite an active part in the protracted meeting there, having himself become a member of the Presbyterian church. The dear fellow is carried away with enthusiasm. It's a dangerous thing—I hope he will come safely through it and be able by the help of his Heavenly Father to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free." Please do not imagine your merry young unshaved, "yaller-fever-faced" boy in trouble, but keep your smiles bright for an illumination when you once more meet

Your Devoted Son

G. W. CABLE

Brig. Genl. Comdg—*Cuisine* (!)

*To the same*

At General Forrest's Hd Qrs.,  
Gainsville, Ala., April 16th/65

MY DEAR MOTHER:

You have little idea that I am in the town of Gainsville, Ala., and have just returned from a pleasant walk on the steep and lofty bluff bank of the Tombigbee River. I have been watching a steamboat making a landing, & it brought back home more vividly than anything I have seen for two years. As usual, I have found friends who have been taking great care of me. I have been playing the guitar

<sup>1</sup> Probably the negro who had been my father's "little slave boy," in the home on Annunciation Square.

for some young ladies who in their turn have been charming me with some new songs. Gainsville is, so far as I can judge, a very pleasant little town. I am writing by a window that overlooks a beautiful bend in the river lying about 75 ft. below me. A long pontoon bridge, a green flat bank on the opposite side, where the general's escort are encamped with the white tents stretched on the edge of the water, the graceful curves in the river above and below the town, the dense foliage lining the shores, the group of soldiers at the foot of the bluffs, and two rather fair looking steamers with steam up near the landing, all go to make up as fine a view as I ever saw. Genl. Forrest is a hard worker. Everybody about him must be busy. I think he calls for "them clerks" a dozen times a day. He attends to everything himself, sits and talks to everyone, knows everyone by name, tells everything he intends to do, and tells the same instructions over fifty times in half an hour. His brain, however, is as clear as crystal & he seems to think of a dozen things at once.

I have not heard from my transfer, nor can I expect to, as there must be great confusion in the affairs of the Mobile forces. I fully expect to stay with Major Ellis, as he will most likely want to keep me, transfer or no transfer.

It rejoices me to know of any pleasure you enjoy, for I am constantly in fear that your courage will fail & that you will succumb to your troubles. But I should remember how all my life I have seen you "suffer & be strong." You must really make Mary Louise come up to Madison this summer. The way times are now, I think it is highly desirable & necessary that we should be as little scattered as possible. I do not doubt that the enemy will hold the country she is now in. These are the "times that try men's souls," and my constant prayer is that when ours are tried they may go through the ordeal as gold through the refiner's fire. Give my love to the household & accept much for yourself from

Your Devoted Son,

G. W. CABLE

At the close of the war he returned, a paroled prisoner, to New Orleans, with only his soldier's pay in his pocket—\$155.00 in Confederate paper money!

Years later he liked to tell the following story of those first days after the war: "I was a youngster in the counting-house of——, and was sent on an errand to General Banks's headquarters, on the outskirts of the city. I had to sit waiting some time for him to appear. When he did so, he was in the Federal uniform. Imagine my feelings! For three years I had been supposed to shoot when I saw that uniform. I advanced with my letter and handed it to him,—boiling mad inside. He looked me over and said, 'What do you mean by coming here in that uniform? Don't you know that there is a law that forbids you to wear that uniform?' I drew myself up to my fullest height and replied: 'Yes, sir; I know that, sir. But I know of an older law which I am bound to regard, which forbids a man to appear without any clothes at all, sir.'" General Banks sat down at his desk and wrote; then handed to the young clerk an order on his employer for a suit of clothes—citizen's clothes.

*From Major-General Banks to F. Van Benthuyzen*

Headquarters, Department of the Gulf  
New Orleans, May 28th, 1865.

Mr. F. Van Benthuyzen,  
New Orleans, La.

Sir:

Your clerk who has presented me your bill, I notice wears grey uniform in contravention of military orders. I desire you to enable him to purchase clothing which will not be against the regulations of the Department.

I remain

Your obedt. Servant,

(Signed)

W. P. BANKS  
M. G. C.

New Orleans, May 28th, 1865.

Mr. F. Van Benthuisen,  
New Orleans.

Sir:

Mr. George W. Cable, your clerk, has stated the circumstances connected with his wearing Confederate uniform, which are satisfactory to the General. He has no objection to your continuing him in your employ, providing he does not again wear the grey uniform.

I remain

Your obedt. Servant,  
JAMES L. AUDEM,  
Private Secretary to Maj.-Gen. Banks.

## CHAPTER III

### BOOKKEEPING: SURVEYING: BOOKKEEPING ONCE MORE (1865-1870)

*"Employment, sir, and hardships prevent melancholy."*

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

There were many other ex-Confederate soldiers just then seeking employment in New Orleans, and the job of errand-boy was neither remunerative nor stimulating; so that when a position was opened in Kosciusko, Miss., which included his younger brother, it was accepted, and in the fall of 1865 the two went thither.

#### *To his mother*

DEAR MOTHER:

Kosciusko, Miss., Octr 26, 1865.

The morning being rainy I have a little time to write to you which is the first for a very long time. Mr. B—— made his final start for New Orleans last evening, and I am left in charge until he returns.

If B. was a good business man my place would be a fine one. I make \$50.00 per month & the total of my expenses will not exceed \$15.00 per month. But the way he crashes about must end him in about three months more, so I am still doing my best to get employment in New Orleans & I am led by my friends there to believe I will soon succeed.

Kosciusko is being blessed these times by the presence of the Synod of Mississippi, (which includes Louisiana,) and a crowded church is treated to a splendid sermon

quite frequently. Jim and I are to have one of the members in our room, which will give "Sans Souci Shanty" quite a *respectable* air. If I had devoted my leisure hours to drawing a likeness of John Bunyan I might venture to "hang" up L'Imperatrice for her beauty—(some villain says preachers like pretty women)—; but to have the Empress of Fashion swinging opposite to Adalina Patti—the very bright particular star of the European opera—would be a sight grievous to our guest's digestion.

I am still trying to study but it's slow work. I showed my drawing to a drawing-teacher the other day. She pronounces it excellent & tells me to persevere, which I shall do.

I hope that Mary's troubles may soon end. She need not be uneasy about your welfare, for thank Providence, I can now support you. I counted up our savings (Jim's & mine) today & found to my surprise we have to our credit \$99.54. What a pile! Don't you think we had better buy an iron chest? You ought to see the way the young ladies are beginning to dress here. Calico is at a tremendous discount & the "demoiselles" appear before the astounded storekeepers in dresses imported direct.

Console poor Mary Louise & be content yourself, looking forward to a time in the future when we shall sit around our fireside & "Remember the Poor."

I remain, Dear Mother, your Aff't son,

G. W. CABLE

*To the same*

DEAR MOTHER:

Kosciusko, Miss., Novr 17th, 1865.

I received your letter of the 14th last night and seize the first opportunity to answer. Your letters give me such great pleasure, that were I to attempt to pay you for your goodness by letter-writing I should fail completely. In the hurry and bustle of the day, elbowing as best I can my way thro' the world, all the ruder and more selfish traits

of my nature are developed and I find myself at night isolated both from the great world of strangers and the dear ones at home. Then I sometimes have a letter from you to read—rec'd during the day in the rush of business—and it is such a change, such a blessed change from the cares of the long day that I cannot thank you half enough for the trouble you take to write. I do not know what I would do without my dear mother's kind messages. I am worked pretty hard now and sometimes my very heart gets weary and I long for some oasis in this wilderness of Labor where I may for a few moments halt and rest, but a letter comes from you and I am so renewed in spirit by it that I could not be persuaded from toiling to my uttermost and that without ceasing. A letter came from you a day or two ago, a dear, long letter full of a mother's love—how I did bless you for that letter. I know what it cost you to write it too; I know you too well not to know that you labored hard to give me such a treat.

I had hoped ere this to have found a situation in the city but I still look for one from some of my many friends there. However I know that if I earnestly and prayerfully strive to do my whole duty, come what may *it is impossible* for anything to go wrong; for "I know that my Redeemer liveth" and that whatsoever He may appoint, whether suffering or happiness, is all for my eternal welfare. Meanwhile we may pray nothing doubting that that blessed day may be hastened when we shall all meet under one roof and that roof our own. The Lord grant that it may be near at hand for your sake.

Your Devoted Son,

G. W. CABLE

Fortunately, the exile in Kosciusko did not last long; a more satisfactory position was soon secured in New Orleans, with a Mr. Coleman, a cotton-factor, and an old friend of the Cable family.

*To the same*

**DARLING MOTHER :** New Orleans, La., Decr. 11, 1865.

I seize my pen in hopes of having time to write a few lines. You know by my last letter how I am situated, & where. Mr. Coleman is very indulgent, I have but little to do compared with the way B—— used to crowd me. My principal business seems to be to take care not to strain myself, and be sure to read the paper. I am trying to get employment for Jim & hope to make things work so as to have you down here long before Spring.

Bear up, the end I hope is very near. I am living for the present with Mr. Coleman & find it very pleasant, of course. You have the luckiest son in the world. I came down here & within Five days I have had Five offers for employment & plenty of idle clerks in the city too. I have commenced making new friends already. A Mr. Walthal wants me to room with him for NIX, & everybody tells me I am highly complimented. But that's enough about myself. I knew it would give you pleasure to know it. Sam Linton is here & other old comrades, & if I only had you here & was n't in love I'd be just as happy as a lark. And now darling mother goodbye——

I am your loving son

G. W. CABLE

*To the same*

**MY DEAR MOTHER :** New Orleans, Jan'y 10 1866

When I write you, which indeed is seldom, I talk of little but myself, and I would thank anyone who would tell me some cure for such a bad habit, but since I must talk selfishly please put up with it until I learn better.

No doubt Madison<sup>1</sup> is as dull now as during the war, and yours is surely a trying life, as your whole time is spent in or immediately about the house. Dear mother you

<sup>1</sup> Madison, Mississippi.



must not allow yourself to "rust" away to nothing. Stir about as I know you love to do. Please do your children the kindness to "spend your money free" & call for "More!" Were I to send all the money I would like to I should have to "hopen a bank." After a time when salaries rise and rents fall we will have a little home of our own in New Orleans La Belle & *one hearth, one circle, one interest, one motive, one faith, one love*—shall bind us all together. And then—here's a health—may you have a larger family than ever before. You are so full of courage, you have always looked Fate so straight in the face, that I believe you will catch from me the high hopes that set my young blood adancing and wear a patient smile for a little longer. A little longer! I have warm friends here as I have always had everywhere, and they will do all in their power for me. Let me then work on and the time will come, please God, when I shall be blessed with the sight of my mother in her home.

Jas. B. Cable, Esq., is happy under a new hat, has but little to do but is kept out of mischief all day and goes to roost at dark in the old way. Last night he came and sat by the office fire where I was busy with my angles & circles and enjoyed half a dozen glorious snores. Poor fellow, if his eyes would allow it he would sit with me and read every evening.

I am drawing again. I must tell it you know. Genl. R. E. Lee will be glad to know that I am taking him down on Bristol board. The empress hangs over Mr. Coleman's parlour mantlepiece. Our old church looks very natural lately. I go Sunday nights to hear Dr. Palmer and think I have never left him and felt unimproved in head and heart. I should say I have always left his church with new resolves and clear faith. The city is full of life. I have attended one concert this winter. It was splendid. Such music, such singing, such instruments—how bad I want three dollars to hear M'lle Elie & M. Oliviera play at

Odd Fellows' Hall tomorrow night. Strackosch manages the Opera at present and tho' it has been poor I think it will now be fine. Dinner hour has come & I am glad of an opportunity to *stretch*. Good bye. I have enjoyed my visit & will come again soon.

I remain  
Your Affectionate Son

G. W. CABLE

*To the same*

DEAR MOTHER:                      New Orleans, Jan'y 26th 1866

Though it is quite late (I have just laid my books away) I am writing for fear I may be busy tomorrow, & unable to write before Monday.

I am getting along in my home about as usual but I suppose all good things have an end. Here's hoping the end of this one may be far ahead in futurity; unless we can get an establishment of our own where you can make biscuits while we talk over our plans and hopes. I still study, & believe my toil begins to show something accomplished at length. I am slowly learning, in my present position, some of the hitherto incomprehensible parts of the great machinery called Trade. I begin to see what I thought was not to be found—the beauties of the *Science* of Trade. The cotton business is very pleasant—but I cannot help striking higher, & trying for an honourable profession. May the world regret me when I die! And above all may I hear the approving words from the universal Judge—well done good and faithful servant—enter into the joy of thy Lord. That your distresses & anxieties & loneliness & sickness, may soon give place to quiet & peace & health at home, is my Goodnight wish. I long for the time when I may once more receive the goodnight kiss.

As ever  
Your Devoted Son

G. W. CABLE

*To the same*

DEAR MOTHER:

New Orleans, Feb'y 27 1866

Jim & I have just returned from the regular weekly meeting of the "Young Men's Weekly Prayer-meeting." We have formed a society of young men for religious reading & study & add to these prayer & singing. It is very pleasant & highly improving.

But what is uppermost in my mind I have not mentioned yet. I think I shall in the course of two weeks succeed in obtaining a good position in the engineering business. I hope & pray that I may get it, as, situated as I now am, I cannot do justice to my employer & my books too. An eminent engineer promises to take me in his employ & make me an engineer, in case he gets certain R. R. iron which he is waiting for. But if he does I must go to Texas.

Your Devoted Son

G. W. CABLE

*To the same*

DEAR MOTHER:

New Orleans, March 6, 1866

Enclosed find (20) Twenty Dollars to come home with. Come! for if I succeed in getting my position with my Texas engineer I may leave before you get here. But the Lord grant I may behold your beloved face before I leave. Jimmy or myself will be at the depot to meet you on the next train, so you need not send word unless you do not come soon, as we will meet every train until you come. Mary is gone—by this time, I hope, is in her new home—now come to yours. Quick, Mother, before I go.

I remain

Your Devoted Son

G. W. CABLE

Apparently the expected position did not become a reality, though the studying had gone diligently ahead; and



IN 1868, AGED 24 YEARS.

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early in July the young engineer started off with a State surveying expedition sent out to re-establish the lines and levees along the banks of the Atchafalaya River.<sup>1</sup>

*To the same*

In camp, Mo. Red River, July 9th, 1866

MY DEAR MOTHER:

I am safely arrived in camp, and what is still more important to me, have passed the first night in the open air without taking additional cold. My cough has almost entirely disappeared. I suppose all steamboat trips are the same so long as we keep in the Mississippi, so I will not describe the journey, though were I talking with you I could amuse you with a half-dozen droll anecdotes of the strangers I saw:—the cross old man who wouldn't look at the bill of fare & became offended because he was so plentifully helped to dessert—the man who could not cut his steak & would not have another piece—the man who was always a course ahead of the rest & always ate his soup before the gong screamed—the fellow that wouldn't go to bed if he knew himself & the fellow that wouldn't get up if he knew himself—& finally the plain lady who would stay on the boiler deck & the pretty one who would stay in her room, all these I would tell of but judging by myself you are too warm to laugh much. I have been out with the engineers "helping" them to adjust the instruments and find them as careful to keep out of the sunshine as I could desire. I am with a "very nice gentleman"—I put it in commas because I mean that he is what the ladies

<sup>1</sup>The Atchafalaya Bayou, La., is an outlet of the Red River, or possibly of the Mississippi, originating in the northern corner of Pointe Coupée parish, where the Red River enters the Mississippi. At times of inundations a part of the water of the Mississippi is discharged through this channel. There was at one time thought to be considerable danger that the Red River, which then also discharged a part of its waters through the Atchafalaya River, might make this its principal outlet.

always call so—i. e., a companionable stranger. “Capt. Cozzens is his name and Dixie is his nation.” We move camp tomorrow bidding good-bye to the banks of the Mississippi. I sit now upon the edge of my cot upon the western bank and without rising might easily throw my lead pencil into the red current that sweeps majestically out of the great tributary that opens out about a mile above, and flows slowly down close against this side. If you could see the great rivers as I see them now, mingling their waters without a ripple like two great giants silently clasping hands; if you could go to the edge of the bank by night and hear the soft washing of their waves like the breathing of some monster asleep, you would, like me, realize as you never did before the force and wisdom of the remark that “still waters run deep.” But excuse the romantic—there must be Irish in our blood “somehow or somehow else”—and I will soon leave this agreeable task and go to books.

Your Aff't son

G. W. CABLE

*To the same*

“Oaks,” Atchafalaya River,  
July 22, 1866

DEAR MOTHER:

Sunday has come and almost gone but thanks to the kindness of Mr. Nelson, the name of whose place heads my letter, before the sun sets I will have written you another letter. Two weeks have now passed since we landed at Red River and in spite of the constant exposure to which I am subjected I am in good health & spirits and pleased with my new occupation. Our journey so far will not be interesting on paper. We have seen a sufficient quantity of white herons, sandpipers & alligators to “last us”; plenty of sickly cotton, small corn, empty houses, old crevasses, mud, sun & cottonwood brakes; and a few nice houses, green fields and cotton-gins. The ruin worked by high water has been almost complete on the eastern bank, & the western, upon which I now am spending Sunday, has also

suffered severely. I will be very glad when we leave Atchafalaya & start down the Mississippi. Engineering is hard work, but I inherit enough of "Mrs. Cable" to like the labour—it is in fact what I thought it—a beautiful profession that few men are willing to sacrifice their comfort for.

No word has reached me yet of my dear ones at home, but I hope to get more than one letter when I arrive at R. R. Ld'g. Everything seems to center there—I am promised promotion when I reach there—I do not doubt I will get it but it will not pay any more, I think. Please be very particular in telling our friends of me not to hint that I am an engineer or surveyor—the caution may be unnecessary to you, but I fear you may not know the great difference between engineers and their subordinates. However, the gentlemen do all they can to smooth off the inequality; I mess and lodge with them, while the flag, chain & ax-men have a separate tent & table. When we commence the Miss. River proper I am to be chief of the flag party—I know no more what it means than you do, only it is to be made very instructive to the *young hopeful* of the party. I have to letter the maps &c and will have a great deal of map-making to do very soon.

You must please let me hear often from home—it is very lonesome and did I not feel this to be what I have actually chosen as my lifetime profession I would be homesick. The most unpleasant thing that has happened since leaving home was my being obliged to work from breakfast to dinner today—Sunday. It was an absolute necessity—but caused by the laziness & drunkenness of the leveller with whom I work. I will not be obliged to work Sundays except when absolute necessity compels. Well—how I would like to kiss you good-bye. Tell Jim to stick to business & above all things never to be an engineer. The sun would make him blind in a week.

Good-bye.

Your Devoted Son

G. W. CABLE

*To the same*

Stmr. *Cleona*, Atch-&c River  
July 25th, 1866

DEAR MOTHER:

As you may see by the frantic style of writing before you, I am afloat and trying to catch step with the paddle-wheels that shake our little *Cleona* like she had a chill.

Some sons would have too much respect to their mothers to send such a scrawl as this, but I do not hesitate, as I am persuaded that every word I send you are glad to receive if you can read it. Tomorrow! what a day for me. Letters, Love, reward, praise & promotion. Keep it to yourself, ma chère mère, that I am highly complimented for all my work & will be promoted (as I have previously said) tomorrow. I don't know what "chief of both flag parties" is, but I am told it is a promotion—that's enough.

My love to M. L., Nettie, Jim, Morton, Jimmy, the C's—but most of all—above all—to you, my dear mother.

Your Affectionate Son

G. W. CABLE

Shortly after the writing of this last letter the whole surveying party was attacked with a virulent form of malarial fever, known in that region as "breakbone fever"; and the enthusiastic young rodman who had thought this was to be his "lifetime profession," was forced to abandon the work. Nor did he fully recover from the effects of this illness for more than two years; in fact, he was not entirely free from certain serious after-effects for the next six years. His months of convalescence, however, spent in the surveying camp, were put to good account in studying the natural history of that region; for he could no more keep himself from studying, all his life, than from breathing.

When at last he was able to return to work, he established himself at the counting-room desk. But the desire to write which had been strong in him even as early as



when he was the editor and the principal contributor to his school journal, "The Spirit of the Times," now asserted itself anew, and his leisure moments were given to the production of short skits and verses, which he contributed anonymously to *The Daily Picayune* of New Orleans. These were so acceptable that he was soon offered a position as reporter for that paper, and was thus enabled to quit the uncongenial labor of bookkeeping. Besides his reporter's work, he carried on, for somewhat less than a year and a half, a weekly column of criticisms and humor, under the title, "Drop Shot." Here he created the character of Felix Lazarus, a supposed acquaintance and companion of "Drop Shot," the writer of the column. Felix figured in many of the weekly paragraphs and gradually became so real a person—at least to his creator—that when the time came for "Drop Shot" to bid farewell to his readers, his column ended thus:

#### ADIEU

For many and many a month we have spoken to you under the familiar black capitals that now head our column for the last time. The muse—heaven bless her!—has shown us many a mood: Sometimes sad, sometimes gay, once or twice (as, for instance, when the registrar of births called at Felix's house,<sup>1</sup>) jolly, and lately quite taciturn. Many a time we have been rewarded for our labor. For the love of the muse, do not think we mean paid in money; that was sustenance, but besides that we have had our reward. Many a smile have we brightened and lightened many a care. They have told us so—the public have—by letter now and then, and oftener by word o' mouth. We trust we have never affected Sir Oracle; we trust our mistakes may be forgiven; we trust we may not instantly be forgotten; and wherever our dear readers may find the scratch of our pen in future, oh, that they may rec-

<sup>1</sup> "The New Arrival," to which reference is made in Chapter X.

ognize us without an introduction. Once more, adieu! for we have an appointment to attend a funeral today, and would appear in our decenter suit upon the sad occasion. The tombstone is to bear the simple inscription,

SACRED TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
FELIX LAZARUS

---

In February, 1869, he became engaged to marry Louise Stewart Bartlett, and on December 7 of that year they were married. Both born in New Orleans, they had grown up within a few squares of each other and had had many common friends, yet did not meet until they were grown. Louise Bartlett, though Southern-born, also had, through both of her parents, a long line of New England ancestors, the earliest of whom had been prominent settlers of a number of the old New England towns. Her father, William Allen Bartlett, had come to New Orleans from his native Connecticut as a young man and had there engaged in business, married and brought up his family.

*To L. S. B.*

Plaquemine, June 25th, 1869.

As I am applying myself systematically to the care of my eyes, you will not expect an apology for a short letter. I am feeling much better than when I left home, & without being too sanguine, have much reason to hope that I will soon be fully renovated. The enjoyment that offers seems to be principally fishing and rowing on the bayou Plaquemine, & I have just now returned from a long trip with Miss Bond, as sweet a lady of 45 as ever you knew. I have gathered some pretty flowers and water-weeds "And all to be a posey to my ain true luve." There has been a dinner given to a newly married couple here and Whar-ton met me (not knowing that I was coming) before the

whole company, with such screams of delight, hallooing Cable! Cable! Cable! until he fell on my neck in a fit of gleeful laughter, that the whole company were acquainted with me in a moment and seemed to think they had been wanting to see me for a long time. However, more anon, at the present only this much more—

I have been to the woodlands this morning, my love,  
Where the breath of the wildflowers is sweet on the breeze;  
How happy, I thought, near the nest of the dove,  
To build a bright bower for the lady Louise.

Here the glories of nature are many and fair;  
What queen hath such robes or such jewels as these?  
Yet these in their beauty would faintly compare  
With the graces they'd meet in the lady Louise.

All wet with the morning, I found the wild rose  
Deep blushing with love at the kiss of the bees;  
And I blessed the sweet flower only less fair than those  
That bloom on the cheek of the lady Louise.

The violet, sweet type of the humble of earth,  
And the close-clinging vines in the dark-hanging trees;  
They hinted of modest affection and worth,  
As they reign in the breast of the lady Louise.

Low drooping her head from the south-wind's caress,  
The innocent pansy blooms under the trees;  
Thus kindly, thus coyly, nor loving me less,  
Wilt thou yield to *my* fondness, sweet lady Louise?

A thousand fair flowers, unnamed and unknown,  
But beloved of the sunbeams, were opening with these;  
And I thought it but meet that a bower and a throne  
Should be builded among them for lady Louise.<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime, the position on *The Picayune* did not wholly satisfy him: his heart was not in it; it was not suited to him, nor he to it. "I was naturally and emphatically unfit," he himself said, "for the work of gathering

<sup>1</sup> These verses were later published in his "Drop Shot" column.

up and throwing down heterogeneous armloads of daily news. I had neither the faculty for getting more news, nor the relish for blurting out news for news' sake after it was got. Had I possessed these equipments in any excellent degree, I need never have lost my place because—as has been printed of me—I would not violate my conscientious scruples, or, more strictly, the tenets of my church, by going to a theatre to report a play. The fact is I had no strong reportorial value in me to offset this somewhat vexatious scrupulosity. . . . I wanted to be always writing, and they wanted me to be always reporting. This didn't work well, and so when the summer came on and they began to reduce expenses, it was intimated that my resignation would be accepted. I vowed that I would never have anything to do with a newspaper again, and I went back to bookkeeping.”

CHAPTER IV  
"OLD CREOLE DAYS"  
(1871-1879)

*"When high desire of fame  
Gave life and courage to my laboring pen,  
And first the sound and virtue of my name  
Won grace and credit in the ears of men."*

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

Once more he betook himself to the counting-room desk, and in 1871 entered the employ of Wm. C. Black & Co., cotton-factors and commission merchants, with whom he remained for the next eight years, until the death of Wm. C. Black, the head of the firm. Here he soon added to his duties of bookkeeper the more responsible management of the finances and general affairs of the counting-room. He became also the private secretary of Mr. Black, and through him Treasurer's Clerk and Secretary of the Finance Committee of the New Orleans Cotton Exchange. These duties were carried on with a faithfulness that won him the regard and friendship of his employer; and when, ten years later, he resigned these positions he had the satisfaction to receive from the officials of the Cotton Exchange the following communication: "The books and documents of your department bear evidence of skill and neatness and are the best witnesses of a faithful performance of duties characteristic of your management."

Upon his side, he writes: "I soon conceived a sincere affection for my two employers, if not for my work. The senior was a man of great public value, a proverb for integrity, deliberate, sagacious, willing to serve, and a true lover of the people—according to his idea of what and

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who the people were. The best, wisest and most powerful merchants, financiers and lawyers were daily visitors at the desk where he sat 'not caring,' he said, 'to get any richer.' Many a debate I had with him when work was slack and no visitor near."

It was in these fierce days of Reconstruction that were laid the foundations of opinion and conviction which some years later prompted the writing of "The Freedman's Case in Equity" and "The Silent South."

### *To his mother*

New Orleans, Nov. 20th, 1871.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

I thought your birthday was the twenty-first; Louise says it is the twentieth; you will excuse my ignorance since I am necessarily compelled to get my information by tradition. I hope the day finds you well, however, and ready to continue on in life's experience. It becomes me to render thanks to you, on your birthday, for all you have been to me since ever I was born. You have done more, and suffered more, and lost more, than can be repaired by me should your life continue through a century. I remember some of your self-denials and sacrifices and sicknesses, and misfortunes that were borne for my sake. All I am, in mind, in morals, in social position, in attainments, or in any good thing I owe mainly to my noble mother.

I have heard nothing final from my publishers yet, and cannot resist much anxiety.

Your Son  
GEORGE

The publishers referred to were in the North and had been approached in regard to the reprinting in book form of a collection of his fugitive writings in *The Picayune*. The proposal did not commend itself to them, and each in turn courteously but firmly declined to risk the under-



**LOUISE STEWART BARTLETT, AT THE TIME OF HER  
ENGAGEMENT TO GEORGE W. CABLE, 1869.**

taking. About this time, however, the editor of *The Picayune* invited his former reporter to write some historical sketches of the principal churches and charities of the city. “My counting-room work,” he says, “was not so engrossing but that I could accept this invitation, and the better to qualify I began to study the colonial history of Louisiana. I became deeply interested; wrote the sketches and still studied on. My good, strong eyes, being imposed on, gave out, overtaxed; but I got friends to read to me.”

*To his mother*

MY DEAR MOTHER:                      New Orleans, July 4th, 1872.

Matters are moving along with the lassitude of the season in the city, and Harry Parker & I are about the only two persons really hard at work within the horizon of my knowledge. He is dreadfully overworked and, they say, looks haggard and cannot sleep. I, on the contrary, am looking and feeling well. Here is the manner of my working: this morning I rose at 6, having had Walker to read Geo. Calvert’s essay on the “Life and Writings of Goethe” until 10 last night, preparatory to reviewing it for Sunday’s Pic.; breakfasted on wheaten meal (it is very good as well as digestible) and—you will envy me—hash, with etceteras. Walked to the office at 7, wrote a book notice for a little volume of very good poems by a new writer (Henry Abbey), wrote a few lines to Louise and fell to work on cash-book and ledger. Today finishes my labors of the counting-room upon the closing season, & I shall have considerable leisure for literary work until the cotton crop is made. At 3 o’clock I shall go to dinner, dining at 4; at 5½ Ross will appear and we shall sit down in my cool bow-window, and he will read the History of Louisiana aloud. Tomorrow I review Fanny Fern’s last book, and Ross & I finish the 2d vol. of the Hist. of La. I write these criticisms more to oblige Harry than to profit myself, as I get only the works themselves for my trouble, and they are not such as I would make my library



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of. Saturday and Sabbath I spend with Louise and write *The Picayune* a letter for which I get paid. About Tuesday next I hope to begin writing a series of papers for the Pic. that Harry promises to buy.

Now you will say—and Aunt Susan will look frightened—“when am I going to take a little rest?” Well, as Jimmy’s shoemaker said about getting sober, “That’s the qeshun!” I feel pretty well rested now, however; though I worked pretty hard this spring, didn’t I?

Now, my dear mother, a kiss—one for Aunt Susan—one from Louise, one from baby-Louise (whose first success in speaking is the mastery of “please” and “thank you”) and so, God bless you, good-bye. Mrs. Bartlett is saving you the root of a rare flower.

G. W. CABLE

*To the same*

New Orleans, Aug. 20th, 1872.

MY DEAR, DEAR MOTHER:

I am so busy trying to catch up with my writings which have been thrown almost a month behind what I expected, that I do not know how to get time to write to you.

I have read a great deal since last May; I had to be posted in State & City history. My papers have somehow taken a form which must make a book if they are fit to make anything. One thing you will be glad to know: I was solicited to attack the Lottery company with all the virulence I chose & did so in an article which was at once copied by another city paper, the editor sending word to me that he was so pleased with its truth and force that he reproduced it in full. Buckley, recognizing my style, drops me a note offering to pay me for an article in favor of the Catholic Total Abstinence movement. I couldn’t charge Buckley & can’t stop to write it for nothing.

I must be off to work.

Your devoted son

GEORGE W. CABLE

Continuing his own story: “I was moved at last to write some short stories of old New Orleans. But I did not at that time seek a publisher; I laid them aside. In my reading I came to the old Black Code. In sheer indignation I wrote a story which years afterward became the foundation for the episode of *Bras-Coupé* in ‘The Grandissimes.’ In summer hours when the counting-room was idle, I went to the city archives and read hundreds of old newspapers. Here I got my inspiration for ‘Tite Poulette,’ written in sympathy for the fate of the quadroon caste. And here, too, I conceived the story of ‘Posson Jone.’ All this time months—years—were passing. I met Edward King, visiting Louisiana and writing the ‘Great South’ papers, and he encouraged me to offer my stories to *Scribner’s Monthly*. Some of them were accepted. But I did not press my success; I neglected it. My counting-room duties filled my time and I merely wrote a little now and then for *The Picayune*, as editorial matter.”

The story of the meeting of Edward King, the brilliant young journalist from the North, and George Cable, the more or less obscure secretary-manager of a New Orleans cotton-factor’s counting-room, has been told by others than my father. In 1872 Mr. King appeared in New Orleans, in the course of his journeying through the Southern States for material for his “Great South” papers, a commission for *Scribner’s Monthly*. He and my father met and an enduring friendship grew out of that meeting. He was shown the manuscripts of several stories that had been the outcome of the study among the archives; and with a journalist’s zest for a new writer in a new field, he bore them away in his own hands and, not even waiting for his return to the North, enthusiastically posted them to Dr. J. G. Holland, then editor of *Scribner’s*, and to Richard Watson Gilder, his associate.

It is a matter of regret that none of my father’s letters to Edward King can be found; but some extracts from Mr. King’s letters to him at the time will serve to show

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how keen was Mr. King's enthusiasm and how exceedingly helpful were his efforts in placing the stories, as were also the constant advice and encouragement and sympathy which, as a fellow-craftsman, he unstintingly gave.

*From Edward King to G. W. C.*

NOBLE CABLE: Mobile, Ala., March 25, 1873.

Fair youth, I have not all deserted thee. "Bibi" has waltzed away to New York, hand in hand with Bienville and the other heroes of that time, and is I doubt not, ere this, in the hands of a grim editor, who is torturing him with anticipation. Fear not, O Cable, for your fame is sure if you continue to make Bibis. But do not toil by the midnight lamp too much; otherwise the wells of your life will run dry just at the moment when most you need their waters. . . . Au revoir, and don't work too hard.

Yours truly,  
EDWARD KING

*From Edward King to G. W. C.*

San Antonio, Texas,  
April 24, 1873.

. . . Do not fail to send "'Sieur George" to the Cushing address, as I shall delight in reading it to certain of the faithful. . . . You shall soon hear from the Scribnerian ranch, even tho' I have to write and remind them. . . .

Ever Yours, EDWARD KING

"Bibi" rode me as a nightmare the other midnight.  
E. K.

*From Edward King to G. W. C.*

St. Louis, Mo.  
July 22, [1873.]

DEAR CABLE:

The battle is won. "Monsieur George" is accepted, and will be published in *Scribner*. It will appear in the maga-

zine as “‘Sieur George—A New Orleans Story”—. I read the story myself to the editor, who liked it; it trembled in the balance a day, and then Oh ye gods! was accepted! I fancy I can see you waltzing around the office of the venerable cotton brokers, shouting the war-cry of future conquest! Courage!

It now behooves you, however, to take special pains with whatever you do hereafter. The main criticism upon your work is that the plot is not always worked out as lucidly as could be desired. . . . Scribner & Co. will doubtless write to you in due time—but meantime appointed me to tell you of the acceptance.

Yours,

EDWARD KING

*From G. W. C. to Fred Lewis Pattee*<sup>1</sup>

Northampton, Mass.,

July 21, 1914.

MY DEAR MR. PATTEE:

In reply to your kind letter of the 18th let me say, Yes, Edward King came to New Orleans almost at the beginning of his tour of the South and we became acquaintances and friends. I asked him where to send some stories—two or three—which I had just written and he himself read and sent two to Dr. Holland, editor of *Scribner's Monthly*. Then Gilder, assistant editor, wrote me, and my lifetime acquaintance with both the *Century* and Charles Scribner's Sons began. I cannot say that King's "Great South" papers affected the Southern literary awakening. I think the two were merely co-incidental.

Yes, I read some French literature and believe it had its influence on me, though not so much as Dickens, Thackeray, Poe or Irving. My Frenchmen were Hugo, Merimée and About. I also read many of the old *Relations* of the priest explorers and much other French matter of early historical value.

<sup>1</sup> Author of "American Literature since 1870."

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It would give me much pleasure to tell you just how I came to drop into the writing of romances, but I cannot; I just dropt. Money, fame, didactic or controversial impulse I scarcely felt a throb of. I just wanted to do it because it seemed a pity for the stuff to go so to waste.

Command me as much further as you choose and believe me ever

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE.

“Sieur George” was accepted only after a hard-fought fight; but two other stories, “Dr. Goldenbow” and “Hortensia,” were returned with the brief comment, “Not quite up to the level of your other work”; whereupon they seem to have been consigned by their author to the wastepaper basket. “Bibi,” which Edward King particularly liked, was rejected by *Scribner's Monthly*, was rewritten a year later and returned to them, when it was again, though reluctantly, rejected. After being offered to several other publishers and by them declined, “on account of the unmitigatedly distressful effect of the story,”<sup>1</sup> it was put aside, to be rewritten several years later and incorporated into “The Grandissimes” as “The Story of Bras-Coupé.”

Though Mr. Gilder, with his editorial caution, was less precipitous than Mr. King, he was no less generous in his encouragement and advice. Of him, years later, my father said: “In all the first years that I knew him, I did not guess that he was young. The words of editorial counsel in his headlong handwriting were so sage, so lucid, and so plainly impromptu, that they seemed certainly to spring from the depths of a long-clarified experience, and the inspiring surprise with which I first looked upon the

<sup>1</sup> George Parsons Lathrop, writing for William Dean Howells, then Editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*.

boyishness of his form, step, and smile, and saw a man of my own years, is now a specially tender memory.”<sup>1</sup>

In 1873, Mr. Gilder wrote to Edward King: “If you think worth while will you forward enclosed letter to Cable.

“He is a genius & ought to know it. If he’s a *man*, it won’t hurt him to know it, but will spur him up. But I suppose you have said these things to him.”

The “enclosed letter” was sent :

*From R. W. Gilder to G. W. C.*

Scribner’s Monthly,  
654 Broadway, N. Y.,  
Aug. 29th, ’73.

MY DEAR MR. CABLE,

After reading your story in the proof—’Sieur George (I’m sorry we did not have time to send it to you, but Mr. King kindly looked over it) I feel moved to say that “we” hope you know that you have the makings of one of the best story-writers of the day. All you want to do is to appreciate yourself. You will do much better even than “’Sieur George.” Don’t forget to be always *clear*—don’t weary your reader with trying to remember or discover things—make every sentence as sharp as may be—these are only incidentals that I make bold to mention—and I make bold because, selfishly and editorially speaking, I want you to fulfil the promise that there is in this story. You know how to be pathetic in manly fashion—and to say a thing in three words that some would say in thirty. Go to work in good earnest and high faith in yourself—work as religiously as if you had already Bret Harte’s reputation—& perhaps you may have one as lasting.

Yours faithfully

R. WATSON GILDER

<sup>1</sup> “Letters of Richard Watson Gilder.”

After the acceptance of "'Sieur George," a second, "Belles Demoiselles Plantation," was taken by the Scribners; then "'Tite Poulette" and "Madame Délicieuse." But "Posson Jone'"—"the little parson story," as Mr. Gilder called it,—was literally hawked by Edward King among the publishing houses, until at last it was accepted by the editors of *Appleton's Journal*.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, paragraphs concerning the "discovery of George W. Cable by Edward King" began to appear in the newspapers and Mr. King sent my father, under date of March 4, 1874, the following clipping, writing above it:

"Thou canst not say I did it!  
Never shake  
Thy long moustache at me!"

"It is said that the name of Geo. W. Cable is a coming one in literature. He is a New Orleans *litterateur*, discovered by Mr. Edward King during his 'Great South' journey, has already published one story, 'Sieur George,' in *Scribner's Monthly*, and will have a second, 'Belles Demoiselles Plantation,' in the April number. He is doing

<sup>1</sup> Published in *Appleton's Journal*, April 1, 1876. The payments for these early stories may be of interest, and are here given for comparison with present-day prices, as well as with those received by my father for later work.

'Sieur George—October 9, 1873.....	\$50.00
Belles Demoiselles Plantation—April 4, 1874.....	\$62.00
'Tite Poulette—July 21, 1874.....	\$82.00
Jean-ah Poquelin—April 17, 1875.....	\$78.00
Café des Exilés—February 24, 1876.....	\$80.00
The Grandissimes—March 7, 1879.....	\$500.00
July 23, 1879.....	\$500.00
August 11, 1880.....	\$500.00
Full payment \$500.00 more than first offered by <i>Scribner's</i> .	
Madame Delphine—August 20, 1880.....	\$250.00
Gregory's Island (The Solitary)—May 5, 1896.....	\$400.00
Seven articles on the Louisiana Creoles, 1883.....	\$1500.00

for the Creole life of the South something like Bret Harte's work for the characteristic California 'society,' and the work already published is very fresh and fine."

And when, after several years, the story still persisted, Mr. King wrote Robert Underwood Johnson: "Do tell Geo. Cable when you see him that I shake my skirts of that paragraph promenading the press which calls me 'the discoverer of Cable.' Surely I never spread such a story, I who know so well that Cable discovered himself, and would have dawned upon the world had there never been any 'Great South' scribes in New Orleans, to hear his mellifluous reading of his delightful sketches."

But my father himself had never any hesitation in acknowledging his great debt to Edward King as well as to Richard Watson Gilder. "The first person outside of my own family circle," he wrote many years later, "who ever read my story of 'Bras-Coupé' was my dear friend and 'discoverer,' the late Edward King, who wrote me from San Antonio, Texas, that he had read the manuscript over three evenings in succession and had encountered him in three successive nightmares. This naturally was great encouragement to me, for of course the height of the storyteller's ambition is to give his readers nightmares."

After the fate of the first stories was decided, there came an interval of nearly two years, with the handicap of frail health, and in 1875 *Scribner's Monthly* brought out "Jean-ah Poquelin" and "Madame Délicieuse."<sup>1</sup> Later in that same year "Café des Exilés" was sent to them, and then came another interval.

During this time my father made his first visit to the North, partly for the recreation afforded by such an absence from his office-desk, partly for a face-to-face acquaintance with his publishers.

<sup>1</sup> In May, 1875, another story, "Ba'm o' Gilly," was sent to the editors of *Scribner's Monthly*, but this one was not accepted. Apparently, it was never published anywhere.



*To his mother*

DEAR MOTHER:

Havana, July 7, 1875.

Since writing my letter to Louise I have been out in the street a few steps & have returned. Thought you would be disappointed if I did not send you a line also.

I hardly know how to write anything at all without getting entangled in a long rehearsal of city and sea experiences. However, I will simply dot down a stray note or two, thus:

I measured a street of fair average width—20 feet from wall to wall. Also measured a sidewalk of less than common width—*16 inches*.

The floors here are never of wood. Those of any pretention are black & white marble; there are no fireplaces in Havana.

Everybody rides in cabs. The cabs just swarm. They run the whole 24 hours. 30c a ride—any & every where. Everything shows trifling, pleasure-seeking, indolence & cruelty. The city is one mighty stench! When wet—it rains every day—a perfect pig-sty.

People live in elegant apartments directly on the street in alleys as bad as the one between Magazine and Camp on Orange. Ground floor too. The children & mothers look through the iron gratings like jail-birds—the aristocratic young ladies never show themselves except on the Plaza in carriages & volantes after night.

Another time I will tell you of some of the magnificence.

Your Devoted Son

GEO. W. CABLE

*To the same*

MY DEAR MOTHER:

New York, July 19th, 1875.

I am back once more in N. York, and sit down to wait a few minutes for Mr. Stockton<sup>1</sup> who is going to show me some of the wonders of Gotham.

<sup>1</sup> Frank R. Stockton, the writer.

When I come home maybe I shall be able to tell what I am now seeing but—if I should attempt it here I should produce a “corner” in the Stationery Market.

How they did treat me at Holbrook Hall. Mr. A. drove me out in his “cart”; took me, with others, out calling in the twilight, visiting two or three of the nabobs of the neighborhood in their splendid villas. And now I bear an exquisite little bouquet in my buttonhole, placed there by Mrs. Appleton’s own hands.

Don’t I write like a college boy? And why shouldn’t I? It’s vacation, you know.

Love, love, love to one & all. The thermometer went down last night to (47) (XLVII) Forty-seven!

Yours coolly yet fervently,

GEO. W. CABLE

*To the same*

MY DEAR MOTHER: . . . New Orleans, Sep. 9th, 1875.

I write so soon again to say first that you must always let your absent-minded boy know just what you are in need of. So much—oh! so much more than anybody would suppose—has been imputed to carelessness and hardness on my part in many of my experiences, that was nothing but pre-occupation of thought.

I want to ask you to overlook it and its consequences, & always give me timely notice of your wants.

God give us peace and mutual grace to be a help and comfort, each to each.

Yours devotedly,

GEORGE W. CABLE

Through the winter of 1875-’76 my father produced not a single story, and in April of 1876 came a letter of inquiry from Mr. Gilder. The following reply was sent back:

To R. W. Gilder

DEAR GILDER:

New Orleans, Apl. 21, 1

You see? Right hand laid up for repairs—forg cunning. I can still write with it, but it hurts! So, left hand as relief guard. I am very much obliged to you for your nice, warm letter. I am doing nothing in the way of writing just now—have nothing on hand; but whenever I get my right hand may fail, but hardly my memory, I trust my *Scribner* friends shall hear from me.

Will you let me trouble you for a postal card? I will write on the back what I can get *French's Collection of Louisiana Papers*, and *Poole's Index to Periodicals* for, from S. W. & Armstrong.

Man is born to trouble—other folks. Regards (served hot) to all yours and *Scribner's*.

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

This letter is written with the left hand, with quite as good result as if with the right, for my father was naturally left-handed. In his boyhood his mother had insisted upon the use of his right hand for writing, and by this practice he became ambidextrous. But he always threw a ball with his left hand!

"My counting-room duties filled my time," he says; but that which actually exhausted his strength was his habit, in his eagerness to get his story-writing done, of rising at four o'clock in the morning to write until breakfast-time and then go to his office desk for the day. This, in addition to his daily work as bookkeeper, was the cause of no less than three breakdowns in health. To save his eyes, my mother acted as his secretary at home, but even with that help he dared not undertake any work beyond what was necessary. Two years later, however, in 1878, "being," he himself once wrote, "quite unexpectedly

invited by *Scribner's Monthly* to furnish a serial novel, I hired assistance at one of my office desks, and fell to work to write 'The Grandissimes.' In fact, that novel was already partly written. The editors knew nothing of this,<sup>1</sup> much less that the work I should by and by send them was going to have any political character. But that was well-nigh inevitable. It was impossible that a novel written by me then should escape being a study of the fierce struggle going on around me, regarded in the light of that past history—those beginnings—which had so differentiated Louisiana civilization from the American scheme of public society. I meant to make 'The Grandissimes' as truly a political work as it has ever been called. . . . My friends and kindred looked on with disapproval and dismay, and said all they could to restrain me. 'Why wantonly offend thousands of your own people?' But I did not intend to offend. I wrote as near to truth and justice as I knew how, upon questions that I saw must be settled by calm debate and cannot be settled by force or silence."

Early in 1877 had come a letter from H. H. Boyesen, then Professor of Literature in Cornell University, but also already recognized as one of the fiction writers of the day—a letter so full of friendly encouragement, although from a total stranger, that it evidently called forth a warm and grateful reply. The outline of the novel, then well under way, was sent to him for criticism.

*From H. H. Boyesen to G. W. C.*

My DEAR MR. CABLE, Ithaca, N. Y., March 17th, 1877.

I need not tell you that your letter was profoundly in-

<sup>1</sup> This is evidently an error of memory, for in November, 1877, Mr. Boyesen had written to my father: "I talked with Dr. Holland about you this summer & he expressed the hope that you would send him your novel as soon as it is finished."

teresting to me, & I should have answered it long ago, if I had felt equal to it.

The magnificence of the material for your novel quite dazzled me, & your little parenthetical remarks, sprinkled through the main narrative, convinced me that you see both your dangers & your exceptional advantages as clearly as any novelist I ever knew. I read with a glow of delight your brief sketch of your plot, & I saw immediately what your chances were. Yours is going to be the kind of novel which the Germans call a "Kultur roman," a novel in which two struggling forces of opposing civilizations crystalize & in which they find their enduring monument. That is rather awkwardly expressed, but you know what I mean. Out of the material you display before me, I would undertake to make a dozen novels, all tolerably unhackneyed; but you can do the same & in the course of time will do it.

I shall of course say nothing about your novel; only I like to talk about what you have done already.

Sincerely your friend

HJALMAR H. BOYESEN

Since the appearance of "Café des Exilés" in *Scribner's Monthly* for May, 1875, my father had been trying to induce Scribner, Armstrong & Co., the book-publishing part of the firm, to bring out his short stories in book form; but with no success. They, and indeed other publishers to whom the book was in turn offered, were averse to taking the risk of a volume of short stories which had been printed already in the magazine; there was no sale, they all declared, for such a book. But Mr. Boyesen thought otherwise. On January 8, 1878, he wrote: "I had the pleasure to-day to induce Mr. Scribner to undertake the publication of your short stories in book form, which I understand from Gilder he refused to do last year. I had two interviews with him on the subject, & finally succeeded in convincing him that you were a great man."

The next day came word from Mr. Gilder: “I need not say how de—lighted I am at the chance of seeing your short stories brought out and your novel written. Be sure I will do all in my power to get the public waked up. Boyesen actually *bribed* (!) S. A. & Co. to take the short stories.” To which Boyesen, a year later, after the book was out: “I foresaw clearly the success of ‘Old Creole Days’ & the bargain I made with Blair Scribner (Gilder tells me he wrote you about it, although it was my intention that you should never know of it) proved happily superfluous. You can safely count on two editions more.”

*From G. W. C. to Scribner, Armstrong & Co.*

DEAR SIRs:

New Orleans, Jan. 16th, 1878.

I have your estd favor of 12th inst. and the book mentioned in it. In accepting your proposition I beg to say that I think that you are doing as you would that men would do to you.

I have not given the naming of the volume much thought, but there was a name in my mind some weeks ago that, it suddenly occurred to me, was the name for my stories if ever they should be bound together. It touches the Creole *electrically* just where he has a soft spot common to all mankind. The name of the book, if it please you, shall be *Jadis*. If you would like me to try again, however, I will do so; I appreciate the importance of a name that will, so to speak, go where it's sent.

In order to give you the printed MS in good shape, I shall have to trouble you to send me not only the back numbers of the magazines containing the stories, but to give me all the advice you can imagine necessary for the guidance of one who, for a writer, is laughably ignorant of the art of book-making.

I will merely mention to you the story of Posson Jone', published a year or so ago in *Appleton's* magazine.

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It would go nicely with the others, I think; but I do not wish to influence your judgment at all, and see no harm in leaving it out.

With thanks for the volume of Mrs. Burnett's stories, I am, gentlemen,

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

*To Scribner, Armstrong & Co.*

DEAR SIRs:

New Orleans, Feb'y 9th, 1878.

Since my last postal to you I have been so closely occupied with the press of office-work usual with the first of the month that, although I have done something on the stories, I have not finished with them. I think another week will see them on their way to you, as I shall give them a good deal of time from this on. Please tell me how it would do to date them; thus: Jean-ah Poquelin, 1805; 'Tite Poulette, 1810; Posson Jone', 1815; Belles Demoiselles Plantation, 1820; Madame Délicieuse, 1830; Café des Exilés, 1845; 'Sieur George, 1850. These dates would be exactly correct, but maybe policy would dictate a more marketable arrangement of the stories. Putting Madame Délicieuse, for instance, as the best foot, foremost.

I have beat my brain for a title, almost the only result being that the brain is well beaten. *Jadis* signifies, as near as I can give it in English, *once*, in the fairy-tale sense; "once upon a time," or "in old times." *Jadis reigned en Normandie un prince*—etc. (Robert le diable.) My notion that it is a good title is partly founded on the fact that the word itself is a trifle antiquated; has passed out of conversational usage & belongs to the past; is used only in narration & I think in prose is found almost always as the initial word of the narrative. I would give—"what wad I not?"—for a Creole provincialism meaning the same thing, but there is none to be found.

Now I will proceed to give a bad lot of unsatisfactory

titles & hope to hit upon something good before it is too late. PROSE IDYLS FOR HAMMOCK AND FAN. HALF-HOURS FOR HAMMOCK AND FAN. THE OLD REGIME. CREOLES ET CREOLES. A PECULIAR PEOPLE. CREOLES. CREOLES DU VIEUXTEMPS. HAMMOCK AND FAN.

I have a lot of old Creole songs gathered with great difficulty & strangers to printer's ink. How would it do to quote from these at the head of each story?

With regrets that I am not able to send my work on completed, I have the honor to remain

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

*To Charles Scribner's Sons<sup>1</sup>*

DEAR SIRs:

New Orleans, Octo. 17th, 1878.

Your esteemed favor of Octo. 10th found me in great distress and affliction. Death has been thinning the ranks of my kindred & of my own family and household. I will not enter into particulars. In comparison with many my lot has been an easy one. Moreover, it is the Lord!

There is nothing in your letter that my conjectures had not pretty accurately anticipated, and I am ready to say promptly that I think your course in relation to my short stories is the best one for your interest and that whatever is to your interest in the matter is obviously also to mine. I am therefore ready to agree with you more cordially than you seem to expect me to do, believing that I forego only the pleasure of seeing my work in print a few months sooner than might be best for it.

I hope, when the time comes, you will have been so fortunate with the venture as to announce a credit on your books to the author; for in the midst of bereavements I have also not been without disaster, and would

<sup>1</sup> This was the new name of the reorganized publishing house.



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like to find my old stories netting me here a little and there a little toward the rebuilding of certain breaches in my wall. Still, I shall be content if only you lose nothing.

With sentiments of the highest esteem, I am, gentlemen,

Yours respectfully,

GEO. W. CABLE

*To R. W. Gilder*

DEAR GILDER :

New Orleans, Octo. 17th, 1878.

Here is a little history of the last few days with me. If I write this I shall afterward feel able to go into the consideration of other matters.

On Saturday the 5th inst., my two brothers-in-law who live with me left town by two diverging railways to spend Sunday with their little families in the country. I remained with my family which thus reduced consisted of my wife, three little girls, one little boy and an infant (all our own children), myself, a nurse maid and a cook to whom we were much attached.

On Monday morning before day my younger brother-in-law knocked at my door and came in to lie down with the yellow fever. He had felt himself struck with it while with his children in the country, had gone to bed to wait for a train, finally took a freight train on which he spent 8 hours of the night and came to my house to receive the preliminary treatment of his disease 15 hours after the attack of a fever that kills in seventy-two. We did what we could and though despairing of his life fought for it with our might.

The same day a telegram informed us that my other brother-in-law's youngest child was attacked with the fever but was doing well. The next day a second despatch announced her dying. The following day a third announced her dead, a second dying and the third and last

very ill. The day after was Thursday and the brother-in-law in our house was hanging between life and death.

On Thursday night at 10:15 o'clock, going to the nursery to take a final inspection of heads and pulses for the night, I found that my second child, a girl of six years, had the fever—had had it for probably fifteen minutes. In one hour and a half her pulse was 150 and her temperature 105. A telegram informed us of the death of my absent brother-in-law's second child & his expectation of losing the third.

On Friday morning at 10 o'clock my only son, a child of 4½ years, was found to be exhibiting the influence of the fever, and symptoms were distinct indicating that the brain was involved. At 1:30 P.M. my fourth child was found to have the fever. My brother-in-law, on the other hand, gave hope of recovery.

On Saturday my physician expressed plainly his doubt that either my fourth or my third would recover, and on Sunday the three children were showing the most alarming symptoms of black vomit, two of them even vomiting signs of it. On Sunday night my little boy appeared to be dying in one room and my smallest girl in the other.

On Monday morning our cook was attacked & I had no room where I could put her. She went to her sister's house and took to bed. My little boy was fighting for his life but had the black vomit and was losing ground hourly. The second child was struggling against the same thing, the fourth was barely alive and the house resounded with the wailing, moaning & screaming of the tortured children. At 6½ o'clock P.M. my little son breathed his last. The little girl younger than he was shrieking with frenzy and the elder was retching and gagging.

My eldest child had been long since sent off the premises and the infant continued well. The state of the mother can be imagined.

On Tuesday my child was buried without any cere-

monies under my roof, the body being carried out stealthily to the corner and there consigned to the carriage which bore us to the cemetery. That evening the infant's nurse appeared to have the fever, but time has proved that she had nothing but fright.

Today is Thursday. The Lord has delivered us out of much tribulation and my brother-in-law, my two little girls and my elder brother-in-law's last child are in a measure safe. My cook will most likely die tonight of black vomit or raving mad.

Such, my friend, is my short story. It may seem a little strange that I can today sit down and write it; but I desired to make this record in order to arrange in order the terrible memories of the past ten days and I have used you for the purpose.

Toward the end of these experiences I found one morning your letter in my pocket unopened. I thank you for it. I believe the offer you make for my novel is a just one. I cannot go into the merits of it, nor is it necessary. I am satisfied you are giving all you think you can afford and that you are doing as well by me as you would for anybody of equal rank as a writer.

Please to remember me kindly to Mrs. Gilder & each of my friends in "Scribner's" personally.

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

I expect tomorrow to resume my work on the novel.

*To Charles Scribner's Sons*

DEAR SIRS:

New Orleans, June 5th, 1879.

I have today ordered by telegraph 50 copies, more or less, O. C. Days. Have not yet rec'd the circulars. They would be very useful. I do not see that I have any opportunity of pushing the sale of the books beyond New

Orleans. It has been a matter of pride with me to secure them a hearty welcome home & that is fairly well done already. There is scarcely a copy in town for sale today.

Mr. Redwood is with me, sketching. We take a 24 hours run in among the Acadians tomorrow. Please send me some Northern press notices.

Yours truly,

**GEO. W. CABLE**

CHAPTER V  
"THE GRANDISSIMES": THE HOME ON  
EIGHTH STREET  
(1880-1882)

*"I love tranquil solitude  
And such society  
As is quiet, wise and good."*

SHELLEY.

Toward the close of the year 1879, which had marked the publication of my father's first book, "Old Creole Days," and the appearance, in the magazine, of the beginning of his first novel, "The Grandissimes," occurred the death of his employer, Wm. C. Black. "I never lost a dearer friend," he later wrote. "I tarried two or three months to make his affairs intelligible to his executors and then withdrew finally from counting-house work. I hoped to make literature my sole calling." And he adds: "Literature meant, to me, *belles lettres*. Yet I made an odd digression from *belles lettres*, for all that. The Government had commissioned Col. Geo. E. Waring, Jr., to gather the 'social statistics of cities' to consist of an untabulated, encyclopedic report from a selected expert in each of the great cities of the Union. On starting for New Orleans a friend of his handed him 'Old Creole Days' to read on the train. On reaching the scene of those tales he sought their author and offered him the commission for reporting New Orleans. It was accepted. Against every effort the work expanded as I wrote. The editors of *Scribner's Monthly* seeing me so deeply immersed, proposed that on finishing for the Government I expand the work into an illustrated history of the Louisiana Creoles.

"Again I consented, well pleased to write historically

of a people whom I was accused of misrepresenting in fiction, and wrote 'The Creoles of Louisiana.'"

While engaged upon this work for the U. S. Census,<sup>1</sup> he was also asked, through Col. Waring, to gather data concerning the Acadians in Louisiana, for use in the same Census. This work required another visit to the Acadian country—that country of which, years before, he had made his first careful study, during the months of convalescence in the surveyors' camp.

*To L. S. C.*

Vermillionville, Nov. 21, 1880.

This, you see, is Sunday afternoon. I have been to Sunday-school & church & to dinner. Now let us talk of good things & good thoughts and so pass down the western decline of one more sabbath.

I never could have realized before as I do now what a sad want the want of the word of God is to an otherwise civilized people. The Bible would lift the community in which I am sojourning out of the miry clay into which it has fallen. If anything else would I know not. Railroads will bring commercial development & wealth & fortunately the Bible with it. Tell our little girls they must lose no time to see to it that their hearts are given to God and their hands to His service, for had they a thousand hands they could not do all that they will have opportunity to do.

The Roman church is very inert out here & its results meager. The people, but for practice of one or two vir-

<sup>1</sup> A foot-note to the "Historical Sketch"—a part of the Social Statistics of New Orleans in the U. S. Census for 1880—reads: "In the preparation of the report on the city of New Orleans, the local assistant, George W. Cable, Esq., not only secured and transmitted a very large portion of the detailed information concerning the present and the past condition of the city, in response to schedules of interrogatories, but to him alone is due the careful and elaborate historical sketch with which the report is introduced."

tues absolutely essential to the framework of social order, are without religion, superstitious and densely ignorant. God spread the love of souls among His favored people whose myriad advantages spring from the possession of the English Bible!

This is the hour when I generally meet our fellow-workers in the little mission on 3d street. What a drop in the bucket, what a grain of dust in the balance, does that feeble little enterprise seem compared to the work that is crying to be done even at our doors—at the gates of our city.

It is by these littles, however, that God's work is done. I suppose it ever will be so until we learn to give our means & strength as we should, throughout the church to the advancement of the Kingdom.

Let me turn our thoughts to our loved ones. Speak an affectionate word to each of them for me—all yours & all mine. I have lost a great deal of time in this world, loving less than I should have done. A man lives more by loving more. So does a woman.

In 1881 my father took his family—his wife and four little girls—from New Orleans to Franconia, in the White Mountains, for the summer. My mother's health was very frail and the journey to a cooler climate had become a necessity if she was to live at all. On his way back to New Orleans he stopped in New York, to see his publishers, who had become also his warm friends.

*To L. S. C.*

New York, June 4, 1881.

I arrived in New York only 14 hours after leaving you, coming through from Springfield with a whirl and a hum that was the sort of excitement you know I like.

I dropped in for a moment on the Gilders, it being their night. Mrs. G. sends love to you. They have now

gone out of town. The Johnsons are gone. At Springfield I dispatched to Col. Waring to know if he had got home. He answers "Yes—Come at once to my house."<sup>1</sup> I go there on the Sound steamer Monday night.

Drake expected me Friday & had a nice teaparty for me at his house. Richd. Whiting was there.

I am tonight at the Century Club. It is "Strawberry Night," one of the big nights.

I have been for four hours today sitting for my portrait, which is being painted by the artist Thayer, for Scribner & Co. to be engraved by Cole or somebody else.

*To his mother*

DEAR DEAR MOTHER: New York, June 4, 1881.

I write this at the Century Club, sitting a few feet away from the corner where Thackeray used to sit. If God wills it I may one day venture to go and sit down there.

I shall not attempt now to give any account of my experiences even in a cursory way. I only write to say, dear mother! and precious mother! and beloved mother! and God-blessed mother! I would I had your dear, hardened, shrunken hand in my own to cover it with kisses and tears of gratitude for the life you have given me & the sacrifices without number you have made to make that life what it is.

Tonight is a great night in this ancient club: "Strawberry Night"; and Mr. Scribner has invited me specially to be here. He and Mr. Burlingame, (son of the Minister Burlingame, late Minister to China & then Chinese Ambassador [for] the United States) met me here last Saturday night & made it delightful for me.

I have met many fine men of late, John Hay, for one; and none I was better pleased with than St. Gaudens, the maker of the new statue of Farragut. I was pleased, too,

<sup>1</sup> In Newport, Rhode Island.



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with Hay. Also, especially, with Hovenden, a great artist.

I hope this evening to meet Stedman.—I like Charles De Kay, Gilder's brother-in-law; a prince in appearance and manner. Mrs. Herrick has been most kind & hospitable. So has Mrs. Gilder. Good-bye—love to all.

Your aff. son,

GEORGE

To L. S. C.

Newport, June 7, 1881.

I am about done with this precious day of delights. I drove yesterday afternoon with Mr. Roswell Smith in Central Park, then took boat for Newport, steamed out through the thousand beauties of New York harbor, East river and Long Island Sound, and at four o'clock in the morning turned the key in the door at "The Hypothecuse" (Col. Waring's home) and putting out the dim gaslights as I followed the way that led to my bedchamber, silently went to bed and fell asleep.

Did ever anything happen so droll! I send you Col. Waring's letter to show how it was done. This morning, about 8½ o'clock Col. W. came and woke me. I breakfasted with Col. & Mrs. Waring and went out with Col. W. to his office. Took a walk by myself & saw an old graveyard containing the graves of men who died long before the revolution. Came back with Col. W. to the house & met a company at lunch invited to meet me. The "lunch" consumed nearly four hours. One of the gentlemen was—to my great surprise—Mr. Le Bourgeois, with whom I spent the night last fall in St. James parish.

Also met accidentally, & enjoyed it greatly, Miss Ticknor the head of the "Women's Society for the Promotion of Study at Home."

Then to the R.R. station & rec'd Mr. James Osgood the publisher, who, *en route* for N. York stopped purposely to meet me.



*Courtesy of the Century Co.*

**GEORGE W. CABLE.**

Engraving by Timothy Cole, from a painting by Abbott H. Thayer.

We all dined at Col. W.'s & I had a splendid business talk with Mr. Osgood. Will tell you about it some time. It relates to the distant future & I don't like to write it down.

*To the same*

New York, June 14, 1881.

I think my last line was Sat'y morning. After writing<sup>1</sup> I went to the office of J. R. Osgood & Co. & made the acquaintance of Mr. Osgood's brother, E. L. Osgood & of the two Messrs. Ticknor. Then I went & bade my dear Col. Fairchild goodbye (as I had already done Howells & Col. F.'s sister, Mrs. Dean), and so on the cars and away for Hartford.

I went to see Charles Dudley Warner. Found him, his brother George & Mrs. George Warner. It is hard to realize now that I have known these kind, gentle, hearty friends only four days. They telegraphed at once to Mr. Clemens (Mark Twain) to come up—from somewhere beyond New Haven. On Monday they came—taking the first train that started after their rec't of telegram. We doubted its reaching them & I was out inspecting the insane asylum & then seeing the marvellous beauties of the state-house (inside & outside). Both Mr. & Mrs. Clemens came, Mrs. Clemens "inviting herself," as she said.

And so I met Mark Twain. We all lunched together & "Mark" & Mr. Warner were ever so funny. But soon the Clemenses had to bid us good-bye & return to the cars & to New Haven. I will tell you all about it some day, from the hearty meeting to the pleasant but regretful parting. George Warner took me out again in the afternoon, driving in & out of the beautiful town.

In the evening I dined with them. Met Charles Dudley Warner, Rev. Jos. Twichell, Rev. Ed. Parker, Mr. & Mrs. Geo. Warner & Gen'l Hawley. A brilliant company.

<sup>1</sup> From Boston, Mass.

But I have entirely omitted to tell you of my Sunday evening with Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. We had a long, & to me delightful, talk about the South.

How happy it makes me to hear of the good conduct of my four little daughters!

Haven't I had a big time! And now it draws to a close. Drove in Central Park this evening with Roswell Smith again. He doesn't like Osgood's having flanked him.

*To the same*

En route at Dalton, Ga.,  
June 22d, 1881.

Well, the greatest holiday of my life is about over. It was a little dashed with the necessity of doing business with friends (always an awkward task), but it is all done & I believe without losing the kind feeling of anyone. Mr. Scribner acknowledges himself rather harshly disappointed at my giving my next novel to Osgoods, but I explained it so as to make it plain that it was not because of dissatisfaction & Mr. Burlingame & he are mollified. I like them both very much and would feel very bad to have any estrangement spring up between us.

The friends I have made are many and of the best—I mean God's best.

*To the same*<sup>1</sup>

New Orleans, June 24, 1881.

Your contact with people different from yourself and those with whom you have been commonly thrown can be made to be an advantage to you. For we must remember we belong to nothing less than the whole human race and that these people are our brethren. It should teach us how much patience we ourselves may be taxing from others strangers to our ways.

<sup>1</sup> Stopping for the summer in a farm-boarding-house in the White Mountains.

You must be friendly with the new people when they come in. The Yankee general will probably turn out to be a pleasant person with very little war talk. If they talk about the war tell them you are—you know you are—an abolitionist.

Now the boarders are coming—see how much good you can do them. Life isn't long—seize its opportunities.

*To the same*

New Orleans, July 2, 1881.

I have today, from London, a handsome little red, cloth-bound volume called "Madame Delphine, etc., etc."—containing, (with Madame Delphine) Mad. Délicieuse, Belles Demoiselles Plantation, & Posson Jone', published by Frederick Warne & Co., Bedford St., Strand, (London) (by George W. Cable, author, etc.)<sup>1</sup>

*To William Dean Howells*

MY DEAR MR. HOWELLS: New Orleans, July 12, 1881.

If I made claim not to be a savage I should apologize for not having written earlier after my return home; and indeed I should have written (or might, could, would) if I hadn't intended launching the Grandissimes at you simultaneously. I send my book by this mail. [A fiendish laugh under the platform.] If you ever forgive me this act I shall be ever so happy to know it.

Please kiss Mrs. Howells' hand for me. I see her at this moment in the midst of her treasures new and old in the beautiful home whose interiors she did me the honor to show to my "raptured vision."

Yours truly,  
GEO. W. CABLE

<sup>1</sup> This was the first edition of his writings to be published in England.

*To the same*

DEAR MR. HOWELLS:                      New Orleans, July 30, 1881.

I don't any more know where your copy of the *Grandissimes* is than I know who sent the infernal machines to England. I haven't the stamina to attempt another shipment; I should find I had sent Madame Delphine to the *Grandissimes* and Mrs. Mary Hallock Foote to you.

I hear with delight that when this engine-room atmosphere has blown southward from New Orleans I may expect you and Mr. Clemens down this way. Happy day! You think you have seen people behave foolishly over a man—just wait!<sup>1</sup>

Yours truly,  
GEO. W. CABLE

*To the same*

DEAR MR. HOWELLS:                      New Orleans, October 8, 1881.

I am quite happy in your letter of the 2nd inst. But what shall I say? Your broadsides of compliment have silenced my batteries before I could return a shot. I am utterly helpless. Take me along; tow me in and dismantle me. I have quaffed your sweet praise until I am simply in no condition to attend to business.

Blessings on you for your kind words. But to think that you should like my offspring one by one, all the way from Agricole to Raoul.

. . . . .  
Alas! Poor Frowenfeld; I knew I should never raise that child. The goody-goody die young. But—speaking in earnest—it was my chagrin over my partial failure with him that determined me to write out a character who should be pious and yet satisfactory to the artistic sense; hence Père Jerome in the story of Madame Delphine.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Howells had written him: "Those Hartford people made me furious with their praises of you. I hate to see people foolish about a man, even if he is a great artist and every way charming."

If ever you do me the honor to read that tale please note this intention. I think I succeeded. I know—I feel—that there is no sound reason why goodness should not be artistically wrought. It is only our wretched ideas of goodness that make such walking mummies as blast the fond parental hopes of most female and many male fictionists. Where we hoped to make demigods we make dervishes,—Excuse the alliteration.

My dear wife comes in and sees me writing to you and asks when are you coming. *Ah! c'est ça, oui!* When! How soon? Only let it be soon and we will not care how soon.

Shall I tell you what I have done today? I have renounced the world—of commerce. “The last link is broken”—I have resigned from my secretaryship in the cotton exchange and closed up my office. Nothing now for offense or defense but my grey goose quill!

I think of the good Fairchilds—sweet thought. Now, it may be long—long—before I can see them again, yet it is most pleasing to know that I can go even to Belmont<sup>1</sup> without asking leave of the President, the Treasurer and the Finance Committee.

Oh! come and help me talk to my friends and fellow-citizens. Bring the man of solemn jest with you and clear my atmosphere. It is now approaching bedtime and the thermometer at my back says 83 degrees by the open window. Bring your own ice.

Adieu! I feel as if I had you by the hand. Write fast—not too fast—but still—not too slow. Much love to Mrs. Howells.

Good-bye.

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

<sup>1</sup> “Belmont” was then the country home of William Dean Howells, where my father had recently visited him.

*To Mrs. Mary Hallock Foote*

DEAR MRS. FOOTE: New Orleans, Novr. 15, 1881.

I have two letters before me from you, one of Sepr. last and one of the present month. Both have given me great pleasure and one should have been answered some time ago. But I have had a trying time—not of afflictions, but of sad vexations and disappointments—and have not been fit for writing letters.

I do not intend to burden you with an account of my tedious summer toil to complete my government report; of how on turning at its completion to my office affairs I was confronted with confusion and falsification of accounts and the peculations of my employees; of my time consumed in restoring order and recovering a part of my losses; of my long efforts, and struggle with a set of ward politicians, in a project for the amelioration & reform of our public prisons and asylums, or of my complete discomfiture (at least for the time being) only yesterday.

Over against this I had the sweet pleasure (yet care, too,) of getting my loved ones home and the domestic order restored. With these occupations I have mixed an endeavor to write something for "The Century" and am getting on with it now, though slowly. Alas! what snails we get to be when we most feel the need of making haste.

You mention Madame Delphine. I thought you had her all along. I had the pain of receiving a day or two ago a Boston paper containing a notice of the book and calling it bad in morals and weak in art, and underscored all through in red ink by someone who could probably take no other revenge on me. It isn't pleasant to be hated, though I dare say it is safer than praise.

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE



When the time came for the visit to New Orleans, mentioned in the letter of October 8, Mr. Howells was in Europe; but the "man of solemn jest"<sup>1</sup> took with him instead to the South, James R. Osgood, the Boston publisher. The story of their meeting there with Joel Chandler Harris and of their call upon my father at our home in Eighth Street, were best told in Mark Twain's own words:<sup>2</sup>

"Mr. Joel Chandler Harris ('Uncle Remus') was to arrive from Atlanta at seven o'clock Sunday morning; so we got up and received him. We were able to detect him among the crowd of arrivals at the hotel-counter by his correspondence with the description of him which had been furnished us from a trustworthy source. He was said to be undersized, red-haired, and somewhat freckled. He was the only man in the party whose outside tallied with this bill of particulars. He was said to be very shy. He is a shy man. Of this there is no doubt. It may not show on the surface, but the shyness is there. After days of intimacy one wonders to see that it is still in about as strong force as ever. There is a fine and beautiful nature hidden behind it, as all know who have read the Uncle Remus book; and a fine genius, too, as all know by the same sign. . . .

"He deeply disappointed a number of children who had flocked eagerly to Mr. Cable's house to get a glimpse of the illustrious sage and oracle of the nation's nurseries. They said:—

" 'Why, he's white!'

"They were grieved about it. So, to console them, the book was brought, that they might hear Uncle Remus's Tar-Baby story from the lips of Uncle Remus himself—or what, in their outraged eyes, was left of him. But it turned out that he had never read aloud to people, and was too shy to venture the attempt now. Mr. Cable and I read from books of ours, to show him what an easy trick

<sup>1</sup> Mark Twain.

<sup>2</sup> "Life on the Mississippi."

it was; but his immortal shyness was proof against even this sagacious strategy, so we had to read about Brer Rabbit ourselves.”

It was Mark Twain who read the story, to the exquisite enjoyment not only of the children, but of “Uncle Remus” himself.

The house in Eighth Street was the first home, with any sense of permanence, that my father had had since his early boyhood, when the family had been compelled to give up the home in Annunciation Square. Built in 1874, under his own direction, it became a well-loved home for him for the time that he was to remain a resident of New Orleans. Here he wrote his first novel, “The Grandissimes”; and later, “Madame Delphine,” “Dr. Sevier” and “The Creoles of Louisiana.”

It was not an imposing house; it was, indeed, modestly simple and of cottage proportions, although it bore a strong suggestion of the old type of the Creole mansion; but, newly built as it was, the semi-tropical growth of vegetation had soon given it a luxuriance of surrounding garden that softened any rawness of outline and lent a natural beauty to its architectural simplicity.<sup>1</sup>

Standing in what was then known as the “garden district” of New Orleans—opposite the Creole end of the city—its low picket-fence enclosing from the street its lawns and flower-borders, the house was raised upon square brick pillars, ten feet from the ground, over an

<sup>1</sup> During the winter of 1884-85—the first winter that my father and his family spent in New England—this house was occupied by the California poet, Joaquin Miller. He had gone to New Orleans as the “special correspondent” of several newspapers, at the time of the New Orleans Exposition. From here he wrote: “I am living in the home of George W. Cable, and every morning my table is made beautiful by my black servant with flowers of all kinds and colors gathered from the open garden. I can at this moment step out from my porch and pull from among the friendly green orange boughs a bushel of golden oranges of the sweetest kind, and the orange blossoms are bursting and breathing their fragrance all over my porch from these same boughs that are borne down with the golden apples of Hesperides.”

open, cement-floored basement. A broad flight of railed steps, flanked by two immense orange-trees, led up to a vine-covered verandah or *galérie*—as the New Orleans term is—and to the front door. Surrounding the house lay the garden, a constant profusion of flowers; and at the back were a number of fig-trees, the favorite playing-places of the children.

The most important room in the house was the study, for, notwithstanding the long hours of work there, it was always the meeting-place for family and friends—a room of many windows, and all opened wide to the garden. Besides its principal furniture—a square, old-fashioned, roomy desk and low book-cases against the walls—it contained a curious assemblage of objects picked up by my father in the quaint old corners of the city, where he loved to roam: a large glass case of moths and butterflies, given him by the old Baron von Reizenstein, the Entomologist of his later story; a peculiar and beautiful shell; a great snowy owl, mounted by his friend the Taxidermist, but originally brought alive into the room, where it had acquired the habit of perching on his shoulders as he sat at his desk. And on that desk a slender glass vase holding a rose or two from the garden.

Underneath the study, but projecting from the side of the open basement, was a greenhouse, and when one day my father came home carrying tenderly in his hands two wounded rice-birds—the Northern bobolink—which he had rescued from a vender's crippling string, the greenhouse became a bird-sanctuary. A few days later, some young mockingbirds, that had fallen from the nest, were adopted and fed by the children; and the greenhouse was turned into an aviary. This became a great delight to my father, as he added from time to time other birds caught in similar ways; until one day a hail-storm crashed against the glass sides of it, and what birds had not been killed by broken glass or escaped of their own will, my father let go, and the aviary was reluctantly abolished. One of

his chief pleasures in it had been to put into musical notation certain of the bird-songs, particularly that of the mockingbird; for he had a keenly correct musical ear, doubtless inherited, as was his clear tenor voice, from his father.<sup>1</sup>

The study was, as I have said, the meeting-place of the house. Here—though on warmer evenings it might be on the *galérie*—would gather groups of friends for pleasant talk; or my father would read aloud, either from his own manuscript or from some printed page that he had himself enjoyed—Artemas Ward, or a recent poem by Robert Browning or Tennyson, or a story of Frank Stockton, as the mood of the moment demanded; or he would sing, accompanying himself upon his guitar, some Creole or African-Creole song or an English or Scottish folksong. In a corner, withdrawn, Lafcadio Hearn might sit, moodily nursing a cherished grievance, or in sheer timidity refusing to be beguiled into the conversation. Here came one afternoon Oscar Wilde, in all the oddity of velvet coat and silken knee-breeches, and flowing hair; and here, too, were Mark Twain, Richard Watson Gilder, Charles Dudley Warner, Edward King, "Uncle Remus"

<sup>1</sup> The following story was often told of my father's father: During the early eighteen-forties, while engaged in supplying wholesale Western produce to hotels and steamboats, he had allowed some small Red River boats to fall deeply into his debt. One of these was surrendered by its owner, and my grandfather put it into the charge of his cousin, James Cable, but himself accompanied him when the young captain took the boat upon its first journey into the wilderness up the river. It was not long before the crew of Irishmen began to show discontent. The trouble grew until their overwrought tempers threatened mutiny. Anger and indignation were at a dangerous pitch when suddenly a rich, clear voice was heard above the imprecations, singing the strains of a song that no Irishman can hear and his heart not grow tender within him. Not a man of them stirred while "The Exile of Erin" was sung to its end, and when the last words, "Erin go bragh," died away, the singer was surrounded, lifted with shouts to the shoulders of the crew and carried around the deck in a tumult of appreciation. At last, raising his hand for silence, he laid matters before the men, and, confidence in the new captain being restored, the rest of the journey was made in safety.



NO. 229 EIGHTH STREET, NEW ORLEANS.



THE HOUSE ON ANNUNCIATION SQUARE, NEW ORLEANS, IN WHICH  
GEORGE W. CABLE WAS BORN.

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and others of that fellowship of American writers, into whose circle my father had but lately been received. Also, in the spring of 1882, came Joseph Pennell.

During the winter of 1881-82, the history of the Louisiana Creoles, which had been begun a full year back, was completed and Charles Scribner's Sons, having decided to bring it out in illustrated form, commissioned Mr. Pennell to go to New Orleans for the purpose of studying the Creole city and making a number of accompanying etchings. Mr. Pennell, who was then making his name known, through his unique and beautiful work, in this country and in England, speaks of this visit in his "Adventures of an Illustrator," as "one of the first of my adventures."

Journeying partly by rail, he says, and partly by boat, he arrived in New Orleans late in January and went—almost every newcomer to the city did go, in those days—to the St. Charles Hotel. "Into the office of the hotel in the morning—a big room with big chairs, big slouch-hatted men, and big spittoons all about—there came a little man with a black beard. That was Cable. He was charming, and he carried me off at once to find a place to stay in, and, as the work was mostly to be about the Creoles, he chose the French Quarter. We walked over to Canal Street and turned down the Rue Royale, and right into old France. America stopped in the middle of Canal Street. The people on one side were Americans, and on the other were Creoles. The signs on one side were English, and on the other French, and newsboys yelled "*The Picayune*" on the left and "*L'Abeille*" on the right. As soon as we got into the Rue Royale, we stepped right into Cable's stories. . . .

"Those were delightful days that I spent over my drawings, in courts, on plantations, on the levee, up the bayous in the sunlight. . . . Then there was a grand excursion when a schooner was hired. We picked her up on Lake Ponchartrain, and meant to sail up and down the

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bays and bayous ; but the wind and tide didn't mean us to, and we spent days among islands inhabited only by distant flamingoes and near pelicans and everlasting alligators. In the evening we would pull up by an island, and the captain would make some wonderful gumbo soup and mix things out of cans, and then Cable would sing, and sometimes tell a new story. Finally we gave in to the head winds and boarded a steamer, and so got back to town."<sup>1</sup>

*To L. S. C.*

The Open Gulf,  
Apl. 18, 1882.

The waves are running and glittering as you have seen them when sitting by my side. But our beautiful yacht bounds over them, not like the great steamers but like a deer on the hills. I know of nothing I have ever experienced in the nature of going that equals this.

No land in sight. Only the vast blue sky and the crumpled, silken sea casting back the glorious sunshine. The spray wets the paper as I write. Huge pelicans fly back and forth by threes and fives from one fishing ground to another.

One always finds one has forgotten how beautiful is the sea.

As I write the low line of the Chandeleurs<sup>2</sup> rises faintly to view. The yacht takes a dazzling wave every now & then as a thoroughbred horse takes a green hedge.

Where are my loved ones? In God's hands, and I also. So be it ever.

I fear this S.E. wind is making sad work with the poor in the suburbs of the city.

In September of this same year, when Mr. Pennell had finished his sketching and had returned to his home, my

<sup>1</sup> "Adventures of an Illustrator."

<sup>2</sup>A group of small islands in the Gulf of Mexico.

father journeyed again to New York, in one of the periodical attempts to recover his health and working powers in a more bracing climate. During the year past he had been very hard at work not only in writing his novel of "Dr. Sevier" and in bringing to completion his article for the United States Census and his history of the Louisiana Creoles, but he had entered with characteristic energy upon a sort of work widely differing from any of this, that of prison and asylum reform in his native city—a work which was greatly to influence his writing and his life in the years closely following this.

*To L. S. C.*

New York, Sept. 25, 1882.

Went to church, then to Gilder's, where I dined. Invited back to tea. Went out & secured a lodging-place—same old Union Square Hotel—merely for the night. Went to church. After church went to my room, fell asleep & awoke an hour after Mrs. Gilder's tea-time. No choice but to run over & apologize. They had not waited. Met Charles DeKay. They made me a cup of delicious tea. Just as I was dropping sugar in, in walks Mr. Joe Jefferson, the comedian. We had a three hours' talk. I like him extremely. He seems good and *sweet*. He said—I—I—I have done things in my life I'm ashamed of—we all do that; but I have no secret. I can't lie, or cheat, or steal; yet I am the fifth generation of an unbroken line of comedians. I have promised to go & visit him on his island<sup>1</sup> if I possibly can next Spring.

*To the same*

N. Y., Sep. 28, 1882.

Worked yesterday from 8 A.M. to 3½ P.M. Mr. Os-good called. He invites me to Boston & evidently has

<sup>1</sup> Côte Gelée, a small island in one of the bayous of the Acadian country, Louisiana.



some social conspiracy fixed up for me there. Went to 4 o'clock tea at Gilder's, met Joe Jefferson, one of the sweetest, noblest, highest-toned men I ever saw; and Madame Modjeska the great tragedienne, a sweet, handsome, witty, gentle woman who impresses one as being lovely & lastingly so, as her friends say she is. The conversation was brilliant. Also her husband was there, a Polish nobleman, extremely bright & keenly correct in matters of criticism. Oh! such a talk as we had about Shakspeare! Went thence to see Mrs. Holland, who had sent for me, although the floral decorations for the wedding were still on the walls & tables & the bride's gifts still spread. Of course the wedding had been "very quiet." She showed me all over the house to try to make me acquainted with all her precious, lost husband's associations.<sup>1</sup>

(*Later, same date*)

Wrote today, all day long. Then, at 6, to dinner with Prof. & Mrs. Boyesen. She is beautiful & has three beautiful boys. Gilder was with us; also Mr. Thomas Appleton, of Boston; a famous conversationalist; one of the most wonderful talkers. Intimately acquainted with Mrs. Browning, the Darwins, Carlyle—of whom he gave charming anecdotes; it was delightful—such stories of Victor Hugo & Daudet & Hans Christian Andersen and many others.

Tomorrow I write & read to Gilder. The Gilders are the nicest of all.

*To the same*

[New York,] Sep. 29, 1882.

All day at work in the little room I have taken that overlooks the vast roaring city; writing hard. At sunset went out into Broadway. What a mighty throng of *cheer-*

<sup>1</sup> Dr. J. G. Holland, Editor of *Scribner's Monthly*, died Oct. 12, 1881.

*ful faces!* You know how I prize a cheerful face—& here are thousands. What glitter! what elegance! what wealth! what beauty!

*To the same*

N. York, Octo. 8, 1882.

I haven't told you about night before last—Friday night.<sup>1</sup> Johnson & his wife were there—two sweet people, sweet-looking, too, though Johnson, as you know, very manly & strong. Mrs. Gilder shone with her gentle, lovely light. Gilder the same—two most lovable ones. Kate<sup>2</sup> & Joe Gilder, ed'rs of *The Critic* were there, also; two strong, unassuming people, full of humane feeling and art feeling, upright in both—as they seem to me, & so I am told they are. Such was the setting: the gem was Miss Kellogg.<sup>3</sup> She played on the banjo and sang. What a voice!—Though she only gave us glimpses of it. She was delighted with my *chansons Créoles*. Pov' piti' Momselle Zizi, she says is—the music of course—by Haydn. What delighted her most was the song of the steamboat roustabouts—“Rock me, Julie, rock me.” She made me sing it over & over. She sang negro melodies and accompanied herself on the banjo. “The Yalla Gal,” was something delicious. After my Mississippi river song she sang a song of the sailors on the ocean steamers. She truly said it is a glorious thing, for she sang it gloriously.

“Hey, yea, roll a man down!  
O give me some time to roll a man down!”

She and Kate Gilder are great cronies. They call our exalted friend Gilder, “Watsy.” The other Gilders & I walked home with her. The clock struck twelve. We

<sup>1</sup> At the Gilders' house.

<sup>2</sup> An obvious error; Miss Jeanette Gilder was known to her friends as Jean, or “Jen.”

<sup>3</sup> Clara Louise Kellogg, the opera singer.

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promised to meet at her home in a few days. She has a piano, of course. What a time we'll have!

*To the same*

New York, Octo. 11, 1882.

Met John Burroughs at the Century office and by appointment spent the evening with him at the Gilders'. DeKay was there. Burroughs and all of us had a sweet talk about birds in England, New England & the South. He enjoyed my account of the mockingbird, & I his concerning a hunt (search) for the nightingale. He will write a paper on the subject of this search.<sup>1</sup>

Early in 1882, my father had been invited to deliver an address to the graduating class of the University of Mississippi, at Oxford, Mississippi, and in June of that year he had made the address—in his first appearance as a public speaker—calling it “Literature in the Southern States.” His method of approach to this subject indicated his first public attempt to reach beyond the confines of thought of his native Southwest—to think nationally instead of locally—as he dwelt earnestly upon the necessity and value of regarding Southern literature from a national point of view, of incorporating it into American literature, as Hawthorne, Emerson, Bret Harte and Poe are incorporated. “Let us cease,” he said, “to be a unique people. . . . We want to write, as well as read, our share of the nation's literature.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “A Hunt for the Nightingale,” by John Burroughs; *Century Magazine*, March, 1884.

<sup>2</sup> In reporting this address, the Boston *Literary World* of July 15, 1882, said: “The author of ‘The Grandissimes’ pointed out how completely those had failed to contribute anything permanent to American literature who had kept out of the main current of American thought. He urged the propriety and importance of treating home subjects—State histories, State geologies, botany, archæology, etc., and even State *belles lettres*. ‘Only let them be written,’ he said, ‘to and for the whole nation, and you shall put your own State not the less, but the

Strange and new as was this his first public utterance, it met with favor in the South<sup>1</sup> as well as in the North, and a few months later he was asked by the Johns Hopkins University to prepare a series of lectures on literature, to be delivered in Baltimore the following year. In that same June of 1882, another Southern University, Washington and Lee, had conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters, "in recognition of your claims as an accomplished Southern litterateur"; and the following year he was similarly honored by Yale University with an honorary Master of Arts, "with the desire of recognizing publicly the eminent success which you have achieved in embalming in literature a unique phase of American social life which is rapidly passing away."

*To L. S. C.*

N. York, Oct. 21, '82.

Have been to Balto & returned. Had a delightful time with delightful people, Prof. Gilman, wife, & daughter; Profs. Gildersleeve & Adams, Mr. Innes Randolph, Edr Balto American. Also my dear old Gilder. We made the visit together.

I doubt if the Johns Hopkins Univ'y really has an equal in some things in the U. S. Its only real rivals are Harvard & Yale. If nothing happens to prevent, I shall deliver 8 lectures there in the month of March next.

I spent a glorious evening yesterday with the 4 Gilders, Johnson, Ed Holland, Lathrop, and Clara Louise Kellogg. Ah, me! Ah me!! Such singing! She sang from Carmen, & Faust,—you know she has played those in the

more, in your debt; earn a double portion of her gratitude and love; add to these the general thanks of a vast country, and give the sisterhood of States a new interest in that sister whom you delight to call your mother and who will be proud to call you her son.'"

<sup>1</sup> Concerning this address, my father wrote several years later: "I had been told on leaving the platform that I would not have been allowed to make that speech there five years earlier."

prima donna parts. She acted as she sang. Then she danced with castanets a slow, superb Spanish dance in which the toes never leave the floor. What a sight it was! Then she played on a Japanese banjo & sang two perfectly entrancing Japanese songs. She sang again some negro melodies. Then they had me sing my Creole & African things. Some came back that I had forgotten. She sang "Hey, yea, roll a man down." Well, well, I feel as though I had spent the night in fairyland. One of her Irish songs filled my eyes with tears.

Breakfasted this morning at Union League Club House with Col. Waring. Shall dine with Burlingame & then to Gilder's to meet Eggleston, DeKay, Brander Matthews & others, to found a literary club.<sup>1</sup>

*To Mrs. Pitts Burt*

MY DEAR MRS. BURT: New Orleans, Dec 26, 1882.

Do you simply love to get your friends into trouble? Didn't I tell you plainly that Mrs. Cable has forbidden us all to bring a dog upon the place? And here's one that proposes to sit on the table and watch us eat!<sup>2</sup>

Valuable dog! The household at Mt. Auburn are not going to be forgotten while this animal's metal holds out!—or mine either. I mean my metal.

Well you are just too good! It's your only fault, as far as I know. A merry Christmas & a happy new year to you and yours and all "sich."

I can't say yet which way I shall go from here to Balto, but I think I may come back via Cincinnati—which al-

<sup>1</sup> The Authors Club had its beginning at this meeting, though for some reason, which I have not been able to find among his papers, my father did not become a member of it until years later.

<sup>2</sup> "A little metal salt-shaker which took his fancy," writes Mrs. Burt on the margin of the letter.

ways means Mt. Auburn to me—or me to Mt. Auburn, rather.

Adieu. I make you a low bow—wow.

Yours truly,  
GEO. W. CABLE

Mrs. Cable desires me to thank you cordially for including her in the invitation to Mt. Auburn. She has no hope of going with me to Balto. Too many blessings to take care of at home. And now here's the little dog added to the rest—he has taken her heart completely.

G. W. C.

CHAPTER VI  
LECTURES AT JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY:  
FIRST READINGS IN NEW YORK, HARTFORD  
AND BOSTON  
(1883)

*"Methinks I hear, methinks I see,  
Sweet music, wondrous melody;  
Towns, palaces, and cities fine,  
Here now, then there; the world is mine;  
Rare beauties, gallant ladies shine."*

ROBERT BURTON

*To Daniel C. Gilman*

MY DEAR DR. GILMAN:      New Orleans, Jan'y 18, 1883.

I have just written the last line of my 4th lecture—no, in truth I have begun the 5th, but lay it aside to commence on when I feel fresher than I can on a murky day with thermometer 75° F and an electric storm pending.

The six lectures would have been finished before this but for earlier engagements. Now nothing intervenes and I expect to finish the 6th by Feb. 1.

I thank you for J.H. circulars. The last rec'd announces me for Eng. Literature. Maybe I can give you a better form of announcement. The subject as chosen by us jointly when we were together was The Relations of Literature to Modern Society. Extensive subject! I felt, when I first got back to my study and began to look into it, as a man may who peeps over into the crater of an extinct volcano. However I soon found that the ocean is as easy to swim in as a pond. (I use better grammar when I lecture.)

Here is the way I divided my subject:

- (1) The necessities from which literature springs.
- (2) Its influence on Man's public life.
- (3) Its operations and effects in the private life.

- (4) The attitudes of modern society toward literature.
- (5) The reciprocal duties of literature and society.
- (6) The literary art and artist.

I have had great trouble to cram the matter of each lecture into 55 minutes space, but I have succeeded. (I speak of the four that are written.)

Being required to make an address the other evening, I took the opportunity to try timing myself, prepared a 55 minutes address and delivered it in just 55 minutes. So I shan't be able to get off anything funny about the Gaul being at the gate when I stand up in Hopkins Hall.

I suppose you see that I am writing a tired man's letter—wandering on after I have really come to the end of it. I would beg to be remembered to the ladies of your household & to Dr's Gildersleeve & Adams. Tomorrow morn'g I hope to have my little girls gather some outdoor violets & mail them to you for Miss Gilman. I sent some to Gilder a day or two ago & gave those around him much pleasure. They may be less of a rarity in Balto.—I don't know.

Yours truly,  
GEO. W. CABLE

*To William Dean Howells*

MY DEAR MR. HOWELLS: New Orleans, Jan. 27, 1883.

It's come at last—the courage to write to you and tell you how proud I am of the "Modern Instance." I suppose if you do this letter the honor to file it away you will back it "Tenth Thousand." But I couldn't write sooner; I was simply too pusillanimous a coward.

I followed the story month by month as fast as I could get my hands upon it. I saw divorce in its sky at the third instalment and thanked you for your fine, clear exposition of our national "smart Aleck" and his results ever as the story unfolded.

Ah! if you knew what I have suffered from the un-



challenged predominance of America's Bartley Hubbards you could understand the grateful delight with which I behold them with a ring in their nose at last!

Marcia—poor child! poor ill-*raised* thing! I shall never forget her. She was a revelation to me. You're a wizard in your knowledge of women.

Well, well, well! you did manage the whole thing so skilfully. What next? Can you hold yourself up to yourself in "A Woman's Reason"? I suppose so. I was about to take up the magazine just now, to read the first instalment, when thinks I, "I'll write to him—I'll confess—I'll make a clean breast of my indebtedness and throw myself upon his generosity!"

Today a young cousin of Mrs. Cable's—a young, sweet woman—took up "A Woman's Reason" in my study as I was about leaving the room. When I came back it had done its work; she sat looking out the window, all trouble, and seeing me, tried to smile naturally but failed and then rose quickly and went out. You cruel man! What is it in that tale that does this? I shall see when I have written this.

I was in Boston last October, and in Hartford at Clemens's house. Saw Warner and Fairchild and Osgood and had a brave time, but missing you every hour. Made Mr. Aldrich's acquaintance. What a wit he is!

Pennell is soon to be with you. You will like him. Give him my very best wishes.

I was very sorry you could not be in New Orleans last winter—spring, I mean. I wonder where we shall meet again, and when. For Europe is still beyond my reasonable hopes, and I know the chances must be slender of your floating out southwestward.

Shall I mention my present occupation? I am preparing some lectures. The Johns Hopkins Univ'y, at Balto., has me down in its circular for six lectures in March. I am ashamed to tell you their subject. Please find out some other way. Suffice it to say it is something I know nothing

about—just what any other subject would have been. Well, it's large enough, no fear but I shall rattle about in it—not the least.

I have a novel partly written, which is to appear next October in the *Century*.<sup>1</sup> O, my friend, please tell me how to write a little faster, and “while you're up” you might add something on how to write better. If I could only do these two things I should—proceed to do it.

Please give my kind regards to Mrs. Howells, and believe me

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

*To L. S. C.*

Baltimore, Mar. 5, 1883.

I have finished my day. My first lecture is delivered. The house was just as full as the aisles could be packed with extra chairs. There wasn't a vacant seat nor a place where another chair might be pushed in. I never did quite so poorly; but the attention of the audience was perfect. Well, it is anyhow the worst of the lot, and it's over. I occupied just 55 minutes.

God bless my children. I want you to tell them that away off here in Baltimore it makes me happy to hear of their good behaviour.

*To his sister, Mary Louise Cable*

Baltimore, Mar. 5, 1883.

DEAR SISTER:

Only a moment, late at night, to say I have delivered my first lecture and am safely through it. I seem to have pleased others better than myself. Shall know better when I hear more—say tomorrow or next day.

Now that the ice is broken I have no doubt of doing much better from time to time—I mean better each succeeding time.

1“Dr. Sevier.”

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Kiss the dear precious little mother that made the poor little stick of phosphorus I am and if she isn't ashamed of the job kiss her again.

Your loving brother

GEORGE.

*To L. S. C.*

Balto., Mch 15, 1883.

I sit down to write you a few lines after saying good night to one of the young doctors of the university who has been sitting and talking to me all the evening. Nothing touches me so much as to see the brave, learned young fellows full of new life and hope and promise, so handsome & so manly, sitting and catching every word I utter every time I lecture. (They hold the reserved seats just under the platform.)

This one has been talking over his plans and discussing with me some of his half-matured intentions. I must be getting old, for I am beginning to fall in love with young men, and they call me "Sir," & "Sir," & "Sir."

I deliver my last lecture tomorrow. Monday, if I am rightly informed, I am to give a reading from my Creole sketches, in Johns Hopkins Hall, to be in all respects as though it were my seventh lecture.<sup>1</sup>

On the following day he wrote, "The greatest effort of my life is finished successfully. The 6th & last lecture is delivered."

*To L. S. C.*

Balto., Mch 18, 1883.

I am in my room again after a pleasant and profitable Sabbath morning. Dr. Leftwich only 1 square away is Prest. Gilman's pastor & I went to hear him. He preached on the sanctity of the Sabbath, & especially the State's

<sup>1</sup>This was upon the suggestion and special request of President Gilman, of Johns Hopkins University.

duty to observe it & preserve it. A strong—very strong sermon.

Before church I went to the Sunday school & heard & saw what was there. A good large school, but unable to congregate in one room. Went into a small room where a gentlemen's Bible-class was sitting & enjoyed their study, taking part. A young man wanted to insist that the later revelations of God's word give us a more "temperate" view of His justice.

Ah, me! how our poor human nature does wish that God would slacken up His justice! But what respect would He command who was merciful but not just?

*To the same*

Balto., Mch 20, 1883.

I dined last night with Mr. Wallis.<sup>1</sup> The dinner was a little affair of five covers only, but one of the most elegant I ever saw. The persons present were Mr. Wallis, his two nephews, Judge Geo. Wm. Brown and myself.

Judge Brown is the gentleman who desired me to dine with him Sunday. He is a very distinguished Baltimore man; was the mayor of Balto. in the time of the riots of '61 when the first blood of the war was shed, in the streets of this city. He is a man of splendid record & now over seventy seems barely 50 & one of the most entertaining persons I ever met.

Teackle Wallis is a man of extremely interesting face. Gentle eyes, aquiline nose, large brows, silver hair ending in a soft ripple just across the temples. He is intellectually all that his face and voice promise. I do not know how to say which of the two men was most entertaining. They know & have known through their long lives all the head

<sup>1</sup> Mr. S. Teackle Wallis, a distinguished member of the Baltimore bar. His brother, Mr. John Samuel Wallis, was the owner of Belle Alliance plantation, and it is he who is referred to in the oft-repeated question to the Grande Pointe schoolmaster, Bonaventure, as he enters the Acadian country: "Is Mistoo Wallis big-in to gryne?"

men of the nation; and I heard more *inside* history of the United States govt. last night than in all my life before. Both these men were prisoners in Fort Warren during part of the war. We did not rise from the table till after eleven o'clock. I ate & enjoyed the famous Baltimore dish—Terrapin.

But I have commenced at the wrong end. My reading was a *great* success; the hall was absolutely packed & the doors shut with others outside unable to enter; & when I sat down at the close of their severe 60 minute limit Prest. Gilman said, "That's nothing, go on," & I went on, & read Joseph's visit to the Nancanou ladies.

The reading over, a select few (subscribers) ladies & gentlemen adjourned to another room where a tablet to Sidney Lanier was shown on an easel and a pretty little address was made by Mr. Tait, an artist here, & some remarks (very good) by Prest. Gilman & a few words by myself. Then to the dinner, then back to my room & to bed. Woke this morning with a faint impression that one of the terrapins had died during the night.

*To the same*

Balto., Mch 20, 1883.

Spent the morning in an insane asylum.<sup>1</sup> Must go out now paying parting calls. Then to dinner at Judge Brown's.

Have just rec'd from Charles Dudley Warner the formal invitation to lecture in Hartford,<sup>2</sup> signed by him,

<sup>1</sup>This was in connection with his work in prison and asylum reform in New Orleans.

<sup>2</sup>The "formal invitation" read as follows:

Hartford, Mch. 10, 1883.

George W. Cable, Esq.

Dear Sir:

In behalf of the many admirers of your writings in this city, and in furtherance of a general desire to hear you in public, we take ad-

Mark Twain, J. Hammond Trumbull, Gen'l Hawley, Gen'l Franklin, Dr. Parker & all that crowd.

Will lecture there on the 3d of Apl. There's no telling what day I shall start home, for Mark Twain writes, that he has a big idea & I must make no engagement until I see him.

*To the same*

New York, Mch 29, 1883.

Nothing but scrawls these days. Went to Prayer Meeting last night. "Spoke in meeting" at Dr. Robinson's request. Went thence with Mr. Roswell Smith to the meeting of Authors' Club at Stedman's house. Enjoyed both the prayer meeting & the club.

Let me see if I can give a partial list of those at the club: Roswell Smith, E. C. Stedman, John Albee, Joaquin Miller, Charles DeKay, George P. Lathrop, H. C. Bunner, J. Brander Matthews, Richard Grant White, Julian Hawthorne, R. W. Gilder, & many others with whom I have little or no acquaintance.

Am working on my Hartf'd lecture today & shall be straight along until it is delivered. I enclose you a ticket to my lecture. Don't it look—funny? It's in the papers here in N. York as well as in Hartford. O, dear! "It's *very* funny!"

vantage of your presence in the North to ask you to deliver a lecture in Hartford on any evening that will be convenient to you.

Hoping that your engagements will permit you to comply with our earnest request, we remain

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Samuel L. Clemens  
Chas. Dudley Warner  
Joseph R. Hawley  
J. Hammond Trumbull  
R. D. Hubbard  
A. C. Dunham  
E. P. Parker

Jas. B. Patterson  
Wm. B. Franklin  
Jos. H. Twichell  
Henry C. Robinson  
Wm. Hammersley  
A. E. Burr  
Edwin E. Johnson

N. Shipman

*To the same*

Hartford, Conn., Ap'l 3, 1883.

Dear old Mark Twain sends kindest word to all of you, beginning, of course, with Nellie.

We have had a beautiful day today. I ventured over to M.T.'s house without my overcoat & felt comfortable; but on starting away from his house he cried out at the idea of no overcoat.

I said, "The air is full of a soft, warm glow."

"Soft, warm glow! It's full of the devil!—the devil of pneumonia! That's what it's full of!" and so I had to wear one of his overcoats back to Warner's.

Here's another characteristic speech. "Yes, sir, my poor wife must get sick, & have a pulse that ran up to—150 in the shade!"

He began to d—n Roswell Smith (whom he likes very well, I believe). I said I don't allow my friends to abuse each other. "Yes, that's all right; I know it. That's the reason I forbear as I do. You see how mild my abuse is compared to what it would be if you were not here."

He strode up & down the room holding his headachy forehead & brandishing his arms, scolding over the various miscarriages of our schemes concerning the reading.

I said, "I didn't come over here to torment you before your time." He answered—

"Oh, you're not tormenting me; only give me room to swear!" But he did not swear—**much**.

*To the same*

Hartford, April 5, 1883.

The reading here is done. It was a decided success and was delivered to a full house. Osgood & Waring & Gilder, & Roswell Smith & Hutton and Warner were there, (all but R. Smith being on the platform) & Mark Twain in-

roduced me. He was immensely funny. However, I suppose you'll see all this in the papers.

After the lecture Mark gave us (the above party) a supper at the Hartford Clubhouse. Rev. Joe Twichell was there & there was abundance of innocent fun. There were a hundred good things said that I suppose I'll never recall.

This morning I must read to the Saturday-Morning Club (of young ladies) & at 1 P.M. go to the lunch given me by the Monday Club.

(*Later, same date*)

This morning I went to the Saturday-Morning Club meeting at the residence of Mr. Chas. Perkins and read them "Posson Jone'." There were many invited guests. Gilder was among them. Mark Twain had offered last night as we were coming home in the carriage, to introduce me with a short speech. I didn't accept the offer. But this morning I asked him, the moment we met, to do as he had offered. I knew he would do something good & guessed that he had some special thought. So it was. He represented me as an impostor & charlatan—oh, pshaw! if I try to tell it I shall only make it seem stupid, whereas it was royally funny and kind & affectionate by innuendo.

"He will now read you one of his *stories*—not to call them by any harder name. But if any of you are offended at his pernicious utterances you have only to rise in your place & I'll stop him at once."

The reading was the greatest success I have ever made in my life.

From the club we took carriage and went to the lunch in my honor at the Hartford Clubhouse by members of the Monday Evening Club. It was the maddest, merriest three hours—the wittiest uproar that *ever* I heard in my life. It beat the Boston dinner of last fall.

"Well," cried Mark Twain at last when they were all weary with laughing, drawing a sigh, "we might as well



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leave here; I can't think of anything else to say,—that is, anything that's decent." It was a slam at me, of course. So we dispersed.

*To the same*

New York, Ap'l 13, 1883.

Yesterday it rained nearly all day. I went, however, in the pouring rain to find Morris Jesup, the banker, to whom I had a letter from Pres't. Gilman. He is much engrossed in benevolent schemes & Pres't. G. wanted us to have the benefit of each other's talk. I found him much such a man as Pres't G. himself, tho' larger & handsomer, with the same alert eye and smile of perfect self-command & clear discernment.

He invited me to dine with him. I went. Well, I found them very pleasant, graceful, hearty people. I could cover many pages telling you about the paintings alone in the dining-room & library.

I departed at 10 P.M., promising to go to church with him on Sunday next and thence to his house to lunch, thence to the Dewitt Memorial Church, (a mission built by himself at a cost, I have been told, of \$40,000,) thence to the 5-Points House of Industry & thence to the Cooper Institute Sunday afternoon service.

I said to Gilder yesterday, "I wish I could see more of Henry James, Jr. I should like to know him better." He replied, "Well, you never will. Nobody ever does. My wife has known him 20 years & knows him no better today than you do." This disappoints me very much.

Edward King has a much-praised novel on the *tapis*, called "The Gentle Savage." The dear fellow!

Good-bye, daughter Louise!

" " Mary, girl!

" " Lucy, bird!

" " Margaret, toad!

*To the same*

New York, Apl 16, 1883.

Another work-day week is begun. I have a great deal to do this week, the last of my northern stay.

I had a wonderful day yesterday. Breakfast with the Footes—or rather they with me. Church at 11 o'clock in the 5th Ave. Presb'n. Church, the famous Dr. John Hall. Lunch with Mr. & Mrs. Jesup at their home in Madison Avenue. Then off with Mr. J. to Mt. Olivet Mission down in the poor district of N. York, near the Bowery, where we saw the opening exercises of a Sunday-school of 800 in number, conducted with a perfection of system, a beauty, an intelligence & an enthusiasm that was wonderful to see. Thence to the 5-Points House of Industry, where the wonder was doubled. Saw hundreds of little waifs enter in order singing a processional—it would be a long story to tell—my eyes were big with tears again & again.—When they sang, when they prayed, when they said the creed. Mr. Jesup & I sat alone on a large platform with the tiers on tiers of children in front of us & an adult congregation behind. He presided & took part in the exercises. I addressed them for 12 minutes. They sang about 15 hymns. Such singing I never heard before from children.

Afterward we went all over the house. Saw the same little army sitting at their supper-tables, in a great room (or rather hall) full of long tables in ranks.

Thence we went back to Mr. Jesup's house. Mr. Wm. E. Dodge, the 2d of that famous name, had met me at Mr. J's just before lunch. He invited me to dine with him & go after dinner to a wonderful meeting of poor non-churchgoers held weekly in Cooper Institute. I went to his house to dinner. My! such a beautiful table! yet a true & proper Sunday repast, good as a prince need want, but prepared without appreciable effort. And in the midst of all this display of this world's riches we all knelt down to

evening prayer, servants & all. It was very, very beautiful.

The son (a 3d W. E. Dodge) hurried away as soon as we were in our seats again, going ahead of his father & me to Cooper Institute to lead the music. The music, by the way, was Moody & Sankey hymns played on a grand piano with the top off & accompanied by a cabinet organ of very fine quality. The congregation numbered nearly 2000. It was like angels singing in heaven—a thunder of voices.

*To the same*

New York, April 20, 1883.

It is evening. I am looking out of my window in the hotel, far over the countless roofs of New York city—an inspiring, a wonderful sight. I am well again. Was to have dined today with Mr. & Mrs. Burton-Harrison (the latter the adapter of the pretty little 2-act play now on the Madison Sq. theatre boards, “A Russian Honeymoon.”) Expected to meet the Gilders & Footes, etc. Had to excuse myself—too unwell; but have grown so much better that I shall drop in upon them *after* dinner. The affair was gotten up specially for me & I must do my duty; it will be a very pleasant one.

The head chambermaid of the hotel comes in & goes into subdued ecstasies over the children’s picture. A waiter downstairs in the restaurant says, in a conscious venture-some tone, “‘Aven’t I see’ you ‘ere before—in the other ‘otel—on the corner?’” I tell him, yes, & he calls to mind with immense delight the four little girls,—“An’ verry pleasing they was, sir,—and ‘ow well they be‘aved their-selves, sir!”

During this stay in New York my father had put himself under the direction of Franklin Sargent, for a serious course in voice-training. He realized he could not go on with the readings and lectures that he wished to give with-

out first learning how to use a voice that possessed naturally no great strength or carrying power for public speaking. This work detained him in the North for two months or more, and in the meantime he was busy in bringing to completion his second novel, "Dr. Sevier," in arranging with his publishers for a new American edition of "The Grandissimes"<sup>1</sup> and in beginning his story of the Grande Pointe schoolmaster, "Bonaventure."

The brothers Mallory, under whose management he had given, in Madison Square Theatre, one of his earliest readings from his own stories, were now urging him to write a play. This he had been holding under serious consideration, notwithstanding anxious questionings and protests from members of his family, far away in the South, who were aghast at the thought of such familiarity with the theatre. The theatre, with all belonging to it, was then looked upon by good Presbyterians—though not by them alone—as being a great moral evil.

*To L. S. C.*

New York, October 27, 1883.

When I found that I must decide in my own mind whether the theatre was necessarily a moral evil I inquired into the subject closely. I talked with three good and wise ministers of the gospel on the subject & borrowed & read such books as I could get. I looked into it entirely from the standpoint of an opponent & never went near the theatre until I thought I had discovered clearly the flaws in the argument against it.

I talked with theatre people, & heard their side. I talked only with men of good record & good life. I found that if the drama is to be sweepingly condemned it must be on grounds not thus far set forth to my knowledge.

But I didn't thereupon begin running to the theatre. I

<sup>1</sup>In this edition of "The Grandissimes" some of the Creole dialect was taken out.

thrust away what was in all likelihood my only chance of ever hearing the immortal Salvini. I refused to go & hear Jefferson. Finally I went to a little theatre to hear a poor play, with one of the noblest & most active Christians I ever have had the fortune to know. I mean Roswell Smith.

When [your] Mother says the theatre is bad I must admit it generally is. When she says it is wrong,—that is, cannot be right,—I doubt her ability to show it. But I shall not neglect to hear all she has to say about it & give it full weight. I am not seeking opportunity to jump the fence of moral proprieties; I am trying to settle a great moral question.

I was invited yesterday by a gentleman who began life with the distinct intention of studying for the pulpit & of giving his life-labor through it to the reformation of the stage. He is now a pious man, full of noble motives, a man of family & the author of a play, soon to appear on the boards, the intention of which is to impress upon the hearer's mind the loveliness & sanctity of home. He is a regular, salaried theatre man; a reader of MS. plays.

I was invited, I say, by him to go & hear Joseph Jefferson play the "Cricket on the Hearth." I did so. And if there is anything worse in that—no, I'll not put it that way—If it isn't as pure & sweet & refreshing & proper a diversion as spending the same length of time over a pretty, sweet, good story-book, then I'm a dunce. .

Almost all theatres are conducted merely for making money—as almost all stores & hotels are conducted. Some—many—are corruptly managed just as many hotels, boarding-houses, railroads, etc., are.

But if these are without excuse—if there is no good reason why theatres shouldn't be managed so as to be as free from immoral tendencies as a restaurant or a millinery establishment, what then? Haven't those who are believed to be full of ability to produce good, clean plays & good, clean acting a duty to perform somewhat different to the unreasonable denunciation that is the old fashion?

I shall positively make no engagement to write a play

July

Aug

XLIX.

Littleton

There came a sound of drums. Twice on such a day,  
 once the day before, twice the next day, till by and by it was  
 the common thing. A light-striking skirt-blade with belt and  
 brown bandolier at shoulder was not fatal, as in the longed  
 days of peace, to find, on running to the corner, its high hopes  
 mocked by a wagon of empty barrels rattling over the cobble-  
 stones. No; it was the Washington Artillery, or the Crescent Rifles,  
 or the Orleans Battalion, or, best of all, the Blue-jacketed,  
 white-legged, red-breasted, and red-frogged Fusiliers; or better  
 than the best, it was all of them together, their captains  
 stepping backward, sword in both hands, calling "approche!  
 gauche!" — "Left! Left!" — "Guide right!" — "Portez armes!"  
 and facing around again, showing their shining blades stiffly  
 to belt and epaulette and glancing sideways from under their

FROM "DR. SEVIER"—PUBLISHER'S COPY.  
 Written with the right hand.

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till I come back & see you. Don't fear. I doubt that I shall go to see another play while I am here; but I think I was right to see this one as a part of the sincere inquiry I am making into both sides of the question.

Well! I've neither time nor space left to tell you how lovely—how *lovely*—Jefferson is in the play. I feel this morning as if I had had a bath in pure, cool water. I am fitted anew for working & loving & doing good. I thank God for the pleasure I have had—now let me see if I cannot make some feeble return for it before this rising sun goes down.

*To the same*

New York, Octo. 28, 1883.

Yesterday I finished & handed in to Johnson my paper on the Acadians. I don't know whether it's good or poor. Bad sign; I may have to remodel it. Last evening dined with Johnson & wife & met Boyesen as my vis-à-vis. Never enjoyed Boyesen's company so much. Went thence with Johnson & Boyesen to the Matthew Arnold reception at the Windsor Hotel. It was quite a swell affair. Must have been 250 persons there. Am beginning to enjoy these affairs immensely, because my acquaintances multiply so fast that I now find them at every turn. Last night met for the first time, besides Matthew Arnold—who is much finer & stronger-looking than his picture in Apl '82 *Century*—& Mrs. & Miss Arnold, Dr. Robert Collyer, Courtland-Palmer, Mrs. Youmans & others.

The host was Mr. Andrew Carnegie who drove the four-in-hand through England—you may remember the pleasant book on the journey.

*To the same*

New York, Oct. 30, 1883.

What a night was yesterday's! I was in Gilder's parlor. The company was made up of those whom you have met

& a few others—Godkin, Bishop Potter, John Burroughs, St. Gaudens, Maud Howe, Chas. DeKay, &c, &c.

At 9 o'clock came in Andrew Carnegie & Matthew Arnold.

Mr. Arnold is tall, commanding, kindly, intellectual in expression, with great breadth of forehead. There is a certain brokenness of surface in his white brows that gives them a look of tremendous thinking power and immense strength of conviction. You would say a bull, butting it, would crack his own skull.

I was sorry not to succeed in an effort or two to get into close conversation with him,—the changes from person to person were too rapid. I liked him as far as we went in our talk, but it wasn't much more than to get it said that he was sorry not to visit New Orleans, &c, &c.

He went away at 11 o'clock. Others left—the company thinned out. But some choice spirits remained & at 11:30 came Joe Jefferson from his play. Oh! then we had a good time. We sat down together at once & had it good.

We talked about the principle of the subordination of details in art. Every art except music was represented by some one or two of noted ability. It was a night to remember all one's days.

*To the same*

New York, Novr. 2, 1883.

Are you not tired of my accounts of my daily experiences? I write them because they are vividly in my mind; but they must sound selfish and self-occupied. I'll try & put another tone into them.

This morning practised & studied & wrote till 12 o'clock. Then to Cent'y Co.—thence to lunch, then to C. Scribner's Sons, thence to the *Tribune* office. Saw Nassau street—very shady & narrow—with huge buildings on either side—very interesting, with its hurrying hundreds. Went with Mr. Krehbiel, musical editor of the *Tribune*, to Fulton



ferry. Passed by water almost under the vast Bridge. What grandness of human achievement! The eye refuses to take in its magnitude. Hurried away to the "Academy of Music" in Brooklyn to hear Theodore Thomas & his orchestra. The music was sublime. The great house was full to the walls & the ceiling.

The music was marvellous. O Margaret, my little girl, if you could have heard those forty violins saying tweedle-dee at once!—& the horns & trumpets & viols & contrabasses & clarionets & flutes & harps & oboes & bassoons and trombones! I did so long for you to be there, & also for Louise & Mary.

Madame Trebelli sang Glück's "*Che faro*." It was all superb. At last! at last! after almost 40 years of waiting, I hear the best music!

The ferry had just started out for New York when the whole great fleet of Sound steamers, the finest and largest in America, came up the harbor one behind another—compelling the ferry-boat to back in again into her slip while they glided majestically under the Bridge and passed away up the East river and around the point. I cannot begin to tell you what a sight it was.

### *To the same*

New York, Nov. 4, 1883.

I wish you could enjoy this bracing air. It gives one a physical pride. It straightens the form & makes the step firm and the eye clear & alert. I believe it really makes the moral fibre stronger. One seems to tighten up into tune with the right order of all things.

I had a great day yesterday. Three weeks ago I did a dreadful thing—I forgot an invitation to dinner. But my kind friends forgave me & invited me, anew, to a breakfast. I hated much to lose the working hours, but there was no avoiding this claim. And, moreover, in this fine

air any hour is a working-hour. I can come into my room at 10 P.M. and fall to work.

It was a delightful affair. All nice people. Had some delightful chats with Jefferson, who can talk about a great many things & always with taste & sweet modesty. Yet when he closes his mouth it comes together with a firmness up & down & a sweetness across that is pretty to see. His eyes & brows do the same thing at the same time. Wish you could see it. He invariably refuses all kinds of alcoholic drink with gentle firmness—a laugh in his eye and a self-command in his lower jaw. Coffee seems to be his outer limit of indulgence. He delights to talk about painting, not excepting his own painting, which he distinctly believes in & works hard on whenever he is not in the theatrical season.

A very funny and pretty thing happened. I noticed that the two waitresses were extremely pretty; but in passing dishes, scraping crumbs off the cloth, &c, &c, they were a little raw and slow. After dinner, as Mr. Jefferson & myself were sitting side by side with one or two others, talking, Mrs. Morse<sup>1</sup> approached & said they had all had such immeasurable enjoyment in seeing Mr. Jefferson's plays that they thought it but right to reciprocate & act a little farce for his amusement. I saw him try to hold back the dismay that began to gather in his face. (For his time was limited—he had a *matinée* at 2.) Mrs. Morse, however, nothing loath, turned & opened the door into the hall & called for the "actors to enter." The two waitresses came in, & she proceeded to introduce them by name to the ancient Joseph. This looked like the prologue. Bless you, 'twas the epilogue! They were two society girls & the farce had already been played in the dining-room. It was a hit. The laugh was long and hearty.

<sup>1</sup>Mrs. William Herbert Morse, his hostess.

*To the same*

New York, Nov. 8, 1883.

I have rec'd no "call" yet from the good citizens of Boston, but shall in due time. I am to give 3 read'gs in that place in the new Chickering Hall. It holds only about 460 persons, & of course there's no "big money" in the enterprise. But it's best as it is. The hall is engaged for Nov. 26, 28, & Dec. 4. I read before XIX Cent'y Club, N. York, on Dec. 6, & expect to start for Buffalo immediately afterward.<sup>1</sup>

I don't fancy this reading business overmuch. It looks too much like working merely to get money, & that hasn't been my way. I shouldn't feel so, I suppose, for I shall greatly increase the sale of my books, & I do think my books ought to do good. It also lets me into the lecture field. For example the lecture I propose to give to the XIX Cent'y Club is just what I think it a Christian's duty to say to just such a lot of free thinkers & doubters as I am told that club principally comprises.<sup>2</sup>

I am happy to hear that Sargent has been saying nice things about my voice—that it is going to be very powerful &c, &c.

*To the same*

New York, Nov. 17, 1883.

Feb. 1, I am to have issued by C. Scribner's Sons a handsome parlor-table book entitled

THE CREOLES  
OF  
LOUISIANA

with nearly fifty illustrations (the Pennell things). Isn't that nice!

<sup>1</sup>At that time the route was apparently from New York to Buffalo and from there to New Orleans.

<sup>2</sup>This lecture had for its subject, "The Ideal Life and Art of the Fictionist."

Went this evening & heard the grandest music that ever my ears listened to—Beethoven's 7th Symphony. Was with Krehbiel. Took dinner with him. On leaving there went into the Gilders' to say good-bye & found John Hay had been looking for me. He had left word I could find him in the Century Club, & as Mrs. Gilder had given him my address wrong, I went in. Saw him; had a long, pleasant talk with him. Promised to visit him in Cleveland if possible on my way home, & to lunch with him & Mrs. Hay at the Brunswick on Monday.

*To Daniel C. Gilman*

Springfield, Mass.

Nov. 22, 1883.

MY DEAR PRES'T. GILMAN:

I have been some days in rec't of your letter enclosing one written to you in Balto. on the subject of my readings, and have kept it, waiting until I could write you from this point after reading here.

A great deal hung upon this, my first reading before an audience after months of training, and now that I have scored so complete a success I hasten to tell you of it, who heard my first, crude effort and encouraged me to repeat it. I shudder a little whenever I think of my Balto. experience. There is a class, said by the great Scotch dyspeptic to be numerous, that "rush in where angels fear to tread." I will not be too certain where I belong now, but I know I was of that noble army of fearless ones last Spring.

The reading last night came about by matters being taken in hand by a very small club of ladies numbering less than 20 of actual working force, & only about that number in all. I enclose a clipping from the *Sp. Repub'n* and the pretty little programme used. It looks short but being more correctly rendered than you ever heard it from me, it covered an hour & a half.

Pardon me for taking up your attention with these de-

tails, but as I am enjoying the announcement that I am to be recalled to Springfield as soon as possible to read to a larger audience & as the matter is purely spontaneous, I feel happy and—communicative.

Please give my kindest regards to your family & to Dr's Adams, Jameson and the rest, & believe me

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE.

*To L. S. C.*

Adams House, Boston, Mass.,

Nov. 23, 1883.

I have just come in from dining with the Fairchilds. Mrs. F. asks after you & all the children. She knows them by heart. They are ever so nice.

Boston is the most picturesque place I've seen outside of N. Orleans. Such queer old streets; such interesting architectural confusion, that is not mere confusion but very effective.

Spent an hour this morning with Mr. Osgood. Went & saw the pretty, brand-new hall where I am to read,—New Chickering Hall. Used up the day studying my readings. At 5 P.M. Howells called. Oh! what a gentle, pleasant soul he is! James is in Europe.

I dine tomorrow with Osgood at the Anthonys', with whom he lives. Thence to the St. Botolph Club where I am to be the guest of the club. The evening is specially Mr. Matthew Arnold's, but it is very pleasant to know that I am his junior partner in the honor.

Monday I read. Tuesday I go to an afternoon reception at Howells's. Wednesday do. do. at the Anthonys' and in the evening read the 2d time.

The afternoon at the Anthonys' is to meet Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Barrett.

*To the same*

Boston, Novr. 24, 1883.

I am just in from a novel experience—that of being the guest of a great club. Went the rounds of the newspaper offices this morning and called on the editors with my manager, Mr. Williams. Then to my work. Study, study, study—maybe you think it's easy.

Dressed & went to dinner at the Anthonys'. Then went to the St. Botolph Club, where the fun began. Talk, talk, talk, talk, talk, *ad infinitum*. Introductions again & again & again; Francis Parkman, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Chas. Francis Adams, Jr., Matthew Arnold—who said, "Oh! Mr. Cable! we've been reading your books—perfectly delighted, sir; perfectly delighted!"—Artists, Architects, Attorneys, Physicians, Judges, Generals, Publishers, Divines,—Phillips Brooks, Lawrence Barrett; &c, &c, &c. As my dear Narcisse says,—“You'd think I was a Major-Gen'l, in fact, an' I don't like that, you know.”

Oh, no. We don't like attention, do we? It makes us pout, eh? We're not vain, and so it displeases us. And when we're waltzed out to the long supper-table at the head of the column, of course it's very unpleasant, & all that sort o' thing.

Help me to remember that pleasing as all this is, it's not the *main thing*. No, no. I read the proof of my prisons article today.<sup>1</sup> Ah! there's where I feel glad. When a man feels that his sword has cleft Apollyon till he roars again. That's better than “Rabbi, Rabbi.”

*To the same*

Adams House, Boston,  
Novem'r. 26, 1883.

I am just in from my reading. The hall would have been—judging by the number who came in the face of the

<sup>1</sup>“The Convict Lease System in the U. S.,” *Century Magazine*, Feb., 1884.

storm—full to overflowing had the night been clear. As it was there was a good audience all the way back to the doors.

Edwin Booth sat in the middle of the house, with Aldrich; they are great friends to each other.

Today a newspaper interviewer, a very attractive young gentleman named Warren, sat with me for two hours. While he was here who should come to call but the aged John Greenleaf Whittier, the poet. He talks the tender old Quaker talk. Said—"I've read all thy writings. I've read every line thee ever wrote, and I knew thee would be a great writer as soon as I saw thy first productions." No wonder I thought he was a sweet old man.

Later Mr. Fairchild called & later, again, Howells; for he was a little anxious about me, inasmuch as I took tea with him & his family (nobody else) last night & felt so unwell after attending church with him that he required me to stay all night at his house.

Howells seems to be a most lovable man. It was he who made that card<sup>1</sup> that the Boston group signed, the other day. Going down to tea this evening at 6 o'clock I fell in with Burbank, the professional reader & Boyle O'Reilly, the poet & Irish patriot. We took tea together. Tomorrow afternoon Howells gives me a big reception; *i.e.*, big for me; and the next night I go to a reception at the Anthonys' to meet Mr. Barrett, whom I have, indeed, already met, at the St. Botolph.

Boston is a queer place. Streets narrow & irregular & houses piled all sorts of ways—often extremely picturesque. The new parts very broad, open, rich & beautiful.

<sup>1</sup>The "card" was a paragraph in the Boston newspapers, telling, in terms of high praise, about the readings previously given in other cities, and urging the good citizens of Boston not to miss the "treat that is in store for you." To this were affixed the names of some six or eight writers of prominence, among them William Dean Howells and Oliver Wendell Holmes.

*To the same*

Boston, Nov. 27, 1883.

The day has been beautiful. Edw'd Everett Hale called to see me & would hardly take no for an answer, wanting to take me to his house, trunk & all. I may go, yet, later.

The reception at the Howellses' was a fine affair. I stood for 2 hours receiving, shaking hands & talking. It's the nicest kind o' thing. You can dash ahead & begin to say any pretty thing you like, for you needn't ever finish it unless it comes perfectly handy. All you have to do is just to turn around & receive the next one. There were nearly a hundred persons present, of which fully 4/5 were notables. Here are a few names: Oliver Wendell Holmes, Francis Parkman, Gen'l Francis Walker, ex-Gov. Claffin, Ernest Longfellow, his sister Mrs. Dana, Edwin Booth, Mrs. Whitney the sculptor, T. B. Aldrich & wife, 4 Ticknors, 3 Osgoods, a daughter of Gov. Andrews, a senator from Wisconsin, T. W. Higginson, Lawrence Barrett & wife, Miss Booth, Rose (Hawthorne) Lathrop, Fairchild and so on for a mile or two.

Just pause for a moment, will you? and think of the generous kindness of Howells & his sunshiny wife to con-coct all that for me.

*To the same*

New Haven, Dec. 9, 1883.

Arrived here last night from N. York. On Thursday (6th) I read my lecture before the XIX Century Club and its guests. The Boston *Transcript* printed it entire—the N. Y. *Tribune* partially. The *World* was very complimentary. It is the paper that passed such critical strictures upon my last Spring's reading.

On the 7th I went with Krehbiel & heard some glorious music under the direction of Dr. Damrosch—among other things the entire music of the "Midsummer Night's Dream," with a chorus of about 150 female voices.



In the evening dined with a Brooklyn party at the famous *old* "Delmonico's" down corner of Beaver & William streets, N. York. Geo. Wm. Curtis was to have been at the head of the table, but instead of him was only a telegram explaining his inability to be present. Nice dinner. Lots of decent fun. Very pleasant to see how sparingly the gentlemen sipped their wine. When cigars were lighted they suddenly went into conclave upon the subject of my appearance in Brooklyn & in a very few minutes had arranged it all. I read in Brooklyn on the 17th.

On the 8th I went to Chas. Scribner's office & saw the new page for "The Creoles of Louisiana," made a suggestion or two & said good-bye. Had a very sweet & tender parting with R/S.<sup>1</sup> He said, "Well, it has come at last. Remember, we prayed to the Lord for this & He has given it to us"—meaning my present success. I told him yes, but that the thing to watch now is to see that success makes a better man of me—not a worse one.

You'd laugh to read my Boston agent's letter of the 6th. He says in one hour after the ticket office was opened for my Boston matinée on the 11th, 4/5 of the hall was sold & by 11 o'clock of the 7th there were but 2 seats for sale in the house & they were putting chairs on the platform. One of these days I hope to fill a *large* hall that way.

Ah! dear! Every dog has his day, even the stump-tailed ones. This is mine. God help me to use it for the advancement of truth & righteousness & the blessed tidings of salvation!

<sup>1</sup>Roswell Smith, president of the Century Company.

CHAPTER VII  
READINGS WITH MARK TWAIN:  
"DR. SEVIER"  
(1884)

*"Man's thoughts and loves and hates!  
Earth is my vineyard, these grew there;  
From grape o' the ground I made or marred  
My vintage; easy the task or hard,  
Who set it—his praise be my reward!"*

ROBERT BROWNING.

To L. S. C.

N. York, Jan. 13, 1884.

I am just in from a long, quiet walk all the way from Mr. Beecher's in Brooklyn. You see I didn't like to use the cars or boats,<sup>1</sup> so yesterday afternoon at 6½ o'clock Major Pond & I set out for Brooklyn by the horse-cars, to take tea with Mr. Moses Beach & family & I to stay all night with them.

After tea went to Thomas's Philharmonic. It was the finest execution I've ever yet heard. Sat with Mr. & Mrs. Elwell & near Krehbiel. Oh! it was glorious!

Back to the Beaches' with the young ladies & Pond. Breakfast at 8½ o'clock and by and by off to Plymouth Church. So at last I was to hear Mr. Beecher preach. I found the rule about the admission of strangers much better than elsewhere among the great favorite churches where I have been. Every pew is rented annually with the distinct understanding that at any time that it is not occupied ten minutes before service begins it is liable to be occupied by strangers. Later, at dinner, I asked Mr. Beecher if he had heard it said or implied—as I so often

<sup>1</sup>Travelling on Sunday by public conveyance was at that time something to be avoided by the strict Sabbatarian.

had—that an admission fee was charged at the door of his church. He was much amused & said no, he never had heard of such a thing. The immense church was simply crammed.

It was a fine, strong, manly, noble sermon. After service I parted with the Beaches & went home with the Beechers; Major Pond also, of course.

Well, there is one table—in 8th street, N. Orleans—where there is as much fun & hard joking as at Mr. Beecher's, but I don't know of any more. They're all a happy, jolly, joyous crowd.

After dinner & as the afternoon wore along, we said good-bye & walked over Brooklyn Bridge—Ah! Why try to tell it! It is like sailing through the clouds.

Kiss my dear, dear little ladies five. Tell them to remember they're on this earth to make it better. Isabel has already done this.<sup>1</sup> Tell them all to remember me; & to think of the Heavenly Father as just as real & personal as the parent, whom they love, far away, & to love Him the same way only far more.

*To the same*

New York, Jan. 23, '84.

I have had some very pleasant excitements since I wrote you last. Went up to Northampton.<sup>2</sup> O the snow, snow, snow! Sleighs & sleigh-bells numberless & musical. Thermometer 15° below Cicero, as Pond says. However, I did not find it so; the wind had turned & though it had been that low in the morning it had gone up to about 20° above.

Make some memorandum to ask me about Northampton when I come home & I'll interest you. I slept in a house that was once General Burgoyne's headquarters.

Up at 5 o'clock & off in the frozen starlight dashing

<sup>1</sup>His daughter Isabel was the baby of the family at that time.

<sup>2</sup>This was his first visit to Northampton, which later was to become his home.

## 116 GEORGE W. CABLE: HIS LIFE AND LETTERS

through the snow with the sleigh runners creaking & crunching underneath, to the cars & back in N. York at 12 yesterday.

Tell my little girls that I want to bring up five splendid housekeepers as well as educated & refined ladies. No lady is truly educated who isn't a housekeeper.

*To the same*

Mark Twain's House,  
Hartford, Jan. 28th, '84.

Don't laugh at me. Mrs. George Warner is my amanuensis for today, as a slight indiscretion has given me a savage attack of neuralgia in that part of my face that I make my living by, in short, my lower jaw—the part that wags, and the doctor, in order to make short work of it, has ordered me to keep my bed for twenty-four hours. That's all.

Jan. 30.

I didn't sit up yesterday, but I may easily do so this afternoon. I have had a hard & ugly fight while it lasted, with neuralgia in the jaw. You can tell little Mary that it would have done her heart good, if her heart wasn't so good already, to see how Father had to keep his mouth shut, when he didn't want to.

In a day or two I shall be in New York and in the old highway-robbery business. We have new ties, now, binding us to our Hartford friends.

Jan. 31.

I have enjoyed Mr. Clemens' company not a little. When I come home I will try and repeat to you some of the funny stories he tells the little Jean. Jean has a magnificent mental digestion. She must have a tiger in every story, and no tiger seems to her to be really worth the money unless he's in a jungle.

*To the same*

Hartford, Feb. 13, 1884.

I wish I could write long today, for I have enjoyed the day extremely. From the breakfast-table Clemens & I went into the drawing-room. He was complaining that he had overworked during the last few days & was tempted to take a half-holiday. We sat down together & fell a-chatting. Time passed & we continued talking. He finished his pipe & as we went on each seemed to kindle the other's mind & so we kept up our converse. By and by we were both on our feet, he walking up & down the drawing-room & I back & forth across it. Our talk was generally earnest—about our great Century & the vast advantages of living in it—the glory & beauty of it, etc., etc.

Only when we were talking of publishers Mark got ferocious & funny.

"Oh!" he groaned with longing, in contemplation of discomfiting some fellows who he thinks have cheated him in copyright, "if it could be, I could lie in my grave with my martial cloak around me & kick my monument over & laugh & laugh!"

He went to the piano & sang a German song—one that Longfellow has translated—

"O, hemlock tree, O hemlock tree,  
How faithful are thy branches."

I sang a tenor part, not trying to use the words. Then back to our talk and out into the library where Mark proposed a little literary scheme for him & me & three or four others; & when Mrs. Clemens came in at 1 P.M. we were still talking.

Part of the time—I forgot to say—was spent in consulting Audubon to identify a strange & beautiful bird that we had seen at breakfast-time from the window of the library.

Mrs. Clemens is reading aloud to Mark & the children

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Howard Pyle's beautiful new version of Robin Hood. Mark enjoys it hugely; they have come to the death of Robin & will soon be at the end.

*To the same*

New York, Feb. 16, 1884.

Mark Twain & I took a carriage & went to see General Grant today—whom Mark knows well, but he has been ill & was asleep & Mark will go to see him Monday morning. It's about a scheme that Mark & I are starting. I'll tell you about it later—a big show for the relief of the Ohio river overflow sufferers—Gen'l Grant to preside & Mark Twain, Henry Ward Beecher and I to furnish the entertainment at the Academy of Music, New York. It may all fall through or it may work—don't know, yet, which.

*To the same*

Philadelphia, Feb. 18, 1884.

At last—at last! I feel well, & it makes me happy.<sup>1</sup>

Tomorrow night my work begins again. I mustn't write you at length tonight, but I must take time to say that the big scheme falls through because Mr. Beecher had an engagement that he could not possibly put aside. He was very sorry, wanted to go into the scheme & thought we could raise \$50,000 for the overflow sufferers. But it's all up & Mark's gone home.

I had not been here long when Pennell & Miss Robbins called to see me. As quick as thought it came to me to

<sup>1</sup>Writing home from the Middle West, a few weeks later, my father says: "I am anxious to know if Louise [his eldest daughter] has taken the mumps. I wonder if it was the mumps that first made me ill. For I have a letter from my dear, sweet little nurse who attended me with such faithful devotion, saying that she has the mumps—took them soon after returning to the hospital. Two of Mark Twain's children had the petty plague of the same name, & Mark insists that I had it. My doctor says emphatically 'no.'"

jump into bed & pretend to be desperately sick.<sup>1</sup> Pond rec'd them in the next room in a solemn whisper & let Pennell in. I fooled him finely. I jumped into bed, clothes & all, covered up, & lay with the whites of my eyes turned up, my mouth open, gasping & moving my head from side to side & softly moaning. Poor Penn came in & stood by the bed. I slowly slipped my hand out from under the blankets. He took it & said softly—"Why, old fellow, I'm mighty sorry to see this"—Then I burst!

I don't believe it sounds funny to tell it, but it was *big* fun.

*To the same*

Ann Arbor, Mich., M'ch 10, 1884.

I wish you were here for the pure fun of it. I am in my hotel chamber waiting for the hour of my reading. The windows are tightly shut & so is the door; but through them come the strains of music that are calling people to the "Opera House" to hear a little man whose name is stuck up on the dead walls about town literally in letters two feet long. Yes, they've got a brass band and it is tooting away for dear life! Truly, I am in the Great West.

Now they pause to take breath. Presently they will resume—bass drum & all. O where shall I laugh!

*To the same*

Providence, April 3, 1884.

Well, here I am in Rhode Island. What leaps over lands and rivers! It has been snowing ever since I wrote you yesterday morning and the land is once more shrouded in white. The rivers and brooks run dark and frowning among the snow-fields, and the trees hang down their heads whitened in a night.

What a delightful evening I spent yesterday. I arrived

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Pennell had been responsible for bringing my father to Philadelphia to read, late in January, when he was prevented by his illness in Hartford, from filling the engagement.

in Boston at 3 P.M. & drove to see Mr. Osgood. Went thence to Mrs. James T. Fields's home in Charles St. & dined & spent the evening with her & Miss Sarah Orne Jewett. They are both women of emphatic goodness & intelligence. Mrs. Fields could not see me for some time as she had just come in from a hard day's work of visiting her various charities & was bedraggled by the storm. We talked of men & things & principles quite delightfully to me. Mrs. F. could tell amusing & pretty anecdotes of the magnates she has met—about Dickens describing his manner of working—about Tennyson reading his "Maud" aloud to her & others, and so on—and on. It helps anecdotes, to hear them from a lovely woman of mind & heart & good works & fame, and golden years, and black hair waving down from the centre of the upper forehead & backward to the ears. I must try to get her picture.

Sarah Jewett has one of those faces that one would never call pretty. She is not picturesque, like Mrs. Fields, but it's a sweet, short sermon just to look at her. She makes one feel the obligation to be good.

Mrs. Fields read to us a poem written by Parsons on the death of Wendell Phillips. It is a unique, bold and successful effort—quite grand. Then the nun, Sarah, at my urging, got out the MS. of her novel on which she is at work & read 2 or 3 chapters from it. She calls it "A Country Doctor." It's fine. I shall read it entire with great pleasure.

Then I read them the chapter of "Dr. Sevier," describing the fall of New Orleans. They laughed and squealed and clapped hands; but I did not get vexed. Then we said good-night and I went upstairs to bed, thinking how many of the great men of the English & American literary world have gone up & come down the same stairway that was my road to dreamland.

Up to breakfast at 8½. More serene pleasure, chatting & breakfasting at a window that overlooks an arm of Boston harbor. Then up & off for Providence and so, as the New Englanders say, "here I be."



Back in New York once more, he wrote, under date of April 9, "The newspaper 'boys' are wild over the Mark Twain thing." He was chuckling over the success of the one and only "practical joke" of his life—as he later spoke of it—while the newspapers in various cities were printing accounts of it similar to the following:

"Mark Twain has revealed the facts of an April-fool joke of huge dimensions, of which he is the victim. Geo. W. Cable, the novelist, was his guest a few weeks ago, and noticed Mark's intense aversion to autograph-seekers. This was the basis of Cable's joke: he wrote and sent out nearly 200 circulars to Mark's literary and other friends suggesting that they write him for his autograph. They readily fell in with the joke, and Tuesday his mail was swelled by over 150 letters, while the front door-bell was besieged all day by telegraph-boys with telegraph messages. Many of the letters are in the conventional phraseology of autograph-hunters, others of great length are filled with business suggestions or friendly correspondence, but inevitably close with a request for an autograph. The letters are from Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Clara Louise Kellogg, Henry Ward Beecher, Modjeska, H. H. Boyesen, Geo. P. Lathrop, H. C. Bunner, Noah Brooks, Geo. E. Waring, Jr., Horace Scudder, Julian Hawthorne, and a host of other personal friends in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and more distant points. The recipient has secured a fine collection through the joke of Mr. Cable, and is considering the propriety of mounting them in frames and adding them to the exhibit of Barnum's great moral show."

The circular letter was this:

*Private and Confidential*

MY DEAR MR. - - - -

It has been agreed among some friends of Mr. S. L. Clemens that all his friends, as far as they will, write to him on receipt of this circular (mailing on such dates as

to allow all the letters to reach him simultaneously on the First of April), asking for his autograph.

The consent to co-operate has already been obtained from a number sufficient to make it certain that the matter will take the character intended for it, and this circular is now mailed to 150 persons of the literary and journalistic guild, in Boston, Hartford, Springfield, New York, Brooklyn, Washington and other cities, each of whom—with yourself—is requested to invite others, ladies or gentlemen, to take part.

It is suggested that no stamps or card or envelope be inclosed with the request; that no stranger to Mr. Clemens and no minor take part.

Yours truly,

(Signed)

GEO. W. CABLE

In July of 1884 my father made a move which was destined to affect his own life and that of his whole family far more than he himself realized at the time. "The ill health," he says, "of one of my family demanding a radical change of climate, I took my household to spend a summer and fall in a village of Connecticut." The village was Simsbury, about ten miles distant from Hartford; and the stay that was to have been for the summer and fall lengthened into the winter and the following summer. "My wife's health and my own superior working-power," he wrote, "were the inducements that led to the change of residence. Moreover, as literature and the lecture platform were now my calling, and it was therefore idle to retain my residence in New Orleans, more than fifteen hundred miles from my publishers and the centre of the lecture-field, I had determined to make my home, for some years at least, conveniently near New York City."

When asked, not long afterward, why he had left New Orleans, he added this: "I thought it well, having been

familiar with Southern affairs during all the impressionable years of my life, to study the aspect from a distance. Also to come into contact with other sections and get comparative views. My own search for more congenial surroundings did not enter into my calculations. I had a throng of friends in New Orleans and was deeply interested in all the relations of life there." This was in reference to his writings on the Southern Problem and to the stories that were then current in the newspapers to the effect that these writings had made it impossible for him to remain in the South.

But to assert—as many did assert, at that time and later—that my father was forced by the bitter antagonism in the South to leave New Orleans and make his home in the North, is contrary to the facts of the case, as a brief study of certain dates will show. In June, 1884, he was invited to deliver an address before the Alabama Historical Society, following the Commencement exercises of the University of Alabama, at Tuscaloosa. In this address he made his first public utterance in reference to the problem of the negro in the South, and, although the local press met his words, "for the first time," as he himself said, "entirely without commendation," there was, so far as the New Orleans press of that date was concerned, no expression of resentment; the address was referred to, by the *Times-Democrat*<sup>1</sup> of New Orleans, merely as "indicating an unfortunate tendency," etc.

When, however, there appeared in the *Century Magazine* for January, 1885,—six months after he had left New Orleans—"The Freedman's Case in Equity"—an article based on the address at Tuscaloosa—there arose at once "a storm of denunciation." My father and his family were then staying on in Simsbury, Connecticut, for the winter following their first summer there, with definite plans for making a permanent home somewhere in the North—the exact locality only had not yet been deter-

<sup>1</sup>June 19, 1884.

mined. Naturally the hostility in the South distressed my father; but that did not deter him from further expression of what he was convinced must be spoken or written, nor did it hinder his journeying through every State of the South more than once in the year or two that followed, for the avowed purpose of gaining knowledge of existing conditions, about which he was writing. His personal reasons for wishing to make his home in the North, he himself gives with definiteness in a later chapter.<sup>1</sup>

*To his sister, Mary Louise Cable*

DEAR SISTER:

Simsbury, Conn., Aug. 2, 1884.

I have been so busy that I just couldn't write to you. I got rather worked down last week & had to content myself with meagre results this week. Yesterday I found myself in good working trim again & today I hope to do a brave day's work.

We still continue to have a good time. Yesterday afternoon we drove with the Robbinses up northward through (between) the two "Barn Door Hills," very majestic masses of rock all grey & green.

The same cool weather continues. The thermometer on the table before me registers 68°. Such delightful sunshine & shadow. Gifts of lovely flowers from neighbors, bunches of beautiful wild flowers brought by our delighted children from the woods—I wish you were here.

I ought to tell you at length of our beautiful drive of yesterday. The woods were full of the smell of pine—the white pine—with now & then the odor of some other growth mingling with it. The chestnut trees & hickories were full of their growing nuts. Sometimes we drove between broad stretches & slopes of these soft, flowery New England meadows. Now between orchards, now into long descents and ascents of yellow sandy road under chestnut and maple boughs, now along the railed edge of some

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter IX.

green steep with the damp meadow below gay with daisies & lilies. Sometimes the hills were very steep & stony. Once or twice we crossed beautiful clear streams of water gurgling over their brown boulders. Sometimes little trout streams tempted us to stop & dabble in them. Fields of half-grown corn & tobacco—the tobacco makes a very pretty field, you know,—stretched away to the breasts of the hills. Sometimes from an eminence we saw the view open far away and in the gap of the “Barn Doors” saw northward in Massachusetts the dim blue top of Mount Tom.

Oh, pshaw! Time & paper both giving out! Kisses to all. Love to friends.

Yours ever,

GEORGE

*To Mrs. James T. Fields*

MY DEAR MRS. FIELDS:      Simsbury, Conn., Aug 2d, 1884.

Your letter gives me the keenest pleasure. And if my story is pleasing you then so much the more enjoyment for me.

Yes, we are in beautiful New England. What delight we take in its airs, fields, streams, valleys and gentle inhabitants would make a long letter. We have Miss Jewett's “Country Doctor” and are getting great pleasure from it. Not I. Poor man! I have to wait my turn. Mrs. Cable, my mother-in-law, two sisters-in-law, all these in New Orleans; and here, our next-door neighbor & our opposite neighbor—all these first, before me—and they're at it. The next neighbor has it now. These lending women will ruin the book-trade.

I began it, but forgot to lock it up. I don't think any review I've seen has done it justice though some of the critics evidently fancied they were quite patronizingly generous.

It would delight me if you could visit us here. Mrs.

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Cable and five little girls make my flock; we are keeping house, have no guests, and in our very plain way should be ever so glad to entertain an angel or two even if we are aware that we're doing it. Might you not take us in your way toward Boston? I should have such joy in showing you the mother-bird & nestlings. Mrs. Cable joins me in best wishes to yourself & Miss Jewett.

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

*To Miss Anna L. Dawes*

MY DEAR MISS DAWES:

New York, Oct. 21, 1884.

Your letter of the 10th instant is a source of much pleasure both to Mrs. Cable and myself. We ought to have written to you long ago to tell you how successfully our hunt for a New England home—in which you so kindly took an interest—ended. We have been since last July keeping house in Simsbury, Conn., and have passed one of the happiest summers in our experience. We should be overjoyed if you could make us a visit. The town is on both the New Haven & Northampton and the Hartford & Connecticut Western railways. By the date of my letter you will see I am in New York; but I go up to Simsbury every Saturday and return Monday. We shall hold our present base until next fall.

It makes me think more of "Dr. Sevier" that you should like it so much. I should greatly like to talk with you about him, and I should be ever so glad to have Mrs. Cable and my five little damsels know you.

Please remember me kindly to your mother, and believe me

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

About this time there arose a controversy, in print, into which my father was unwittingly drawn. Since it in-

volved him in a slight misunderstanding with his good friend, Joel Chandler Harris, he hastened to clear himself by writing to his beloved "Uncle Remus" direct. The *London Saturday Review* had printed, early in 1884, an article entitled "Banjo and Bones," in which occurred the following paragraph: "The instruments of the four performers were the banjo and the bones, the violin and the tambourine. Of these four instruments most persons would at once pick out the banjo as most characteristic of the negro race. Mr. J. C. Harris, however, wrote a paper last winter in which he declared that the banjo was not a negro instrument at all, and that the preference of the darky was wholly for the violin."

*The Critic* (New York) reprinted these statements, and at once a controversy was started, in letters from many correspondents, all of whom were firm in their assertion that the plantation negro did sometimes play the banjo. My father was cited by *The Critic* as having had "occasion to observe the negro in Louisiana, as carefully as Mr. Harris has observed him in Georgia." And in an article in the *New York Tribune* he was quoted as saying: "I have listened half a night to negroes singing to their banjo in Louisiana. But it is possible that Mr. Harris never saw a negro with one. It is a fact that where you find one negro with a banjo, you find a hundred with a fiddle." To this *The Critic* added: "Mr. Cable, however, disagrees absolutely with Mr. Harris in the main issue. He says that the banjo is just as much a negro instrument as the barrel with the jawbone drumsticks, which the negroes use in their dances. And all truly conservative lovers of tradition will rejoice that Mr. Harris has been overthrown. It is bad enough to deprive the negro of his tambourine and his bones; to rob him of his banjo is brutal." To which Mr. Harris replied: "The question is not whether the banjo is played by negroes, here and there, but whether it was and is played to an extent sufficient to constitute it the typical musical instrument of the planta-

tion negroes, and to justify the use it is put to by those who pretend to represent the negro." Here, apparently, the matter was allowed to rest.

A year or two later, however, my father wrote, in *The Dance in Place Congo*:<sup>1</sup> "The grand instrument at last, the first violin, as one might say, was the banjo. It had but four strings, not six: beware of the dictionary. It is not the 'favorite musical instrument of the negroes of the Southern States of America.' Uncle Remus says truly that that is the fiddle; but for the true African dance, a dance not so much of legs and feet as of the upper half of the body, a sensual, devilish thing, tolerated only by Latin-American masters, there was wanted the dark inspiration of African drums and the banjo's thrump and strum."

*To Joel Chandler Harris*

Simsbury, Conn.,

July 28, 1884.

MY REVERED UNCLE:

Now is it possible! Have *you* gone off the handle too? I have never printed a word about your statements on the banjo. You are quoting what the reporter *said* I said!

I have always answered all questions about the Remus-Banjo Imbroglia that Remus was R.I.G.H.T. The fiddle is the favorite instrument of the negro throughout as many of the Southern States as I have any knowledge of.

The negroes were very fond of the banjo in Louisiana and, I believe, never used the violin with their *African* dances.

So long.

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

In October, 1883, the second novel, "Dr. Sevier," had begun its course in the *Century Magazine*, and in September, 1884, it was issued in book form by J. R. Osgood &

<sup>1</sup>*Century Magazine*, February, 1886.



Co.,<sup>1</sup> of Boston. Of its inception and foundation my father once wrote: "I was still engaged upon 'The Creoles of Louisiana' when I was invited to write another novel of the same length—no other feature was ever conditioned—as 'The Grandissimes.' I began to write 'Dr. Sevier.' An experience told me by Dr. E. Warren Brickell, of New Orleans, had moved me to write the story."

Dr. Brickell himself became the prototype for the kindly yet brusque physician, and the story adheres closely in its general outline to the experience related by him. One time shortly after the book had been published, my father gave a reading from it in the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin (the city from which he wrote: "I really feel a tenderness for the place because it was the home of Mary Richling."). Being there asked to tell something of the conception of the story, he said: "The characters, that is, the principal ones, and the main incidents of the work, are true. One afternoon, as I was passing the office of my family physician, he called me in and said he wanted to tell me a story. Not heeding my protest that I was busy, he seated me, and reclining on his lounge, related the story of the people I call John and Mary Richling. The account of their trials affected me deeply, and at my first leisure moment I wrote out the plain story. This I read to my father-in-law on condition that he should not tell it. The recital of the facts brought tears to his eyes, and with this proof of the story's sympathetic strength, I wrote the novel." The story, he went on to say, was in brief: "John Richling (I do not know his real name, for he never revealed it) had married a dainty, sweet, pretty little woman in Milwaukee. He was from Kentucky. They appeared in New Orleans, and that is where Dr. Sevier first saw them. He was called to attend the young wife. He

<sup>1</sup>There were two printings in September, one in October and one in December; the last of which was possibly the first to receive the 1885 imprint. It ran five editions—7,000 copies—in the first six months.

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helped her through several sieges of illness. Her husband was searching for a position, and all this time the Doctor saw them growing poorer and poorer, till finally Mary was found by the Doctor in the Charity Hospital. Shortly afterward John became an inmate of the hospital and remained there for a few weeks. On his recovery Mary, by the Doctor's advice, was sent to her mother in Milwaukee. The Doctor watched over John till he finally got a place with a baker named Rich, on Benjamin Street. Here he proved of immense value to his employer, who died, leaving him in charge. John finally sickened and came into the Doctor's hands again. He wanted to send for Mary, but the Doctor dissuaded him. A daughter was born to Mary in Milwaukee and John, as he lay dying, handed a picture of his daughter to the Doctor, saying, 'This is my baby, whom I have never seen.' Thus he died, refusing always to tell his name, as such a revelation would bring reproach on his family; though they, indeed, had long ago ceased to regard him as belonging to them. Now, somewhere up here are this little woman and daughter, if they are not dead; and I am hoping always that my book, or some notice may come to her eyes that will help to reveal her to me." But he never heard of her or of her daughter.

#### *To the Editors of the Century Magazine<sup>1</sup>*

Simsbury, Conn.,  
November, 1884.

A correspondent in the October number of *The Century* expresses his "profound regret and disappointment" that in the story of "Dr. Sevier" I should have said to the Northern soldiers marching down Broadway in 1861 that their cause was just, and that we of the South can now say it.

The passage should be read in connection with what

<sup>1</sup>From an "Open Letter" to the *Century Magazine*, November, 1884.

goes before and follows if its spirit is to be properly understood. I do not there, and I cannot here, yield to anyone in pride in our struggle and in all the noble men and women who bore its burdens; and it is while expressing such feelings as these that, turning to those who, once our foes, are now more than ever our brethren, I gave to them in turn, not a repetition of those words of affection, too tender for any but our own heroes, but the one word of concession which, on the plane we of the South occupy to-day, we can speak without abating by the weight of a hair our perfect manhood.

Englishmen do not change their opinions so readily as Americans; and yet our Anglo-Saxon brethren across the Atlantic soon conceded the justice of the American nation's cause in its War of Independence waged against themselves. Why, then, should I withhold my acknowledgment when I grasp in cordial recognition the hand of a brother the justice of whose cause has become my own complete conviction?

It is but a few weeks since a personal acquaintance, also an ex-Confederate soldier, asking me to explain the utterance that has given annoyance to Mr. McKay, presently conceded that the success of the principles for which we fought faithfully and gallantly—so far as the fight was for them—would have been ruinous, and that the best-founded and profoundest cause of rejoicing in the South to-day is that, even at such cost, we were saved from the ruin of secession. Now we may take our choice: Was it a war for slavery? We all know now that slavery was wrong. Was it a war for the right of secession? How can a principle that is ruinous be right? Nay, sir; we thank no man for buffets; we make no pretense of humility; but before an issue where both sides could be brave and conscientious and yet each be wrong in many words and acts; but where, as to the ultimate question, both could not be right; with the verdict of the whole enlightened world against us, it is surely not too much to maintain that in

the fullest stature of human dignity we can stand up and say to our brethren,—no longer our adversaries—“Time has taught us you were right.”

“‘And yet—and yet, we cannot forget—’ And we would not!”<sup>1</sup>

GEORGE W. CABLE

In connection with the foregoing letter it may be of interest to quote a few words from a subsequent “Open Letter” in the *Century Magazine* for January, 1885, signed, “A Southern Democrat”:

“Five years ago such a statement made by a Southern man would have aroused quite a little tempest of indignation; but a great change has been going on in the South, and one of the results of this change is the tacit admission of those who are supposed to be the chosen defenders of the South that Mr. Cable, as a Southern man, has a right to hold opinions of his own, even though they may run counter to the opinions of other Southern men.”

In the spring of 1883 my father had said: “Mark Twain writes that he has a big idea and I must make no engagement until I see him.” This was doubtless the genesis of the arrangement between Mr. Clemens and my father to give a series of joint readings from their own works. It was Mark Twain’s idea, since he wished to try a season on the platform, and he seemed to think that my father and his writings would make an effective combination with himself and what he had to offer.<sup>2</sup> My father

<sup>1</sup>From “Dr. Sevier.”

<sup>2</sup>In regard to this tour, the Davenport (Iowa) *Democrat* of February 2d, 1885, quotes Mark Twain as saying:

“I wanted to get a larger menagerie together—Howells, T. B. Aldrich, ‘Uncle Remus,’ Cable and myself. But Howells had to go to Italy on a commission from the *Century*, which will take him a year to fulfil; and the others couldn’t join us for one reason or another, and so Cable and I started out alone. I wanted somebody to keep me in countenance on the stage, and to help me impose on the audience. But more than that, I wanted good company on the road and at the hotels. A man can start out alone and rob the public, but it’s dreary work and a cold-blooded thing to do.”

had already put himself under the management of Major James B. Pond, and with him Mr. Clemens made the arrangement that was to take the two writers on a tour of readings lasting from November, 1884, to the end of February, 1885; and reaching from Kentucky to the Middle West and to Canada: the enterprise was entirely Mark Twain's and my father was simply "one of the Company" for the time being. Major Pond and Mark Twain took entire charge of the business part of the tour.

*To L. S. C.*

New Haven, Conn.,  
Nov. 6, 1884.

The work has begun. Mark & I read last night together. It was an emphatic success. Mrs. Clemens was present. After the reading they came with me here to the Bacons' & the five of us sat down to tea.

Love to my darlings. Tell them I hope they're learning punctuality, despatch, alacrity, and cheerful harmony with the common family interests, as well as the more obvious virtues of love, patience and obedience. They are good girls and must be loved very hard.

*To the same (written on the back of one of the evening's programmes)*

Philadelphia, Nov. 21, 1884.

Mark is on the platform; there goes a roar of applause! We have a superb audience—both in numbers & quality—and we are beating ourselves. Mark says, as he passes me on the retiring room steps, "Old boy, you're doing nobly."

Somehow I struck a new streak yesterday evening at Newburgh. We had a little audience & no end of fun. They kept calling us back— There goes another round of applause. The laughter is almost continual & even my milder humor is interrupted with laughter & applause.

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There they go again! The hall is a large one with two large balconies reaching twice around from stage to stage & full to the ceiling. Men standing thick in the back of the house. I thought you'd like to get just one letter from me from the lecture-hall, so here it is. There they go again!

*To the same*

Washington, D. C., Nov. 25, '84.

I am back in my room after our closing reading in Washington. What a good time we have had!

Our reading was as crowded & as successful as last night. When I came off the platform after my second number whom should I find in the retiring room but the President of the United States, with Miss Frelinghuysen & another lady whose name I missed. They went in between that number & Mark's 2d & took seats amid applause. After the reading they came back the same way. The President showed himself very familiar with my works. He said, "Yes, and the poor child! (Mary Richling) to find her husband dead after all!" We had a pleasant talk all round & then they took carriage & were off.

*To the same*

Phila., Nov. 26, 1884.

I wrote you last in Wash'n. I didn't tell you that I met Fred. Douglas. He came into the retiring room & was there when the President was there. They met as acquaintances. Think of it! A runaway slave!

Mark is on the stage reading (reciting) his "Desperate Encounter with an Interviewer," and the roars of laughter fall as regularly as a surf. I think it's a great thing to be able to hold my own with so wonderful a platform figure.



MARK TWAIN AND GEORGE W. CABLE IN 1884.

I have a letter today informing us that President-elect Cleveland will attend our Troy reading, Dec. 2.

*To the same*

En route betw'n Albany & Ithaca  
Dec. 3, 1884.

We got to Albany without delay & were met by the gentlemen managing us for Troy. At 3:30 we all—a party of seven or 8—went in carriages to the capitol & called on President-elect Cleveland. What a slander his pictures are of him! He has one of the strongest & most remarkable faces I have ever seen. He looks like a born ruler and a great soldier. His face is one that one is satisfied should be that of the nation's chief magistrate. Best of all its strength, though it does not lack intellectuality, is mainly moral. I studied it well while we talked, and I came away from it with the strong conviction that the vile tales that have been told of him are merely vile tales. His manner and speech are those of a man to whom great things are easy. Now we shall see, in the four years to come, whether physiognomy is worth anything.

*To the same (written on the back of a programme)*

Toronto, Dec. 8, 1884.

Such a time as we are having! Such roars of British applause. I never heard anything like it out of N. Orleans. Mark is reading. I have just read Kate Riley & Ristofalo, interrupted by roars of laughter and applause.

We are in a big glass Horticultural Hall with people so far away at the bottom of the audience that their features can hardly be discerned.

When I go back upon the platform again (in a moment) I have to sing my 2 or 3 Creole songs. I always shrink from this, the only thing I do shrink from; though it's always encored.



There! Mark is encored. But he'll be off in a minute.  
Well, I'm off—2 songs & an encore. Mark is on. So  
we go.

*To the same*

Grand Rapids, Mich., Dec. 14, 1884.

Here I am spending the Sabbath. Our rooms are very comfortable and the snow is falling outside, now lightly and now heavily. Went to church this morning to a large Baptist church the hour being late and the church being just at hand. Something funny happened: I went down into the Sunday-school after church, unrecognized. Sat near the door in an adult class (male). A lady teacher said good-morning. Still unknown. The preacher came round. Asked me if I was a stranger. Yes. Where did I live. O, a great way off; just in town for a day; tho't I'd drop in, &c. But he would have my name & town. I gave it—joy! still unrecognized! Presently he came back. "Did you say you were from New Orleans?" "Yes." "Do you, or did you ever, know a gentleman there named Sevier?—Dr. Sevier?" "No, sir." He looked me in the eye. I did as much to him. Then he said, "Is Dr. Sevier dead?" "Yes, sir." I threw up the sponge. He got me upon the platform. I said a word or two to the school on the lesson, and went back to the class. The lady teacher was the pastor's wife. She insisted on my teaching the class, but I insisted the hardest, on her teaching it. By and by I was taken off to address the infant class. The dear little tots! The pastor wanted me to address the congregation tonight, which he said would be a very large one of young people; but I told him I thought as talking was my daily toil I ought to rest from it on Sunday evening.

This hasn't been one of my best Sundays. I do not feel that spiritual refreshment I want. But the next one, God willing, will be spent with you in our quiet valley home among our five darlings and our gentle, quiet friends.

CHAPTER VIII  
MORE READINGS WITH MARK TWAIN:  
HOME IN NORTHAMPTON  
(1885-1887)

*"From one stage of our being to the next  
We pass unconscious o'er a slender bridge,  
The momentary work of unseen hands,  
Which crumbles down behind us; looking back,  
We see the other shore, the gulf between,  
And, marvelling how we won to where we stand,  
Content ourselves to call the builder Chance."*

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

To L. S. C.

En route—Cincinnati—Louisville,  
Jan. 5, 1885.

We returned to Cincinnati on the evening of the 2d. I think I have told you in former years of the beauty of Cincinnati by night. Crossing the great bridge from Covington you see the Ohio running darkly underneath, dotted here & there with the red and green lights of steamboats, and its banks sprinkled with long curves of innumerable white lights like an embroidery of gems shown upon black velvet. Then the city rises gradually, its streets marked by rows of yellow gaslights waving with the contour of the ground. But this would be much as other cities are, if this were all; but back of all this, stretching across the sky nearly halfway up to the zenith a line of lights with here & there a brilliant cluster, marks the crest of the lofty hills under whose arc the city draws down to & about the water.

Yesterday I saw the city from this crest by day. It is a noble sight. But of that by & by.

Saturday morning as I sat at breakfast quite late—10 o'clock—Pitts Burt came in and we went off to Mrs. Nicholls's famous pottery—Rookwood Pottery. Ah, me! how shall I describe the delights of that visit. Forms of such grace that one delight was to handle them with closed eyes. Colors of such richness, such delicacy, such harmony, such heights & depths as never had I conceived among possibilities. Decorations so original, so life-like, such instantaneous revelations of the errors of our earlier tastes and triumph of truer principles in the covering of surfaces, that one must clasp one's hands and lift & part & drop them and be silent or make little moanings for lack of words. Glazes as soft and warm as a mole's back—no wonder they call it "hair-fur-glaze." And there was one thing more that must be told. A new discovery; a wonderful glaze that has but just been produced and which they are not yet sure of ever producing again. I took a large jar in my arms and held it perpendicularly before my sight: a wild wealth of color, deep, ripe, velvety red struggling with dark sea and orange greens as some alchemist's flame might wrestle in the air with its own rolling smoke. Then I slowly tipped its top toward me, its bottom toward the window's light, and oh! marvellous. Slowly, silently as a panther treads, those wonderful depths of color turned pale and paler—turned from smoke to frost, from frost to tresses of softest hair,—from red and green to purple and grey shot with gleams and floating dots of violets.—Let me stop! I dare say Clemens said truly yesterday that I should never again be able to describe it as in the first flush of my first sight of it I described it to him. Was this all? No. I saw for the first time the potter at his wheel. The lump of pallid clay was thrown upon it; the hand of the artisan clasped the mass, the wheel began to spin, and lo! the clay came to life! Swiftly, swiftly and softly, it rises from between those marvellous fingers into form of amazing beauty—Astarte rising from the sea!

*To the same*

Toronto, Canada,  
Feb'y 15, 1885.

As we were leaving the hall on Friday evening, in London, we encountered a large group of young seminary girls in charge of a lady teacher who introduced herself & invited us to visit the school a little way out of town. A moment later the principal, a Mr. English, repeated the invitation urgently and proposed to call for us next morning at 8:45 with a sleigh. We accepted.

The morning drive was one of the most delightful I have ever had in my whole life. The thermometer had been 21 below zero in the night & was still below. The sun shone bright and clear over dazzling hills and still, white valleys. The distances were half-veiled in a tender opaline haze. The deep snowdrifts lay in long, graceful curling billows like foamless breakers turned to white marble. The tinkle of sleigh-bells was everywhere. The snow creaked under the flying runners, the frost hung from the horses' muzzles, breasts and flanks, men's beards hung hard & heavy and white with ice, and the still air was pure, cold and sweet like the waters of a crystal spring.

The school—Helmuth Female College—stood upon a high hill with its grounds undulating away on every hand in spotless white. Soon we were out of the sleigh robes, and free of our wraps and overwear, seated among a group of teachers male & female, sipping good coffee from blue china.

Presently we went down a stair and into the drawing-rooms. Mark and I are certainly a pair of hardened old tramps, but it as surely taxed our power of face to the utmost to enter & stand in silence before that ranged battery of seventy-odd pairs of young girls' eyes. I can only say we did not run or crawl under the furniture.

Then the presentation began. The girls were brought

forward by twos and introduced by the Principal first to me and then to Clemens, that happening to be the order in which we had entered and were standing. At length this pleasant labor was done. Then came the autograph books and every girl in the school, and the teachers, too, asked an autograph.

This over, the cry was for the toboggans. Away went the girls for furs and like belongings and out we sallied with them, walking, laughing, skipping along the beaten path and some of them, trying to make short cuts over the snow-crust, breaking through and tumbling headlong, but up again and on with rosy cheeks and snow-dusted robes and laughter and shouts and every boisterous innocence. So to the crest of a precipitous hill that ran off below into a broad level field whose snow-crust was unbroken.

A moment of preparation, a piling on of girls and then away we went! The toboggan that I was on went, on its second trip down, far beyond any other. When it finally came to a stand and we got off to toil back it was through snow more than knee-deep. We were long recovering the top of the hill and as, with laugh & shout, we did so it was to find it deserted & to be told that a telephone message had been received stating that a change had been made in the movement of trains and that the train for Toronto was at the moment being held for us at the London station.

Clemens was already gone. I saw him in a pretty sleigh behind a tandem team whisking through the distant gate of the grounds and those seventy girls waving and hurrahing and he swinging his hat and tossing kisses right and left; and the scene repeated again as he swept around the slope of a hill & came in sight again a few hundred yards further on.

In a moment I was in another sleigh drawn by two horses abreast, a young lady, one of the teachers, was in beside me, the huge furs were bundled around and off we

flew, down through the cheering, waving line of pretty maids, out into the road, into view again, waving, throwing kisses, laughing, cheering, the horses clattering at full gallop and the snowy road gliding under us.

We missed the train by a few minutes; its conductor could get no telephonic reply that we were coming, and after waiting 25 minutes, departed. We arrived here by a later train, after dark.

*To the same*

Montreal, Feb'y 19, 1885.

Put Montreal down as one of the brightest, liveliest and most charming cities—at least in winter—that can be. We got here something after noon of yesterday. I can't tell you of all the pretty sights. There is much quaint old, and not a little good new, architecture. The snow is wonderful to see, for quantity and for beauty. The remains of the Carnival, i.e., the statuary of ice and the ice-palace (it should be ice-castle) are extremely fine.

The dress of the Canadian people is picturesque beyond anything else in America. The furs, in endless quantity, and variety of kind and color, are enough to give most striking character to them without anything further; but to this feature is added the frequent costumes of the snowshoers & tobogganers (or tobogganists, if that is it) white, red, blue, brown and other flannels in solid colors and tasteful bands & facings of one color on another, and the sashes & belts & hoods and moccasins. It is a charming sight. And the superb sleighs with their wealth of fur robes, and their elegant teams and tinkling bells; and the rosy cheeks & hurried steps. One cannot describe these things. The people have simply turned the bitter months of the year into days so full of exhilaration that there is hardly left time for sleep.

We dined at one & went to bed. Slept till 4:30 and then went into the hotel's three large drawing-rooms thrown

into one, where the Atheneum Club were to give us a grand reception. It lasted till six and was the most elaborate affair I have ever had part in. I don't think I could have shaken less than two hundred and fifty hands.

In the evening we read to a huge audience full of enthusiasm and yet critical; a peculiar and specially pleasing audience—something like Toronto's & something like Boston's.

After the reading we went, by starlight, at headlong speed, bundled in furs to the eyes, in a sleigh, through & out of the town up, up, over the hills looking down upon the twinkling city as upon a brooch of innumerable topazes and diamonds, on and on with the Great Bear directly overhead and the creaking, groaning snow underfoot, the new moon not long set and the horses' bells jingling in our front, until we drew up at last at a door by the wayside where a large man in a snowshoer's uniform bade us welcome and helped us to alight.

Up a stair and into a room blue with the smoke of innumerable pipes & cigars, our ears deafened with the wild cheers of uniformed snowshoers—the "Toute Bleue" club, huzzaing at our—I doubt not I should say Mark Twain's—entrance. So we were walked down the middle of the room to the platform at the bottom; but just as we set foot on its lowest step, the master of ceremonies called for silence and formally announced our arrival & presence, and proposed that as Mark Twain was already a member of the club though never seen by them before, he should be initiated. Instantly, with a roaring cheer, he was laid hold of and walked out into the middle of the floor. Then at the word, "Bounce um!" he was lifted from his feet in the midst of a tightly huddled mass of young athletes, laid out at full length on their hands and then—what think you?—thrown bodily into the air almost to the ceiling, caught upon their hands as he came down, thrown up again, caught again, thrown again—so four, five times amid resounding cheers.

Then the cry was for me. It was my turn. The sensation, you may imagine, was something tremendous. To know that one is falling horizontally back downward, through the impalpable air, depending on a lot of young snowshoers to catch him & throw him up again, is something that must be experienced to be—enjoyed.

Well, then Mark was walked up upon the platform for a speech which he made with great effect. Then I.

Then, if you'll believe me, they "bounced" the gigantic Major Pond. It was a sight to see that huge black bundle of wraps go up to the ceiling & back & up again & back again.

After our speeches a song was sung. At every point where a speech or song was to be given the word was first, "sit down," and it was a bright—a charming sight, to see that great hall full of jolly fellows in their white & blue flannel uniforms with tasseled hoods falling down the back, sink to floor and sit cross-legged upon their buskins & moccasins. Then I was hauled out for a song & gave them Zizi,<sup>1</sup> they taking up the chorus. Then an anecdote—one of his inimitable "yarns"—from Clemens, a little speech of one sentence—but good—from Pond, a jolly snowshoe song & chorus, really very pretty; and then those superb young stalwarts sang—it was a grand sight—sang "God Save the Queen."

Came back to the hotel, slept—for these experiences make great drafts on the nerves & at 3 o'clock waked & received Dr. Louis Frechette, whose name you may remember—the Canadian poet. He has translated some of my stories into French.

Tomorrow we leave Canada and read tomorrow night in Saratoga.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Pov' Piti' Momzelle 'Zizi," one of his African-Creole songs—a favorite with him.

<sup>2</sup>At a public meeting held in New York, November 30th, 1910, in memory of Mark Twain, under the auspices of The American Academy of Arts and Letters, my father told the following story: "One



During the following month the season with Mark Twain came to an end—a successful end—and my father returned to his “quiet valley home” in Simsbury, Connecticut. Here he continued the writing of “Grande Pointe,” the first one of his three Acadian stories; not however, before going South for a brief visit to New Orleans and the Acadian country. On his return to the North he gave a few readings by himself, but he found this irksome, lacking his recent companion, and wrote home, “It comes hard reading alone—without Mark, I mean.”

In the meantime, he and my mother were casting about for a place that would be more desirable as a permanent home. Simsbury afforded a tranquil, pleasant life, and had so far proved an excellent place for my mother’s health and for his own work. But, as he himself pointed

night [during their joint reading-tour] we were in Rochester together. It was Saturday, and for a wonder we were without an engagement, so we started out for a walk; we had gone a few steps when we found a bookstore, and at the same moment it was beginning to rain. I said: ‘Let us go in here.’ He said: ‘I remember I have not provided myself with anything to read all day tomorrow.’ I said: ‘We will get it here. I will look down that table, and you look down this one.’ Presently I went over to him and said I had not found anything that I thought would interest him, and asked him if he had found anything. He said no, he had not; but there was a book he did not remember any previous acquaintance with. He asked me what that book was.

“‘Why,’ I said, ‘that is Sir Thomas Malory’s “Morte d’Arthur.”’ And he said: ‘Shall we take it?’ I said: ‘Yes; and you will never lay it down until you have read it from cover to cover.’ It was easy to make the prophecy, and, of course, it was fulfilled. He had read in it a day or two, when I saw come upon his cheekbones those two vivid pink spots which every one who knew him intimately and closely knew meant that his mind was working with all its energies. I said to myself: ‘Ah, I think Sir Thomas Malory’s “Morte d’Arthur” is going to bear fruit in the brain of Mark Twain.’

“A year or two afterward when he came to see me in my Northampton home, I asked him what he was engaged in, and he said he was writing a story of *A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*. I said: ‘If that be so, then I claim for myself the godfatherhood of that book.’ He said: ‘Yes; you are its godfather.’ I can claim no higher honor than to have the honor to claim that here and now, tonight.”

out, here were five growing girls—not to mention the baby boy, born in Simsbury—to be educated, and it was necessary to find a place offering somewhat larger advantages than the quiet little village in the Connecticut valley. Springfield, Hartford and several other neighboring towns were considered, and when finally Northampton was chosen, it was partly because more personal pressure was brought to bear, partly because of the reputation of its schools and of Smith College, and partly—chance.

A house was secured, not too far from the centre of town, but close beside a beautiful tract of woodland and looking off, beyond the town, to the low, blue Holyoke range; and to this house, in September, 1885, my father brought his family. The near-by woodland, Northampton tradition held, had first been called "Paradise" by Jenny Lind, on her memorable visit to the place;<sup>1</sup> and "Paradise" it remains to this day. The street that led to it, from the principal residence street of the town, was, inevitably, Paradise Road; and the house, of red brick, standing high on a rise of ground toward the top of this street, my father called "Red House."

The gentle routine of his life in this home—broken occasionally by journeys to New York to see his publishers, or by longer travellings on account of his readings—was once described by him in the following words: "I work in my study every day from nine until twelve-fifteen in the morning and from two until five in the afternoon. I take my dinner in the middle of the day, and at the appointed hour am summoned from my study by a call, when I instantly drop my work, no matter what I am doing. After I finish in the afternoon I work hard in my

<sup>1</sup>Jenny Lind (Goldschmidt) had passed her "honeymoon" on Round Hill, in Northampton, within sight of this woodland. But in "My Own Acre," my father sets this tradition at naught. "Mill River," he says, "coming out of the Hampshire Hills on its way to the Connecticut, winds through a strip of woods so fair as to have been named—from a much earlier day than when Jenny Lind called it so—'Paradise.'"

garden until supper-time. Then I spend a while in romping with some of my family at ball, or some other sport. That gets all the blood out of my brain, and I sleep well at night. I read, mostly, before breakfast or in the evening. I read but one newspaper, which keeps me sufficiently informed of current events. My choice of reading is upon public questions. I have read but one novel this year, a work by George Meredith."

He still continued the diligent training of his voice for public speaking, though now under some one else than Franklin Sargent; and in addition he took up the study of the cornet, especially to further strengthen and develop his voice. Actually, it did more, for, although he never became in any degree proficient in his handling of it, he took, from the beginning, the greatest delight in those hours of practice. He could not make it his instrument, as he had long ago made the guitar; but the very difficulties of its technic urged him constantly to fresh attempts at mastering it, and he would even carry it on the train, when he went upon a tour of readings.

*To L. S. C.*

New York, Feb'y 28, 1886.

My young elocutionary teacher, Mr. Harold Henderson, has quite set his heart upon my success and will be in my audience tomorrow. He has been cutting out all the Boston newspaper notices of "Grande Pointe" and enjoying immensely reading to me the wise observations of the critics who see in Mr. Cable's reading a naturalness and grace quite different from professional art and better than anything he could have acquired by *months of elocutionary training*. It certainly is a triumph for art to conceal art even from the Boston critics.

I told him some of my late experiences with audiences, which I wish I had time to write down here. Last Friday

I met that rare sort, a timid audience. I saw people all through the audience trying to repress their laughter when laughter was just what was called for. They refrained from applause for very diffidence. This must be hard to believe, but let me prove it to you. I received a written request, in the retiring room, to add "Mary's Ride" to the programme. I read it on the platform & said that while it was signed by but one person it purported to be the request of many. "Now," said I, "if I can have any assurance from the audience at large that this is really the general wish I shall be glad to read the desired passage sometime during the evening." I supposed, of course, that a general handclapping would follow, to signify yes. What was my astonishment to meet only a dead silence.

"Very well," I said to myself, "if you can't ask for it I shan't give it!" I went into the regular programme, through it, finished, & was about leaving the platform, when a young man came gravely up the front steps of the stage & produced a large paper. I opened it, & behold! a written request followed by a long double list of subscribers asking for "Mary's Ride"! I think that is the funniest encore that ever came to mortal man.

I gave them "Mary's Ride" & every pair of eyes in that house seemed to take the ride with me. The attention was almost absolutely motionless as it *was* absolutely noiseless; yet when I finished the applause was almost nothing. I was exasperated then, but it has been getting funnier & funnier every hour since.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Later in that same year, another New England audience was encountered that yielded a similar experience. A day or two after his reading before it, my father was amused to receive the following, wholly unsolicited, letter:

"Dear Mr. Cable,

"In justice to your audience of this evening, we think you should be told that the people of the old Puritan town of Danvers are still under the grim influence of Salem witchcraft and persecution of Quakers. Laughter still seems to them a little immoral and applause something to be indulged in with extreme moderation. Could you have heard the comments of the occupants of that horse-car mentioned by

*To the same*

Boston, Mch 10/'86.

This finds me in Gov. Claflin's most homelike home looking out upon Charlestown & Cambridge that are basking in the soft spring sun. Old-Boston lies between in the nearer distance and all is a silent glimmer of red brick, grey stone & purple slate with here and there a feathery steam jet and the sky met at last by purple hills streaked here and there with a lingering touch of snow.

The Claflins are really the only people I know that understand exactly how to take care of a lecturing human. They gave me exactly the dinner I should have asked for, without company. Then I went into the library & had a delightful talk with Mr. Whittier, the Gov. & the ladies including some three guests. Our talk fell upon that brave old Quaker saint John Woolman. Mr. Whittier's gentle eyes beamed and sparkled with enjoyment of my recounting the salient experiences of the old wanderer & witness to truth & righteousness. Tell Louise & Mary he was greatly pleased to know that they had listened to my reading of the book with interest.

I withdrew to my room to save my strength for the platform. The audience did not fill the house. I must accept the fact that I am not "the fashion" just now in Boston.

At the governor's again, sat down to some toast & cocoa with him, and stayed, talking, till 11:30. Then retired & read Dante till 1 o'clock, curled up & slept till called at 8, went down to breakfast where I met all the family except the young son.

you at the introduction of your story, you would have learned how deep an impression your reading had made. As for us, we are not Danvers people, and we laughed, wept and applauded as we chose.— No, we laughed and wept as you chose, and applauded as we chose. And we thank you for one of the great pleasures of our lives. We are not autograph hunters and so simply sign ourselves,

"TWO OF THE AUDIENCE."

In the library had another pleasant spell with Mr. Whittier. Then went out to see Pond. Found Mr. Beecher, just got into town & breakfasting at the hotel. Had a bright, merry chat with him alone. I think he is, today, at 74, a tougher man than I, with more physical endurance. Think! he preached Sunday, twice. Rose Monday at 6, travelled alone to Boston, lectured in the evening, went out of town yesterday afternoon & lectured again, rose at 5 this morning & got back to town at 10, and was in bright, gay mood at his 11 o'clock breakfast. Where would I have been?

At dinner I shall meet both him & Mr. Whittier. What a beef-and-wine diet for the mind I shall have in that meeting.

Now I must fall to work on ———'s MS. & see what I can say to her that will profit her & yet not wound. Her history is too diffuse. O that men would learn that the sum of literary art is to tell naught that can be left untold, and also *never* to "stop to talk." But I can't even learn it myself.

Everything indicates now that my future platform work must be of a graver sort than story-telling. The hearing an author read his pages is no longer a novelty, & not being that, there's an end of it. (I speak of the great cities; the New England towns are another thing.) Well, I shall have accomplished the main object of my winter's toil; I shall have secured a freedom & strength on the platform that will be an equipment for life.

As his acquaintance with Henry Ward Beecher grew, his admiration for the great qualities of that famous preacher increased, so that it was with a feeling of personal loss that he heard, about a year later, the news of Mr. Beecher's final illness and death.

*To Major James B. Pond<sup>1</sup>*

Northampton, Mass.,  
March 7, 1887.

DEAR MAJOR:

Can the sad rumor be true—that Mr. Beecher is stricken with apoplexy? It is dreadful as a mere possibility. How shall one express the feeling of loss that comes to every hearer of such tidings? How shall we send words to the family when as to him we are all in a greater degree than to any other man, his children? He is—I trust we need not yet say was—the fatherliest man to the whole people our land has given us.

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

P.S.—I have just read the sad, sad news—G.W.C.

*To the same*

Northampton, Mass.,  
March 8, 1887.

DEAR MAJOR POND:

Your letter of March 6th, written at Mr. Beecher's desk, touches me deeply. I know you are losing in his death the best friend you ever had; a man who had the art of being a friend as few have it.

The blow seems to strike everywhere. No one fails to feel that the world is losing one of its greatest lights.

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

Notwithstanding his conviction that authors' readings were "no longer a novelty," my father found himself, during the summer of the following year, once more "on the road," and not in New England, but in the Middle West. From here he wrote home with more interest in the country than in the moderate success of his readings:

"At last I have seen Lake Superior. Its waters are per-

<sup>1</sup>The manager for his readings and lectures, as also for Mr. Beecher's.

petually cold. Bathing is impossible at any time. Wrecked men can live in it only a very few hours. We are running through a marshy land about Keweenaw Bay on which no forest grows, but which is covered with a storm-tattered fir never over 25 feet high, sometimes dense enough to make thickets. Now it grows taller & is almost a true wood. A bitter cold land.<sup>1</sup> I saw some full-blood Indian women dressed in civilized fashion, bright, laughing, with womanly self-respect & dignity. Fancy Indians in black lisle gloves.

“The air here is singularly drowsy, and was probably a great blessing to me. The Youngs say that I was looking sadly jaded when I arrived. I must have a holiday when I get back home—a vacation, in fact; nothing less than two hours & a half absolute rest will fit me for my coming toils at the desk &c. I hate to give so much time to idleness, but a man must rest.”

*To L. S. C.*

En Route Between Marquette &  
Mackinaw City, July 23/ '87

I had an unusual experience at Calumet last night. As to the reading it was so-so. But I saw the wonderful mines. The Calumet & Hecla mines are the largest establishment of the kind in the world, they say. Some gentlemen, officers of the Co., took me around by electric light, for the work goes on night & day.

It is fine to see the attention given to religion, morals & education. They say if our Southern mining Co's do not attend to these things they can't compete.

I wish you could have seen these things. They make us see that man isn't the little animal with mere legs, arms & trunk he seems to be. One gets a new sense of this at Calumet.

<sup>1</sup>This letter is dated, "July 22, 1887."



Today I have had some noble views of the largest of all lakes, & am still young enough & American enough to be taken with its vastness. But Superior is beautiful, too. The water is wonderfully clear & pure, & its islands and shores picturesque.

We are running now along that neck of land that separates Superior & Michigan Lakes. There are a mother & three pretty daughters on board who evidently don't know me from Adam except by the clothes. I'd know none of them was Eve if they wore nothing but their ugly little jockey travelling-caps. Eve may have done worse things, but she never wore anything so wantonly ugly as those three little double-visored grey woollen caps.

*To the same*

Travelling bet. Mackinaw City & Toledo,  
July 25, 1887.

Sunday is past & I am off again southeastward, having gone into Sunday-quarters, so to speak, on the beautiful Mackinac Island in Lake Huron. So many bright incidents fill the 24 hours, that I scarce know how to begin to tell of them, they are so little worth telling.

The jockey-cap party, too, had planned to stay on Mackinac Island, which is a kind of oasis here. So about 8 o'clock we were all on the island boat, on deck, "In the starlight, *in* the starlight," and muffled in shawls. One of the girls lent me hers. They sang. I listened & applauded & remained songless. At ten we stepped ashore. The jockey-caps had given place to ordinary plumed hats & bonnets. I, only, wore no ornaments. My hair was done up in a simple parting on the left side, without braid, coil, ringlet, comb or pomatum. I had decided against quince-seed wavelets before leaving Calumet, and now I was glad of it, and felt quite at ease with no other adornment under my modest ram-beaver except a faint powdering of rail-

way cinders. I wore nothing in my ears but a simple cluster of cinders & sand. Similar ones but larger were on my shirt-front, next the skin, and around my neat ankles under the socks. I wore a single pair of button gaiters, high-necked coat & vest and short-waisted pantaloons with hip-pocket. But I wander.

There's a new hotel known as the Planks Grand Hotel, in the American tongue. The ladies found good quarters here, but there was a great crowd & I was unfeelingly offered by the austere clerk a cot-bed. I humbly accepted & then sallied out into the night, and tramped from tavern to tavern till I found a real room & bed. Then I came back like a silken retribution to that clerk, took my gripsack & umbrella, thanked him warmly & left. It was 12:30 A.M. when I got to bed.

In the morning went out to church, Episcopalian. Small, crowded. A beautiful & spirited service. The jockey-cap quartette were there—it is the only Protestant church on the island—came late, their trunks having previously done the same thing at the "Planks Grand." I walkit home with the chaperone—honest! They invited me to dine. I dined. The endearing tone with which the clerk called me Mr. Cable, Mr. Cable-ing me with every utterance, was unspeakably touching. But neither he nor I said cot-bed a single time.

## CHAPTER IX

### "THE NEGRO QUESTION": "THE SILENT SOUTH"

*"We know to tell many fictions like to truths, and we know,  
when we will, to speak what is true."*

HESIOD

In a review of my father's life and literary work, it is necessary to consider that group of essays which he himself called his "political writings," since he always separated them definitely and completely from his works of fiction and of history. Far more than his Creole stories, which only the Creoles themselves resented, did these arouse against him in the South a bitter animosity. "The Grandissimes," with its severe arraignment of slavery, and "Dr. Sevier," with its exposure of prison evils, brought no violent protest from the majority of his fellow-citizens. These were matters that belonged more or less to the past. But in his writings upon the Southern Problem—the sore questions of the education and of the political status of the negro in the South—he attacked very present and vital weaknesses in the political order then existing in the Southern States. Against this, many people in his native city, and elsewhere through the South, rose in indignant protest.

A few years after the publication in book form of "The Silent South,"<sup>1</sup> a new edition was under way, and for this my father wrote a Preface,—entitled, "My Politics,"—long and detailed, which, for some yet unexplained reason, was not used at the time and has never been in print. It was written as an explanation of his attitude and is wholly

<sup>1</sup>This included "The Convict Lease System in the Southern States" and "The Freedman's Case in Equity," together with the essay that gave its name to the volume. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1885.

autobiographical. From it certain sentences and passages have already been used, in the course of these pages; but since in the main it is concerned with the why and the wherefore of his “political writings,” the greater part of it has been reserved for this chapter.

In tracing the germination in himself of his own convictions and opinions, where they differed radically from those held by the large majority of his fellow-Southerners, he refers back to the time when, at nine years of age, he was “memorizing the Declaration of Independence under a mother’s promise of an American flag for reward.” “Even then,” he says, “I remember I was puzzled to know how men could declare such ideal truths and yet hold other men in slavery. Nations at birth are supremely heroic and, lifting their best voices, set up ideals to which afterward they have not the heroism to live up, but only at best to legislate toward and approach by gradual steps, with often painful and costly delays. But I did not recognize these simple facts when I was winning my flag.

“At sixteen I was for Union, Slavery and a White Man’s Government. Secession, when it came, seemed a dreadful thing and I wondered at men and women, even if it was a necessity, rejoicing in it. Yet I had not really begun to think for myself and I soon learned to hurrah with a devout fervor for Jeff. Davis and the ‘Stars and Bars’!

“But if I saw the unwisdom of secession, I saw no unrighteousness in fighting for slavery. When the war ended I came back to New Orleans a paroled prisoner without one spark of loyalty to the United States government. Pretty soon the newspapers all over the South began to pipe a strange, new tune. They began to say diligently that the question of the right of secession had been forever negatived by the arbitrament of the sword, and that to this the Southern people—negroes were not counted as people—yielded gracefully and once for all. I revolted. ‘If men could so lightly part with a conviction

of right or rights,' I asked myself, 'was there ever a right of secession at all?' I believed there was. But I borrowed Story 'On the Constitution' and began to study the question; not blindly, not even docilely, but weighing every sentence, every word, every implication; for I had fought for this 'right' when I did not believe in the wisdom of its exercise, and was angered now to see it renounced as a principle.

"I rose at last from this study indignant against the propagators of that doctrine. I knew it had been believed by thousands of good men, but it seemed, and still seems, to me a perfidious doctrine. What use or need had there been to set up such a doctrine and waste three hundred thousand young men's lives in its defense? There could be but one answer; it was to protect slaveholding. Did that shock me? Not at all. Secession was rebellion and revolution; but rebellion and revolution might be right, if only slaveholding was right. *Was* it right? I turned to look into that.

"I began to see that these poor fellow-creatures were being treated unfairly. To pass over graver instances, there began to be much talk about 'our black peasantry.' I had joined a debating society which later furnished some valuable men to New Orleans—Parker, Hester, William Houston, Walker, Whitney and others—and among these companions I spoke with abhorrence against this un-American, undemocratic and tawdry delusion. I made it my private maxim, 'There is no room in America for a peasantry.'

"Mr. C. Harrison Parker, now editor of the New Orleans *Picayune*, Mr. Henry G. Hester, now superintendent and secretary of the New Orleans Cotton Exchange,<sup>1</sup> and I were meeting together every evening in an upper story of the *Price Current* to read Bancroft's 'United States,' and unconsciously,—in my case, at least,—absorbing much good political ethics; and I was fast

<sup>1</sup>This was written in 1888-89.

growing heartily ashamed of my political attitude. I was accepting the protection and benefits of a government to which I gave no hearty allegiance; and yet I privately repudiated the politics of my 'own people.'

“During the most of these years I was a counting-room clerk. But now I had got employment as reporter for the ancient and honorable *Picayune*. The Superintendent of Schools under Republican régime called a ‘Teachers’ Institute.’ I was sent to report its proceedings and was the first to notice and publish in resentful terms the fact that this official had required compulsory attendance of all teachers of these schools and had thus compelled whites and blacks to sit together under one roof, in one room, on terms of equality. The equality, it is true, was public, not private, but I saw no difference then and Southerners recognized none save in the horse-cars, when General Beau-regard as a railway president had forced it upon them. The other papers joined the hue and cry and I—suddenly weakened, slackened, ceased.

“I did not see that I was wrong. I only saw that there were two sides to the question and much doubted which side was least right. Naturally the proprietor of the *Picayune* was greatly vexed at me for losing the lead in this exhilarating chase. I did not feel like losing my place, but I submit the fact to the thousands who have since then accused me of pitching my public utterances to suit the popular ear, that I neglected to do it then. I did not lose the place at that time, nor at last for political reasons; but then and there I permanently lost grace with my employer.”

Very soon, however, he did lose the place on the *Picayune*, and once more he returned to the work in the counting-room. It was at this time that the study in the city archives was begun, and the first short stories were written and, through the kindness of Edward King, sent to *Scribner's Monthly*. After their publication nothing further was written for several years, “and,” says my father, “I

offered nothing to Northern publishers that bore any distinct political character or even tincture. In 'Tite Poullette' I portrayed a white girl *falsely* supposed to be of negro extraction, suffering the semi-outlawry to which quadroons and octoroons were condemned by society and the laws in Louisiana during the early years of the present century. But the situation was chosen for its romantic value, a value always recognized in that condition, throughout the South as well as elsewhere."

Time wore on. One day, after serious trouble in one of the public schools, on account of the enforced contact of the two races, a mass-meeting was held in Lafayette Square to denounce this system. The New Orleans *Bulletin* strongly supported the movement. "I wrote to that paper," says my father, "taking open ground against the popular action and sentiment. My communication was signed, 'A Southern White Man,' but I gave my own name, of course, to the editor. It was printed, prefaced by an editorial repudiation as long as itself. In my letter I maintained that there is sufficient antagonism between races to keep them, in the main, pure, without the aid of onerous civil distinctions.

"I value this mention because in this my first public political utterance, made in my native New Orleans, where dwelt ninety-nine hundredths of all my friends and acquaintances; opposed point-blank to their sentiments and to the sentiments of almost the whole white population; with the whole people in a frenzy of political agitation and on the verge of an armed and bloody revolution; I took the farthest ground I have ever found occasion to take in any treatment of the Southern Question. And I had never then and I have never since, advanced so much as one item of political theory in or to the North that I had not already uttered in and to the South. I had not yet thought of ever being in any degree a political writer."

Even during the writing of "The Grandissimes," he was still, he says, "very slowly and painfully guessing out

the riddle of our Southern Question. During all the time when the national majority was intensely interested in enforcing the principles and scheme of Reconstruction, my writings for Northern publication were unpolitical; and only just when the Reconstruction idea fell most hopelessly out of favor in the national mind I began to approve and advocate those principles; but always first in the South and then in the North.”

In the experience related to him by his friend Dr. Brickell, which forms the basis for the story of “Dr. Sevier,” one item was “the brutal treatment of a young man in our old Parish Prison or *Calaboose*.” “My attention,” he goes on to say, “had hardly thus been called to the city’s horrid prison system when I was pressed into Grand Jury service, was made secretary of the jury and made a careful tour and report of the city’s charities and corrections. And so the novel was not enough. I caught an ambition to do my native town a service and determined to attempt to establish prison and asylum reform in New Orleans.

“I easily gathered into an executive board seven or eight of the city’s best and busiest men, taking, myself, the unpaid office of secretary, with power to employ an assistant at sixty dollars a month, and beginning at once an energetic newspaper crusade against the most conspicuous evils of the established system. It is my politics that a man *belongs* to the community in which he lives, to whatever extent he can serve it, consistently with the fact of equal moment that he belongs to his nation and the human race to the extent of his power to serve them. Maybe I have never quite lived up to this fine theory; but in something of its spirit I pressed prison reform; and my paid secretary worked far better than I did. Owing to my literary preoccupations he must sometimes have been idle had he not filled such intervals by gathering the official literature of his subject. He reached out beyond the city and presently beyond the State, and at length collected



the latest annual reports of all the State prisons in the Union. I had him tabulate these reports, and thus I came upon the whole horrible convict lease system peculiar to our Southern States and cordially detested by their best citizens.

"Of our local efforts for specific reforms, some succeeded; others were defeated by a ring of sheriffs, deputies and their confederates, whose pockets were directly involved. The comparative study of prison systems in other States was but incidental to these efforts.

"One day I received by mail an invitation from the officers of the National Prison Congress, which was appointed to meet in Louisville, Ky., urging me to treat that very subject before them, because Southerners would take from a Southerner and in the South—I do not believe, much, in that now.

"The convention would be entirely unpolitical—in the common acceptance of the word. The subject seemed equally so. And so, I wrote and read my essay on 'The Convict Lease System in the Southern States.' To my agreeable surprise I sold it to the *Century Magazine*. But the editors, as well as my own bent, urged me back to novel-writing, and I began, even that early, 'Bonaventure'; though with a very good notion to write one more essay, on a point I had in mind.

"In writing 'The Convict Lease System' I had come upon certain features in that system, which embodied one of the Negro's grossest wrongs; his unequal chances in the courts of law. I pointed these out in my essay, but to avoid all political bias I withdrew the page or two thus occupied, and laid them away. I might never have used them, but on my way to Louisville I saw that incident which is narrated on page 27 of 'The Freedman's Case in Equity,' and I resolved there and then to tell, first to the South and then to the world, what I had seen, and demand a trial of the freedman's case in the world's court on its equities. Conversing on this subject with a lead-

ing member of the American Social Science Association, he pressed me to make it the subject of a paper and read it the next September, 1884, at that association's annual meeting, in Saratoga. I would not promise. I wanted to enter my charges first before a Southern audience.

“That opportunity soon came. As Commencement season again approached I was invited to address the graduates of the University of Alabama, and accepted. I went to the platform in Tuscaloosa ready to appeal more boldly to the candor and progressive spirit of our Southern youth and scholarship than I had ever done before. The nation had largely surrendered the Southern Problem to the South. Northern indifference had grown so great that it seemed to me one could not, even by passionate resentment, be charged with ‘catering to Northern prejudice’.

“For the first time in my experience the local press met my utterances entirely without commendation. Yet of private expressions of approval and accord I had no lack, and I returned to New Orleans more deeply convinced than ever before that, behind all the fierce conservatism of a noisier element there was a silent South needing to be urged to speak and act.

“The ill health of one of my family demanding a radical change of climate, I took my household to spend a summer and fall in a village in Connecticut. I was glad to become a resident student and observer of that kind of American civilization founded on the Village, the anti-pode of the Plantation. All my life I had seen the South near by and the North afar off; now the case would be reversed. Even as a novelist I felt bound to study social science from as many points of view as I could.

“But hardly was I settled at my new desk when I was again and yet again, urged to write ‘that paper’ for the Social Science Association. And this time I reluctantly consented. Reluctantly, however, only because I was immersed in a couple of magazine articles on nothing nearer

politics than the ancient slave dances and songs of Louisiana. I finished these<sup>1</sup> and then wrote and in September (1884) read at Saratoga 'The Freedman's Case in Equity.' It was published the following January in the *Century Magazine*.

"I treated the subject as a question not of party policy but of political ethics, and throughout the entire North and West the paper met with the widest commendation. Only in the South did it meet censure. There the denunciation was a storm. There came to me unsought more than one hundred pages of adverse, and for the most part unparliamentary, criticism. But in quite another tone Mr. H. W. Grady, editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*, replied in the *April Century* (1885), and one of my purposes was attained; the subject was drawn into the forum of literary debate before the nation and the world.

"In the preceding month I had gone South.<sup>2</sup> The whole winter had been spent on the platform, reading only my pages of fiction; but in the South, as far as my notoriety went at all, the word spread that I was reaping golden harvests by haranguing Northern audiences on the fascinating subject of Southern sins. My journey South—I visited nearly every Southern State—was to note what changes might be taking place, necessary to notice if I should write again on Southern political conditions. And also because I saw that only by wide and studious tours there should I now keep up with all the changes in Southern affairs.

"I felt that I belonged still, peculiarly to the South. I had shared in every political error of the 'Southerner,' and had enjoyed whatever benefits the old slaveholding civilization had to offer. A resultant duty bound me to my best conception of the true interest of the South as a whole—the whole South, white and black. This, aside

<sup>1</sup>"Creole Slave Dances: The Dance in Place Congo"; *Century Mag.*, Feb., 1886, and "Creole Slave Songs," *Century Mag.*, April, 1886.

<sup>2</sup>From Simsbury, Conn., his home at that time.

from the fact that the Negro question is a national question which it is particularly the duty of men of the South to solve; a duty from which they are not released by moving North.

“I think I still owe my native Louisiana a sympathetic interest in her State affairs. But the nation is more to me than any one State. Still, I have never spoken on a Northern platform about Southern affairs save when pointedly asked to do so; and the whole number of times I have thus spoken is just fourteen and no more, out of some two hundred and fifty appearances on the platform.

“My reply to Mr. Grady was ‘The Silent South’;<sup>1</sup> after writing this I produced no political writings save one or two brief Open Letters in the *Century* in reply to critics, until three summers after. But in June, 1888, I addressed the graduates of Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, in an unwritten effort on ‘The Faith’—meaning the early political ideals—‘of Our Fathers.’ In it I tried to show that the true solution of the Southern Question calls simply for the South’s return to and fulfillment of the original principles of government that our Northern and Southern fathers had together declared when they founded the nation.

“Immediately afterward the London *Contemporary Review* invited me to write on the Negro Question in the United States. I accepted promptly, hoping to gain a larger and kinder attention through an English Review than I could through a New York or Boston magazine. I did more; wishing to say in the South itself whatever I had to say on the Southern Problem, I tried to arrange for a simultaneous publication in American newspapers,

<sup>1</sup>When, on the publication of “The Silent South,” he was charged, by certain writers in the public press, with advocating “social equality” for the negro, his reply was: “I cannot divine how anybody can impute to a sane mind the advocacy of what is known as social equality. And yet that is the accusation against ‘The Silent South.’ I say there that it is a fool’s dream, and yet they turn right around and say I advocate it.”

waiving further compensation for myself but securing it to the English editors. I had never published a line in a Republican party organ in my life, but in this case I let the paper appear in London, New York and Chicago simultaneously and remitted the proceeds of its American sale to the London editors.

“The article was an expansion of my Nashville address, and so had been given first in the South; twice, in fact, for I gave it also in Fayetteville, Tennessee. And it reached the South last, also. For it was presently reprinted, not by or for me, in pamphlet form, and distributed by thousands in the Southern States. Rightly enough, too, for I have never written on any phase of the Southern Question but I wrote most of all for Southern readers.

“Very soon after this I was invited to address a ‘National League’ of colored men in Boston. I spoke to them not of rights, but of duties, under the subject, ‘What Shall the Negro Do?’ And, being invited by *The Forum* a few days later, to contribute an essay, I resolved the meagre notes of that address into a careful paper. A few months later Senator Eustis, of Louisiana, printed an essay in *The Forum* on ‘Race Antagonism in the South,’ and, being invited to reply, I decided to review the papers of four Southern writers eminent in politics, written within a year. The result was my essay, ‘A Simpler Southern Question.’

“Such is a summary of my political writings and an account of how they came to be. I have never shaped them to the needs of any political party. I dedicate my pen to that great question—not of party exigency but of political ethics—on which I can best speak and write, to which as a native Louisianian and an ‘ex-Confederate’ I am in duty bound, and which is still the most serious and urgent question before the nation: a peaceable Renaissance of the Southern States upon the political foundations laid by the nation’s fathers, Northern and Southern, when they rose

above the dictates of established order, the temptations of the moment's comfort, and the fear to take risks for the right, and gave to their children and the world the Declaration of Independence as an ultimate ideal to be daily and yearly striven toward with faith, diligence and courage.”

CHAPTER X  
TO THE SECOND AND THIRD GENERATION<sup>1</sup>

*"What gift has Providence bestowed on man that is so dear  
to him as his children?"*  
CICERO.

*To the Editor of the Christian Union*

DEAR SIR: New Orleans, Dec. 17, 1873.

A long way off from New York, in a good Methodist paper, I have found some verses cut from your journal and republished under date of November 27, 1873. They are said to be original with Mr. Fred. Layton, whom I should like to meet. I give the verses. I have some remarks to make afterward:

A STRANGE SAIL  
BY FRED. LAYTON

There came to port last Tuesday eve  
The strangest little craft—  
So small you'd scarce your eyes believe,  
So queer you would have laughed;  
She came across the unknown sea,  
Across the raging water;  
She came consigned to Love and me—  
My daughter, oh, my daughter!

<sup>1</sup>In 1881, when the first of these letters to his children was written, there were four little girls in the family: Louise, born in 1870; Mary, in 1872; Lucy, in 1875; and Margaret, in 1877. The death of his four-year-old son, George, during the yellow-fever epidemic of 1878, had been a grief so poignant that for years afterward my father could not even bear the mention of his name. In 1883 another daughter, Isabel, was born. After we had moved to New England a second son, William, was born, in 1885; and in 1889, the youngest daughter, Dorothea. These two were always called the "Yankees" of the family.

'Twas rash for such a tiny sail  
 To leave the shores of heaven;  
 To breast the sea and brave the gale,  
 Her timbers almost riven;  
 But, thanks to Him who rules the wave,  
 The prospering breezes caught her,  
 And saved her from a watery grave—  
 My daughter, oh, my daughter!

This little craft a baby is:  
 If I've already told it,  
 You must excuse; but so it is—  
 My bosom cannot hold it;  
 For, don't you see—I'm sure you do,  
 At least you surely "oughter"—  
 She came to me and not to you—  
 My daughter, oh, my daughter!

Thou little, rosy, crowing thing!  
 Thou embryotic fairy!  
 Thou beauteous sylph without a wing!  
 Thou image of my Mary!  
 There's not a shape of loveliness  
 I've not already thought her;  
 Incarnate beauty, love, and grace—  
 My daughter, oh, my daughter!

Where shall I stop? where cease the theme?  
 My thoughts within are turning;  
 Am I awake, or do I dream? .  
 Whence comes this tender yearning?  
 I rise, and from her snowy bed  
 My tingling hands have caught her;  
 I kiss her hands, her feet, her head—  
 My daughter, oh, my daughter!

—*Christian Union.*

You will notice, in the fifth line of the second stanza, a spurt of piety. (Excuse my levity.) Also please observe, in the seventh line of the third stanza, that Mr. Fred. Layton curtly asserts

"She came to *me* and not to *you*."



Well, *there* is just where I want your permission to stop, Mr. Layton. Mr. Layton, sir,

She came to ME and not to YOU,

you scamp, and you know it.

Mr. Editor of the *Christian Union*, I am a man about four years married, as near as I can remember. It is now about three years since I received the first consignment of the sort mentioned by Mr. Fred. Layton, whom, I say, I should like to meet. I was then the writer of a regular column in the New Orleans Sunday *Picayune*, entitled Drop Shot. I will be so candid as to admit that the most (and maybe the rest) of that column was trashy. Nay, sir, I can stand up squarely before you now and take my hat off and confess it was Bosh! But I got pay for it, and had to be prompt with copy, consignment or no consignment; and so one morning before dawn, beside the dismal taper light of a darkened sick-room, standing by the mantelpiece, I composed the following verses and published them in the next Sunday's Drop Shot, only because I could not fill the column without them:

There came to port last Sunday night  
 The queerest little craft,  
 Without an inch of rigging on;  
 I looked, and looked, and laughed.  
 It seemed so curious that she  
 Should cross the unknown water,  
 And moor herself right in my room—  
 My daughter, O! my daughter!

Yet, by these presents, witness all,  
 She's welcome fifty times,  
 And comes consigned to Hope and Love,  
 And common-metre rhymes.  
 She has no manifest but this;  
 No flag floats o'er the water;  
 She's too new for the British Lloyds—  
 My daughter, O! my daughter!

Ring out, wild bells—and tame ones too;  
 Ring out the lovers' moon;  
 Ring in the little worsted socks;  
 Ring in the bib and spoon,  
 Ring out the muse; ring in the nurse;  
 Ring in the milk and water.  
 Away with paper, pens and ink—  
 My daughter, O! my daughter!

Immediately it darted through the country papers (country people laugh so easily) under the name of "The New Arrival." And verily, Mr. Editor, from that day to this I haven't heard of a country editor having a new daughter, but some other editor accused him of having written my verses! Just you watch the next one!

But I should like to know Mr. Fred. Layton. He must be a singular man. I have somewhat to say to him privately. I should like to take him by the ear and whisper in it: "Fred! Fred! you're the only man in the United States, for three years back, who has been so mentally impoverished—so intellectually 'hard up'—as to build upon my poetical foundations and sign your own name to the result. And, therefore, I'm sorry for you. But, bless your life, you poor, miserable mendicant! why didn't you take it all?"

Yours truly,  
 GEO. W. CABLE

*To his daughter Louise<sup>1</sup>*

Boston, June 10, 1881.

MY DEAR LITTLE DAUGHTER:

I must send you a line for your own dear self. I am anxious to hear from you as well as from Mother, and I hope I may get a word or two from your own hand.

I could not in a whole hour tell you all the things I have seen since we parted. But I can say that all the time

<sup>1</sup>Aged ten years.

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I saw the beauties of land or sea or hill or valley, whether nature's work or man's, I was still thinking of my beloved ones far away on the mountains.<sup>1</sup>

Yet I did not fret, for I know that the Good Shepherd keeps my little flock, & my prayer is that their souls may be precious in His sight. I pray that they may be sweet, gentle, obedient children, trying to do their parents' will before the parents have to express it.

Be careful to help each other. Be amiable each to each. Remember in everything that you are serving God. Do everything cheerfully—gladly.

Tell Mary not to tease & to keep her face at least half clean.

Tell Lucy I wish I had her here now with a little salt & pepper & mustard. I would eat her for dinner.

Tell Margaret not to forget her breakfast in the morning, her dinner afterwards, nor her supper in the evening. Tell her not to be cross to Lucy & to mind Mother as well as Sister Louise.

Now form in procession and each one kiss Mother as you pass by.

Here are four kisses for four sweet girls & four for their dear mother.

Your affectionate father,

GEO. W. CABLE

*To his daughter Lucy<sup>2</sup>*

BY DICE LITTLE LUCY : Doo Orleans, July 8, 1881.

I have such a dawful code id the doze that I cad odly prodoucce the letter ed wudse id a log, log tibe. You wouldet believe, to see by sball doze, that it could rud all around the house frub roob to roob id the badder id does. It bakes be doubt by sedses, byself. Dote ibbadgid I ab

<sup>1</sup>At Franconia, N. H., in the White Mountains.

<sup>2</sup>Aged five years.

edjoyig it, however; dothig of the kide! Sub bed ad wibbid bay fide abusebet id a ruddig doze but to be it seesb boderately biserable. Subtibes I try to bake berry ad sig sub sipple sog or hub a tude to drowd by addoyadce; but id vaid; doe aboutd of berry-baking cad dab up the Di-agara that ruds frob by idflabd dostrils. One thig I doe! I ab dot goig to have water od the braid till by code asubes adother forb; ad ertil that tibe cubs I rebaid

Your affectionate  
FATHER

*To his daughter Louise<sup>1</sup>*

MY BELOVED DAUGHTER: New Orleans, Aug. 19, 1881.

How sweet it was to get your letter. Your wish that I were with you is my wish as well. It would make me happy to see you having a merry time in the fields and on the beautiful hills. Your account of Echo Lake, the Flume and so on was heard with great interest by Aunt Mary, Nellie, Walter and Daisy. I read it to them at lunch. Ah! how those children do miss you and your three sweet sisters.

I send, with this, great love to my firstborn. Great love, too, to my blessed Mary. Great love, as well, to the little sparkling Lucy and a savage hug to the irrepressible Margaret.

O! my children, if you could know the lonely ticking of the clock and all the silence of the empty home, & how my heart aches to see my precious little lambs and their dear, dear mother!

But it will not be long now & when we come home & are all together once more let us see to it that love & peace fill every nook & corner of the house.

Your affectionate father,  
GEO. W. CABLE

<sup>1</sup>Aged ten years.

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*To his daughters Louise and Mary<sup>1</sup>*

New York, Oct. 16, 1882.

MY TWO DARLING LITTLE HONEY-BEES:

I shall have to write to both of you at once, as I believe I have not yet answered Louise's letter.

It makes me very happy to have such good accounts of you, both from Mother & Aunt Mary.

You are my precious treasures. Everybody remembers, here, how nicely you took care of yourselves & of one another when you were in New York last year.

I am pleased with the school-paper idea. Your circulation is small, I suppose, but select. The *Century* prints this month 140,000 copies.

I want each of you to kiss Margaret & Lucy for me.

I will give you some items for your paper. Let me see:

Mr. Joseph Pennell, the noted artist & etcher, will leave America for Europe about the 1st of next Jan'y, to make sketches of Italian architecture.

Oriental rugs are being imported to New York and freely bought. A fine Eastern rug is more beautiful after it has been used for a hundred years than it was when it was new. Some are made of wool, & some of silk.

Kiss the dear, dear mother.

Your affectionate father,

GEO. W. CABLE

Mr. Chas. Dudley Warner has returned to America.

*To his daughter Mary<sup>2</sup>*

DEAR, SWEET LITTLE DAUGHTER: Balto., Mch. 17, 1883.

Your letter gives me ever so much pleasure. How happy I am to have my dear little girls remember me, & show that they remember me by writing to me.

<sup>1</sup>Aged twelve and ten respectively.

<sup>2</sup>Aged ten years.

Baltimore is a pretty city. It stands on hills & in valleys & is almost entirely of brick. Every way you look you see beautiful streets & the great city either above you or below you. The lofty Washington monument rises in the middle on a beautiful terraced hill. The churches are beautiful, too. The 1st Presbyterian church is the prettiest of all.

But, my dear Mary, the richest houses have no such front yard as our dear home has. They have simply none.

I can't go on writing to you now, much as I would like to do so. I must go to bed. When I was a little boy I thought that when I came to be a man I should sit up always just as long as I felt like it; but now I find that my parents were only teaching me self-control & I must send myself to bed whether I feel like going or not.

Give my love to the children in Sunday-school & day-school.

Your affectionate father,

GEORGE W. CABLE

I send a card to each of my girls. The large dark one for Louise; the large pale one for Mary; the other two for Lucy and the other little girl—what's her name, now, again? The dumpy, plumpy, stumpy, lumpy, mumpy one—ah, yes! Margaret!

*To his daughter Mary<sup>1</sup>*

En route between Toronto & Kingston,  
Canada, Feb. 16, 1885.

ARRAH, MARY!

I would have written to you sooner only that you had such a bad cold and I knew, of course, you wouldn't want to get a letter while you had a bad cold.

I am promising myself much pleasure with my little damsels when I get home. That is, with all but yourself. Because I know you are so dignified and delicate that you will have to be excused.

<sup>1</sup>Aged twelve years.

So my little ladies are learning music. Well, we shall sing and play together I hope this spring, not a little.

We are having a long, weary journey today.<sup>1</sup> Started from the hotel at 8 o'clock & shall be fortunate if we reach our hotel in Brockville tonight at 7.

But the end of our journeyings is drawing near and soon there will be the grandest whipping all round that has ever been seen in Simsbury. You'll like it!

Your loving father,

GEO. W. CABLE

*To his daughter Louise\**

Topeka, Kansas,  
Feb'y 11, 1892.

MY PRECIOUS DAUGHTER:

Your letter gave me sweet comfort and helped carry me through matters that were very distinctly a trial to me. I love you very dearly and it was very good of you to recognize the fact in sending me the welcome word you did send about yourself.

You will find that all of life is a constant beginning over again. Temptations, trials, rewards, distresses belong to every day separately, and we stumble along amazed to find that no grace of yesterday will quite suffice for tomorrow's need. We stumble upstairs. Indeed, there is not one in ten thousand of us that is as calm, strong and sure as he or she looks. We reel like drunkards along a narrow and dangerous way and somehow reach the end we aim for, whether good or bad. We know not how God helps us, but we pray to Him to send what help He can and then must strive as if there were no help for us but our own resources. Let us make use of them. Diligence in business and a spirit of benevolent love will save us where no expectation of special deliverance by any unseen power will

<sup>1</sup>My father and Mark Twain were then on their reading-tour together.

<sup>2</sup>Aged twenty-one years.



MRS. GEORGE W. CABLE AND HER CHILDREN, 1889.

From left to right, Margaret, Lucy, Mrs. Cable, Dorothea, Isabel, Louise, Mary, William.



avail in the least. It is "in us" that God works to will & to do of His good pleasure.

Good-bye, beloved daughter. Cherish the dear ones at home. Be faithful to your calling; work your religion into it so that the two shall be one. I long to see you again.

Yours affectionately,

GEO. W. CABLE

*To his son-in-law, J. Alfred Chard<sup>1</sup>*

Northampton, Mass.,

April 29, '96.

DEAR ALFRED:

You are a dear, dear son and better than I ever deserved—Oh! more than that, better than I ever expected. And now here is my Irish cartman congratulating me upon the birth of a stepson.

I hug myself and everybody else who will endure that kind of attention, and long to see you. It will soon be time for me to drop in upon you and when I do I may possibly want to see my namesake—who ought to have been named Alfred. But I call his father Alfred the Unselfish.

Yours in deep love,

GEO. W. CABLE

*To the same*

Northampton, Mass.,

May 23, '96.

The dear little grandson! How I long to see him. Keep him packed in sawdust till I come. And the dear little mother! Never mind. I shall be along by & by.

Do you, yourself, want to call him Cable? I think George is a great deal safer, and ever so square and honest. He

<sup>1</sup>The husband of his eldest daughter, Louise.

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can add Cable to it himself whenever he wants to, and he may never want to; don't you see? You mustn't let your wife browbeat you into giving him the name *she* likes best.

Good-bye, dear, dear son.

GEO. W. CABLE

*To his daughter Margaret<sup>1</sup>*

The Current Literature Publishing Co.  
55 Liberty Building, New York.

July 3, '97.

MY PRECIOUS CHILD:

I am very proud of you! When I think of my dear Margaret actually winning a literary prize I smile, and smile, with no one to smile at, until my heart begins to simmer like a teapot.

You can hardly estimate how much trouble of mind I have been having about you as to your health. Now I want you to get all the strength and good red blood and good clean nerve you can for your senior year's work. And then some of these days we'll run a magazine together!

Good-bye, kiss the younkens for me and squeeze Dorothea till she hollas. Ever your loving father—

GEO. W. CABLE

*To his son William*

133 Gloucester Road, S. W., London.

June 1, '98.

DEAR WILLIE:

I was very greatly pleased to get your letter. And this was in spite of the fact that its news was not all good. I wish you had told me what your experiment with fish in the little pond was, and why or how it failed.

Also, I should have liked to know whether our boat has been recovered. There are some beautiful toy yachts sailed

<sup>1</sup>Aged nineteen years.

in the pond of Kensington Gardens every afternoon. I wish you could see them.

The account of your birthday is lighter reading. Really I have to be careful, when I read about the cakes & candy you received, to see that my mouth doesn't water on to this letter and make it look as though I had written it in tears.

I have seen some beautiful trees and birds and flowers since I came to England that I did not know before: A beautiful swallow with snow-white breast and back, the golden pheasant, the wood-pigeon, &c.

But I am very short of time. I have seen many boys since I have been here; in fact there are multitudes of boys in England; but somehow I don't find any that I really prefer to the boys (or boy) of Tarryawhile.<sup>1</sup> To whom I now send this kiss, which I hope you will not carelessly let slip out of the letter in opening it.

Ever your loving father,

GEO. W. CABLE

Give my most solemn regards to Cotton & Otis.<sup>2</sup>

*To J. Alfred Chard*

Dryads' Green,  
Northampton, Mass.,  
Aug. 24, '98.

DEAR ALFRED:

I have come into the study and lighted the gas to write you, just because I'm so lonesome for you I can't be at rest till I tell you.

And just now little George was in the parlor trying to tell us all how the canary had gone to sleep with her head under her wing. He made a wing of his hand and laid his head on it now on one chair & now on another and

<sup>1</sup>The name of the house built by my father in 1892.

<sup>2</sup>Sons of the Rev. Roland Cotton Smith and friends of my brother, who was then thirteen years old.

once on my knee. Then he lay down on his back in the middle of the parlor to show us the superior method employed by himself when he wished to go s'eeepy bye.

He is the dearest little man that ever was and our old Tarryawhile is going to be desolate when he is gone.

When he sees me shoulder a spade and start for my woods-garden he shoulders a big kitchen spoon he has captured from Lottie and follows with the stride of an experienced ditcher.

And in the woods I am preparing happy surprises for you. Do come up as soon as you can, bring Louise, my first baby, and see George, our last and best.

*To his daughter Margaret<sup>1</sup>*

Dryads' Green,  
Northampton, Mass.,  
Oct. 13, '98.

MY PRECIOUS MARGARET:

Thank you for the sweet letter which helped to make my birthday one of the happiest I have known.

I am ever so glad to know that your days are passing profitably and not without a fair amount of entertainment and happiness. When you are at work think of me at work also and let us enjoy our sweet partnership. There is a world to be improved, beautified and kept in repair and you and I have our departments and our rightful hopes & aspirations. One of our first duties is to be happy *anyhow*—i. e. no matter what the outward conditions are.

Let us love and be lovable, say the good word and leave the hard word unsaid and take joy out of all conditions, as the chemists get dyes and perfumes out of naphtha and tar.

My story<sup>2</sup> goes on from day to day—read you some of it when I see you next. All well & send love.

Ever your affectionate father,

GEO. W. CABLE

<sup>1</sup>Aged twenty years.

<sup>2</sup>"The Cavalier," Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901.

*To his daughter Lucy*

Des Moines, Iowa,  
Feb'y 12, '99.

DEAR LUCY:

Your welcome handwriting catches me at Grinnell, or caught me there. Grinnell is only 56 miles from here, and Saturday, the day after Grinnell, I came once more to Des Moines to give an extra lecture.

Enclosed I send you a dictated, and therefore wordy, account of how I came to write the story of Bras-Coupé.<sup>1</sup>

Beware of this thing all your life, dear Lucy: people hear things told under all the glow of conversational intercourse and think they will sound very fine in print; but print is a fiery ordeal, and you can make as great a mistake in following such suggestions as a landscape artist can in running after what his untrained friends assure him are "beautiful views."

So take this account of B/Coupé and stew it down to a paste if you think best, or throw it out, as you prefer.

You ask me to come home so that Kipling may come to see us. Ah! dear, it's on my heart! I shall try hard to ac-

<sup>1</sup>The account, in a few words, was this: "When I was first enjoying the impulse to write stories and had been reading in the colonial history of Louisiana some account of the characteristic traits of various tribes of negroes from which slaves were imported into this country, I came upon an account of a tribe which was distinguished by the untamable self-regard of its men. This led them so frequently to poison themselves fatally or to mutilate themselves, that the importers of slaves were warned against them and cautioned to keep a constant watch upon them to prevent them from doing this. A quaint old French writer upon Santo Domingo offered this warning pointedly and I had already picked up hints of it from other writers. My impression is that the tribe was known as the Aradas. In those days I took great pains to talk with old French-speaking negroes, not trusting to the historical correctness of what they told me, but receiving what they said for its value as tradition, superstition or folklore. Talking to one of these—a little old fellow who was porter and cleaner-up in the counting-room where I was bookkeeper and cashier, Wm. C. Black & Co.—he spoke often of Bras-Coupé. Bras-Coupé, he said, was one of those Aradas (let us say),—an imported African chief. As such he disdained to work, and, true to his tribal pride, he

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comply with it. And I'm sorry you have to watch the furnace. But I am proud of your muscle. If Ian McLaren comes to our house before I get back get him to work the furnace for you; he can do it and suffer no exhaustion whatever.<sup>1</sup>

Love to your dear mother and sentiments of the most exalted esteem to Isabel, Willie and Dorothea.

My dear Lucy! p-p-p!

Yours in love,

GEO. W. CABLE

*To the same*

Yacht "Adventure,"<sup>2</sup>  
Marblehead Harbor,

July 24, 1904.

DEAR LUCY:

You perceive that a good share of my letter is already written.

seized a hatchet and struck off his right hand. He was saved by prompt surgery and on still finding himself required to work, escaped to the swamp. Here he lived for years, through the negligence of the police, the terror of hunters and woodcutters and the hero of terror-stories among children and slaves. He was finally captured and, the supposition is, executed. Behind all these facts I was deeply moved to make a story of them by the very natural revolt of feeling I experienced about this time in becoming acquainted with the harsher provisions of the old Black Code of Louisiana.

"It was not until after I had published 'The Grandissimes,' which I was moved to write as an expansion of the Bras-Coupé story, that I heard that a certain well-known Creole family, with one or two members of which I had some acquaintance, confirmed the story of Bras-Coupé. They considered, however, that my version of it was faulty, because I had taken the liberty of saving Bras-Coupé's arm whole. The fact that he certainly did chop it off seemed to them to be a precious verity of history not to be impiously trifled with, and I believe the insistence upon this point was a conscious tribute to the African's magnificent courage."

<sup>1</sup>Ian McLaren, it will be recalled, was a giant in height and in breadth of shoulders.

<sup>2</sup>The "Adventure," a forty-eight-foot yawl, was owned and sailed by my father's friend of New Orleans days, the painter, George Henry Clements.

We had a gallant little tussle with the waves yesterday afternoon, a most exhilarating sail. The swell was majestic—awe-inspiring. Ashore, where the pink and green and gray rocks ranged the unapproachable coast, the surf could be seen breaking twenty and thirty feet high. Out along our course, where here and there sunken ledges or shoals were marked by buoys that warned us away, the vast green rolling ridges of water would grow translucent along their crests and break into mighty plumes of spray scores of yards in unbroken length. Now and then we would be lifted where we overlooked miles of splendid commotion, and the next moment we would seem walled in by great billows that showed us only themselves and the gray sky. So we went by Norman's Woe and Misery Islands and Bowditch's Ledge and the friendly spars that stood as sentinel guides, and passed Baker's Island and turned into the harbor and picked our way clear up to its cozy end and dropped anchor and ate a supper of flounders caught before we started. I had the honor and real delight (as well as decided toil) of steering every step of the way from mooring to mooring. Really you & Will and the others must go out in something or other and get flounders.

I am well and believe I love my girls and boy more than ever.

Your loving father

GEO. W. CABLE

*To his daughter Margaret*

Northampton, Mass.,

Nov. 11, 1907.

I have often thought since you began to be a clergyman's wife that his fortunes—the whole color of his career—would—must—depend more largely upon your personal social effect upon his people (and among them) than you

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might realize before you had made one or two serious mistakes. I do not know that you have made any in any degree, but I wish I had earlier spoken to you of the imperative need of one in your station showing a constant, questioning solicitude for the welfare and happiness of the people (individually and by households) of your husband's flock; showing this at every contact and keeping out of sight and mention your own cares and affairs and family affections. People like to be cared and inquired for and to have others genuinely and livelily interested in what interests them, whether their own social affairs or more public matters. They will want to find in you a solicitous view for themselves, a large view for affairs, and pretty nearly none at all (or rather a very reserved and uncommunicative one) for yourself and your household and kindred. They will politely make themselves interested as long as you talk about yourself, but they will tire of the subject permanently.

Remember, that if you have not received a pleasant impression you probably have not succeeded in giving one, and that it will be only by some fortunate chance if you find out—behind what is told you—what the real cause is. And don't take discouragement, but only stimulation from this extremely straight letter.

Ever your devoted

FATHER

*To the same*

Northampton, Mass.,  
Feb'y 1, 1915.

Your piece in blank verse interests me much. I don't believe it is wise for you to turn aside from lyric forms. Very few writers, in all the history of literature, have really succeeded in blank verse. Its difficulties are of the



subtlest and of no other form of literary production is it so true that "easy writing makes hard reading." I would keep away from it, if I were you, till I had scored larger successes in rhyme.

The poem is not ready for the printer. You must learn to be your own hardest master, your own most merciless and exacting critic. Not even your father can, with profit to you, be cruel enough.

And so on and so on. You mustn't let this sort of fault-finding depress you. And you must not allow yourself to omit that finishing touch which, in verse above all things, is all that ever makes one's work worth while.

See how I love you, that I should pull you about so!

*To Gertrude Williams Brewster<sup>1</sup>*

Atlantic City, N. J.,

May 11, 1920.

DARLING GERTRUDE:

We hear you are to be graduated on the fourteenth. And we send the little check that goes with this, to celebrate the event.

What a bunching of sevens there is in the whole happy happening! For the lucky number is said to be seven and there are two sevens in every fourteen. So your graduation is the fourteenth May day of your own fourteenth year of life, and we are fourteen hundred times glad of it. The check will get you, from bank, fourteen silver hind-wheels to roll you along on the steep road we call Life. So good luck to you, darling, is the tender wish of both of us, dear child of mid-May, tho by birthday a daughter of the autumn. God have you in His keeping long and long, and make you a seven-sided gem to Himself and to us all.

Ever your fond grandfather,

GEO. W. CABLE

<sup>1</sup>The eldest daughter of his daughter Margaret; aged thirteen years.

*To his daughter Margaret*

Northampton, Mass.,  
July 26, 1920.

Old Northampton is red with flags to-day, to welcome Calvin Coolidge who will to-morrow be notified that he is the Republican nominee for vice-President. It seems nobody has yet told him and it is time he knew! The be-shay-shun goes right by our door—what a snub!

*To Alfred Chamberlain Chard<sup>1</sup>*

South Sea, Paget W.,  
Bermuda.  
Dec. 27, 1921.

DEAR HAPPY:

This is the third time I've sat down to answer your pleasant birthday letter. I hope you had a most merry Christmas and I wish you the happiest of New Years. We are trying to make an old-fashioned time of it here and be really merry, but our real success is of a howling sort. We try to howl through a defective telephone with indifferent success. I wish we had you with us to go fishing and catch rockfish, and hamlets and sailors' choice and Shark and red snapper and half a hundred other sorts of marvelous coloring. The birds seem to have turned, nearly all, into fishes. The few birds that still keep their feathers and quills and footsy-tootsies are the redbirds (cardinals), the black-birds (catbirds), the bluebirds (the bluebirds), the ground-dove (ground almost to powder) and the chick-of-the-village (a vireo) and possibly one or two more besides the street sparrow—the bum of all the birds.

Good-bye, and good health. May the winds blow softly about and around, over and on you and hurricanes stay away from you. If I had time I could tell you about flowers

<sup>1</sup>Younger son of his daughter Louise; aged fifteen years.

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and minerals and shells and people and turnips and onions and carrots and cabbages and cucumbers and pawpaws and cristophines, and if there were any ptarmigan or white polar bears or esquimos I could tell you a few things about them. But the books will do that if you give them half a chance.

Good-bye. Ever lovingly your Grand'ther,

GEO. W. CABLE

P.S.—Could tell you about snakes if there were any here, but d'ain't none.

*To his children and his grandchildren*

Atlantic City, N. J.,

Jan. 6, 1923.

TO ALL MY DEAR ONES:

A merry Christmas and a happy New Year. I must take this abbreviated method to open my heart to all of you at once. Bless you, all and singular. May all the joys that are wished for Christmas and New Year rain on you and last you till both holidays come again. And when the year has come around once more may it find me fit to be my own secretary as I shall be glad to wish you the same loving wishes that fill my heart now.

All the gifts you have sent have come to hand and have struck me on the heart making it ring like a bell.

With a wealth of love,

Ever affectionately yours,

GRANDFATHER

## CHAPTER XI

### THE HOME-CULTURE CLUBS: BIBLE-CLASSES IN NORTHAMPTON AND BOSTON

*"Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."*

LEIGH HUNT.

As early as the spring of 1881, when my father was serving as secretary of the Grand Jury in New Orleans—or at least as early as that—he began to interest himself actively in local civic betterment. At that time his interest took the shape of prison and asylum reform, and at the request of the Mayor of New Orleans he undertook, on one of his earliest journeys to the North, a systematic investigation of prisons and public insane asylums in whatever cities he might be stopping, "observing minutely," in the Mayor's own words, "the system by which they are governed." The immediate result was a campaign on the part of the New Orleans press—to which he himself contributed—and a movement toward reform throughout the prisons and asylums of that city.

Two years later he was one of a group of New Orleans citizens who met together in the endeavor to organize a "society for the aid of the worthy destitute and the suppression of mendicancy." When the chairman called upon him, as one who had "given the subject careful thought," to address the meeting, he made the suggestion—among others—that the Society "should start from as small a beginning as possible, and let the future develop correspondingly to our ability to cope with the requirements." A committee was appointed that evening with my father as its chairman, and the work of organizing the Society went on under his direction.

When, therefore, after he had been living in Northampton somewhat less than a year and a half, he conceived the

idea of forming the Home-Culture Clubs—"for the educational and social culture of working men and women, the improvement of their home life and the establishment of friendly relations between widely separated elements of society"—he brought to its realization not merely an enthusiasm for civic welfare, but the results of a personal experience in civic organizations for social betterment. And his suggestion in regard to the Charity Society in New Orleans would seem to have been still in his mind upon starting the later enterprise, for its beginnings were on a very moderate scale, though with room to grow "according to ability to cope with the requirements."

The work originally took the form of very small "fire-side reading-clubs," designed to meet from house to house of their members and therefore generally limited to memberships of five or six, or less, in order to be accommodated in the humblest houses. These clubs met, one evening each week, for the reading of some book—either chosen by the members or, at their request, suggested by the general secretary—and for the easy social contact thus afforded. For "our supreme purpose," said my father of these early clubs, "was not better information or book-culture, but an upbuilding of the social relation, the spiritual enrichment of the social life, the restoration of lost sentiments and habits of neighborship, across dividing social lines however proper and salutary."

To the question, "How shall I start a club?" the answer was usually to the following effect: "Select from the people you come in contact with in the various relations of life two or three persons who may possibly be willing to give an hour a week to some profitable pleasure. Ask each one to ask some friend. Members can be selected from two points of view—those who will be an advantage to the club and those to whom the club will be an advantage. Appoint a time for the first meeting at the most convenient home. Suggest the thing that you would like best yourself—music, literature, art, science, history, current events,

poetry—whatever you may wish to know more about. If the others show a preference for something else, discuss freely and get everybody's opinion. If desirable, the general secretary can be consulted. Do whatever may be done to secure good attendance. The only difficulty which a club cannot survive is the absence of its members." The great advantages in the Home-Culture plan were thought to be "the stimulus of weekly meetings with a few people all interested in the same thing," and the fact that all were pursuing "the same common end—their own growth as individuals and the cultivation of their homes."

The membership was drawn largely from people of humble callings, with small homes and restricted social intercourse—the "unconsidered" part of a small city wherein extreme poverty has not yet become one of the social evils. To them came men and women from more comfortable homes, of wider education and larger social outlook, in the endeavor to know, personally, those who could make use of their friendship, and to give them that friendship in "such exchange of mutual benefits as might be mutually chosen"—the general idea being, "Let us—just you and me—in our own homes, find some pursuit that will interest us both: history, music, mechanics, science, anything that shall be of sufficient moment to us both to furnish a solid basis for a wholesome, educative fellowship. We may be sure that neither is giving the other a benefit without receiving one in return." It was these persons who, because of their larger social experience, became the club leaders, with the duties of keeping up the interest of the members, of reporting weekly to the general secretary and of attending the monthly meetings of the club leaders, where reports were read and common problems discussed and, if might be, solved.

Even in those first years my father's wish was to extend the influence of the Home-Culture idea beyond the boundaries of the town in which it had been conceived. "We seek now," he said, at the third annual meeting of his

club leaders, "as we have not sought before to extend these clubs far and wide. What is good and practicable for Northampton is good and practicable for a thousand other towns. There are thousands of good people, young and old, male and female, who want to give some effort of their own to the betterment of others less fortunate than they, yet have no fortunes to bequeath, nor any consciousness of large executive capacities calling them to the prosecution of large benevolent schemes."

"We think we have the right idea; a very valuable one," he wrote, in reply to a stranger, who sought to form a club in a town of the Middle West. "It seems to us that what we pursue will do both us and others a deeper, finer benefit if pursued in concert, and actual contact, with minds and lives more or less different from our own; share it with homes either much more, or much less, fortunate than ours. You approve of college extension, university extension, do you not? Well, this is Home Extension. Without any disturbance of necessary social distinctions and divergencies (and many are highly necessary), we seek to establish between homes of contrary fortunes—and between homes and the homeless—relations which *something* must establish before either church, courthouse or school can give us very much better results."

Thus did the work not only develop to larger proportions in Northampton, but the idea spread, with varying degrees of enlargement, to other towns and other parts of the country.<sup>1</sup>

"But," wrote my father, in regard to the work in Northampton, "we very early saw that many persons who needed

<sup>1</sup>In 1896, the ninth year of the Home-Culture Clubs, the number had increased from the original eight—all of which were in Northampton—to seventy-five, in twelve States besides Massachusetts: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Colorado and Nebraska. Massachusetts had fifty-eight clubs. Of the seventeen in other States five were in New York, and of the fifty-five Massachusetts clubs, forty-nine were in Northampton.

us had no home tastes, and some knew their habitations only as places in which to eat or sleep or take refuge from the weather. And so we opened a free reading-room exclusively for the man of the street, with no restriction not laid upon him in the street itself by the police. It, too, flourished, and from these twin foundations arose our clubhouse. The clubhouse enabled us at once to assume two new functions of large value: one, the furnishing of social amusements to large assemblages of young people, in competition with concerns doing the same thing purely for commercial gain and totally without social responsibility; and another, the tutoring of very small classes, sometimes even single individuals, in any branch of knowledge or culture they most desired, college students and others."

The classes referred to were at first limited to six members each, with two college volunteer teachers. The members were "young men and boys, working in mills, shops, stores and offices, who wished to renew interrupted studies or to take up new ones." The subjects taken up were reading, writing, arithmetic, language, history, travel and elocution. Later this list was extended to include astronomy, Bible, biology, bookkeeping, botany, civil government, current events, dramatics, drawing, French, geography, geology, German, gymnastics, household arts, literature, mechanics, music, natural history, political economy and public questions. It was not long, either, before the classes—meeting afternoons and evenings—were being attended by all types of persons, from the foreigner, just over, to the high-school pupil desiring extra tutoring, or the telegraph operator anxious to learn more in some other direction, or the engineer trying to get his first-class license, or the person of leisure taking up the study of conversational French and German—men and women, boys and girls, even children.<sup>1</sup> Not all of the classes were limited, as

<sup>1</sup>In 1896 the unofficial record of membership in the clubs gave this somewhat amusing list of occupations: "Weaver, buffer, laundry-



earlier, to six members, nor were the teachers, though still volunteers, exclusively college students; often they were men and women whose homes were in Northampton, or in near-by towns. The salaried staff of the organization has never included teachers of any of its classes, except those in the Household Arts Department and in the gymnastic work for men.

It was in 1889, not quite three years after the first reading-clubs had been formed, that the free reading-room was opened. The undertaking had early begun to assume the features of a municipal enterprise. And as each succeeding year saw a larger growth my father, as its president, was forced to give to its administration more and more of his time and thought and energy; forced by the very circumstance of its success. Yet, since it was the child of his own idealism, he gave all these not only willingly, but with devotion. Before long, however, the form of its activities demanded a more definite framework of management. In 1892 it was incorporated and a Board of Directors was formed, together with a Women's Council and the various necessary committees, all composed of men and women of the town, who gave and have continued to give generously and ably of their time and assistance.

To the question, "How did you ever start the thing financially?" my father's reply was, "We began it and ran it for years on the annual subscription of only eight or ten townsmen of comfortable fortune. But by and by it seemed

hand, spinner, clerk, reeler, college student, cook, shingler, high-school pupil, farmer, forger, driller, blacksmith, casket-coverer, saloon-keeper, college professor, dressmaker, milliner, teacher, domestic, post-office clerk, brakeman, embroiderer of badges, freight-shifter, hotel-clerk, real estate agent, gardener, makers of braid, elastic, silk underwear, etc., stenographer, artist, newspaper-correspondent, popcorn-vender, architect, music-teacher, painter, butcher, draftsman, housekeeper, stationer, teamster, spinner (silk), lecturer, home-missionary, telephone operator, silk-picker, silk-winder, decorator, newsboy, box-maker, foreman, quiller, watchman, paint-works operative, milkman, car-driver, and many whose easy fortune it is to live on their income."

clearly our duty, in a work modelled for general imitation, to solicit our municipal public to make the work their own by sharing in both its activities and support, and that therefore we ought to address it more wholly to their local benefit by dropping off the far-scattered reading-clubs and concentrating upon the clubhouse features, where far more could be done, with larger results and less labor and cost. Their place has been far more than filled by our clubhouse-tutored classes, and the public has come to our support in funds and in fruitful activities, and regards us as an integral part of the social machinery. . . .

"In April, 1905, some thirteen hundred persons gathered to dedicate our architectural outlay of a fund granted by Mr. and Mrs. Carnegie on the light condition that our yearly income and outlay be increased to six thousand dollars. These have been increased to seven, and are on their way to eight thousand. Our total of workers and beneficiaries is over fifteen hundred."<sup>1</sup>

In that same year the organization became the Home-Culture Clubs Corporation, a chartered body, with power to hold property and carry on the work of an educational institution; and three years later, the name was changed from Home-Culture Clubs to that of People's Institute of Northampton, in accordance with my father's belief that it had now grown to be a People's College. It was about this time that he thus described the buildings and their surrounding grounds:

"A property comprising three acres of land in the very heart of the place [Northampton] is the property of the Home-Culture Clubs. At the junction of Main and Centre streets stands its large hall for gymnastics, dramatics, indoor games and half-a-score of other functions. Behind it, in the midst of the enclosed grounds, you will see the housekeeper's 'model cottage'; beyond this are the School of Household Arts and, at its right, the new clubhouse containing our music hall, art rooms, game rooms, offices,

<sup>1</sup>"The Home-Culture Clubs," *The World's Work*, October, 1906.

classrooms, and 'Strangers' Rest.' The grounds are graced—not darkened—by ancient forest trees, native and exotic, and here are the already attractive beginnings of a model 'informal' flower-garden covering the whole three acres and specially designed to set the standards of public taste in the artistic yet inexpensive adornment of the private home. 'The private home,' we say in all these houses and grounds, 'is the public hope.' We made that our motto seventeen years ago. 'If we are to lift a human brother so that he will stay lifted without letting some one else down,' we say to our hundred and seventy-five Smith College student volunteer tutors and the nearly as many city residents of our Council, 'we must lift him home and all.' We try to act it to nearly five hundred clubhouse-members, beneficiaries of these groups of workers, while the idea goes without saying to the twice three hundred and sixty-odd husbands and wives whose cottage-gardens (to that number) are this year—seventh season—enrolled in our Flower-Garden Prize Competition.<sup>1</sup> These hundreds of private gardens, changing the aspect of whole streets, are a part of the Home-Culture Clubs' smiling physiognomy."<sup>2</sup>

In 1906, nearly twenty years after the starting of the first clubs, my father wrote of the enterprise as follows:

"Our Home-Culture Clubs are not Settlement work. They make no claim to be nobler than it, or newer; in fact, they are two years older. They do a number of things which it does, yet Settlement is just what they are not! In our entire scheme there is no "settlement," no colonization of our workers. Our field is not a swarming quarter of hand-toilers in any vast city. It is doubted that our scheme would work in vast cities. Our Home-Culture work has

<sup>1</sup>The Flower-Garden Prize Competition became, with its later accessories of the Northampton Nurseries and Flower Shop, an important development of the Home-Culture idea, and a valuable factor in the work of the Institute. A detailed account of it is reserved for the chapter on my father's love of gardens and gardening—Chapter XV.

<sup>2</sup>"The Home-Culture Clubs," *The World's Work*, October, 1906.

been carefully adapted to our less massive urban communities, where it may grapple the faulty conditions of social life before they have gone wrong half far enough to justify the "settlement" form of corrective so appropriate in our cosmopolitan centres. If any one term can name it we might call it our People's College. In so many ways it works not merely for culture in the home, but for the culture of the home."<sup>1</sup>

For nearly fifteen years after this was written, and until, in 1921, failing health compelled his release from such arduous duties, my father—unanimously elected each year by the Board of Directors—continued in the office of President of the People's Institute. "It was not all plain sailing," wrote a close friend of his and a member of the Board; "misunderstandings, perplexities of administration, and serious financial difficulties have, on occasion, obstructed the work and even threatened the very existence of the Institution. Yet through all vicissitudes he never lost faith in the enterprise"; and to-day the People's Institute of Northampton continues its work and its growth, under the guidance of those who were for so long his associates, and of others whom their self-continuing body has chosen to work with them.

There was—if we may be allowed to retrace our steps—during the same years that saw the modest beginnings of the Home-Culture Clubs, another sort of work which my father carried on with equal energy and devotion—though for obvious reasons it did not prove so lasting—that of Bible study and the organizing and teaching of Bible classes, in Northampton and elsewhere.

From his earliest youth he had been active in Sunday-school work. He had been brought up under the strict rule of the Presbyterian church, which at that time had not a little in common with the early New England Puritanism and adhered with literal exactitude to the teachings of Calvinistic orthodoxy; and it was inevitable that its the-

<sup>1</sup>"The Home-Culture Clubs," *The World's Work*, October, 1906.

ology should have had a profound influence upon a nature so essentially religious as his. He had always been interested in the study of the Bible, and often used to say that, as a young man, he had not been without serious intentions of entering the ministry. It may have been the mere fact that he was early compelled to work for the support of his mother and sisters that prevented this choice of a life-work.

However that may be, he was only in his twenty-fifth year when he was elected by the Session of the Prytania Street Presbyterian Church in New Orleans, to take charge of its "First Mission School"; and for fifteen years he and his young wife devoted their energies to this work. When finally he resigned the office, it was because of the growing necessity of prolonged absences in the North, and only shortly before he made his permanent home in New England.

In one of these absences—in 1883—he wrote from New York to his little mission school in New Orleans :

"As I begin to write these words, you are just beginning your Sunday-school exercises. Here, night has already begun to close in its dark wings over us. My lamp is lighted, the sky is barely seen through the darkening window and the chill of evening drives me closer to the fire. The great city is drawing to the end of its day of rest.

"It is a great thing to see a city—a vast metropolis—keeping the Sabbath day. I have walked in Broadway—one of the greatest streets in the world—on Sunday. I have done so trying to imagine myself a stranger in this world, one who had come from the moon or one of the great stars that look so small to our eyes. I have walked in that street when every footstep that I made was echoed on the walls of the huge, towering buildings on this side and on that. Only a carriage now and then went or came by me, or an omnibus. Far up and down the mighty thoroughfare only here & there a man or woman or child was to be seen. All was still ; doors closed, and the countless signs of

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the stores seeming all at once to have lost their meaning. So I imagined myself asking, what all this could mean. Is this great street dead? And then I would answer myself with gladness—with exultation—no! These miles of street will tomorrow roar like the great cataract of Niagara again. They will be filled with the eager, striving multitude. The doors will all be thrown wide again; the rich goods of the merchants will tempt the eye and wealth will roll in and out, a mighty flood. But today the land has rest.

“Of course you see I have drawn a very flattering picture. I have told you more of what ought to be than of what is. And yet the picture is true. There are many things done here on Sunday that should go undone. And yet it is a true & happy thing to say of the greatest city in all our vast land of America, that one could not set one’s foot in its streets a moment on the first day of the week without knowing that moment that it was the Sabbath day.”

The attitude here shown was a clear reflection of the church to which he belonged: no work should be done on Sunday that could possibly go undone. Sunday was a day of rest—not just for some persons, but for every one. It was on a visit to a friend in a New York suburb, during these years, that, when the family—consisting of his hostess and her two half-grown daughters—proposed a quiet Sunday-afternoon stroll, through the fields and along the country roads, he hesitated to join them, debating seriously within himself as to the propriety of indulging in such a pleasure on the Sabbath. That he consented to do so was evidence of the fact that he was even then altering his own attitude as he came into closer contact with modern thought and liberal opinion.

But he still held, and was to hold for some years to come, the strict sabbatarian’s views in regard to travelling on Sunday; so that when, in 1885, he and Mark Twain made their arrangements to give readings together, it was written into the contract before they started, that my father should not be asked to travel by any public con-

veyance on Sunday. And he never was—or at any rate, he never did,—though Mark Twain, and even the good-natured Major Pond, their manager, sometimes grumbled, sometimes laughed at him, for what seemed to them a stubborn adherence to a troublesome principle. To Mark Twain it was not merely the adherence, but the principle that was incomprehensible.<sup>1</sup>

For a time, also, he was to abide by the old rule that on Sunday no work that possibly could be avoided should be performed in the household. Consequently, no dish that could not be cooked the day before and “warmed over” was ever included in the Sunday menu. The choice of reading, too, must be strictly “Sunday reading,” and no secular literature, however good on week-days, might intrude upon the peace and quiet of a Sunday afternoon.

In all this, as in his continuance for many years of the custom of family prayers morning and evening, he reflected not only the teachings of his own church, but the times themselves. Others than Presbyterians held these things essential to an ordered life in the '80s and even in the '90s. Yet that he was faithful in these habits to his early training, even while the horizon of his mind was widening to a spaciousness undreamed of in his youth, would seem to have been not mere loyalty to an empty form, but evidence of a genuinely religious nature that discerned beneath the forms the beauty of their spiritual significance.

In 1882, at the age of thirty-eight, he was made deacon

<sup>1</sup>Some ten years later Mr. Clemens, in writing to my father, referred to this time, in a reminiscent mood, as follows:

“Yes, *sir!* I liked you in spite of your religion; & I always said to myself that a man that could be good & kindly with that kind of a load on him was entitled to homage—& I *paid* it. And I have always said, & still maintain, that as a railroad-comrade you were perfect—the only railroad-comrade in the world that a man of moods & frets & uncertainties of disposition could travel with, a third of a year, and never weary of his company. We *always* had good times in the cars, & never minded the length of the trip—& my, but they *were* sock-dolagers for length!”

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in "his beloved Prytania St. church," and the following year he accomplished what was considered, by the church authorities, an impossible feat in the matter of raising the church debt. The story, as told in the New Orleans press of the following morning, was this:

"A more utterly impossible effort (in the eyes of the church members) never was attempted than that of paying the entire debt of the Prytania Street Presbyterian Church on yesterday morning. Yet, so it was, that in the course of one hour, more than the amount needed was subscribed.

"In the midst of the violent storm of Saturday evening, four gentlemen met the pastor in his study, and for two hours discussed the ways and means. On Sunday morning the weather was unpropitious, many were absent from church, and not till the Rev. Dr. Nall had finished his sermon was it known whether the contemplated attempt would be made or postponed.

"At 12 o'clock, however, it was announced that Mr. Geo. W. Cable, by appointment of the trustees, would address the church on the subject of raising by subscription on the spot the sum of \$9,000 to liquidate the entire church debt. After a half-hour of eloquent appeal the speaker appointed a collector for each aisle. It was not long before one of them returned to whisper to the leader, who announced one subscription of \$1,000. The second thousand came, from an entirely unexpected source; then a third and a fourth. In a surprisingly short time \$6,000 was raised, and there came a pause. 'What!' cried the speaker; 'will you throw away \$6,000? For not a dollar is to be accepted until the whole amount is subscribed.'

"The collectors passed up and down the aisles, paper and pencil in hand, and again and again, as new appeals were made, someone would beckon to them and say, 'Add 50 per cent. to my subscription,' or, 'Double mine.' Everything was done in a quiet and orderly manner. At length it was announced that \$7,500 was subscribed; only \$1,500 more was needed. Here a motion was made to adjourn



after appointment of a committee to collect the balance from absent members, but while the discussion was going on the collectors met and compared notes, and to their great astonishment discovered that more than the amount was already subscribed. It was announced that the amount of \$9,740 had been raised."<sup>1</sup>

On moving to New England he did not at once relinquish his membership in the Presbyterian church of New Orleans. Since in Simsbury there was no Presbyterian church, he attended the Congregational church and quickly made himself a helpful member of that body, when it, too, became "involved in troubles" of a financial character. Here he urged the use of the church-envelope system of collections, and by its adoption the little village church, within the following twelve months, found itself free from debt "for the first time in many years."

In Northampton he allied himself with the Edwards Congregational Church—so named for the sturdy old Puritan, Jonathan Edwards, whose first pastorate had been in that town; and, having been for twenty-five years an ardent Sunday-school worker, he soon organized a class there for Bible study and assumed the leadership of it. The results of his study of the Bible through so many years were becoming evident in a different attitude toward religious questions than he had known in his earlier years; for criticism began to lift its voice in the town of Jonathan Edwards and the "more rigidly orthodox became," according to report, "alarmed at the breaking down of

<sup>1</sup>My father himself, in recalling this incident, related it closely to his entrance into the lecture-field: "The church in New Orleans of which I was a member and with which I was officially connected, became involved in troubles, and I was led to think that I saw the way out of them, if I could inspire the people with my ideas. I was not sure of my competency for the task, but asked and obtained permission to try what I could do. I did so, and with remarkable success. It was thus revealed to me that I had a dormant talent in this direction, and upon my relating the matter to a friend of mine in New York, he insisted that I could succeed in lecturing and ought to enter upon it."

creed barriers, doctrines and dogmas." So that when, in the early summer of 1887, the class was disbanded, it was suggested by some that its cessation was caused by this disapproval. Upon this report reaching my father's ears, he replied in the following letter, addressed to the editors of the *Hampshire County Journal*, under date of November 2, 1887:

"I seize the earliest opportunity to ask you to correct a statement which I find in your very kind personal notice of me lately printed. I am totally without knowledge of any such fact as that my Bible-class work in Northampton was found too liberalizing by any appreciable number of persons. The class was discontinued solely on account of my feeling obliged to be absent several weeks from Northampton in the beginning of summer, and I had then and have now the fullest assurances that the class would be large again if it were resumed."

That summer he made the trip through the Southern States and down to New Orleans, of which he speaks in an earlier chapter; and by the beginning of that winter the church class was not only resumed, but resumed with a much larger attendance. Upon his return from the South he was invited by the Boston Sunday-school Teachers' Union to conduct a class for Bible study in Tremont Temple, and in August he began his weekly journeyings between Northampton and Boston for that purpose. Here for the next fifteen months he gave, every Saturday afternoon, a talk on the study of the Bible before an audience that averaged 2,000 persons; and here also the change in his views was obvious. In "The Busy Man's Bible," which was largely an outgrowth of these talks, he says:

"Religion is co-extensive with the universe. It is not mere ecclesiastic or academic tenets; it is not any part of life; it is only the whole science and art of life animated and inspired by a universally pervasive and perfect philosophy, the very alphabet of all correct teaching, an alphabet whose Alpha and Omega are Unselfishness." And "the

effort of the wise teacher," he added, "will be ever toward the completer simplification of God's truth. He will never lead downward into the darkness of the Bible's obscurities; he will ever be leading upward into the light of its great simplicities."

He had indeed gone far already from Presbyterian orthodoxy and doctrines. "He sets tradition at naught," said one of his Boston audience; "he tramples on conventionality. He sees with his own eyes, thinks with his own mind and decides with his own judgment."

Toward the close of the year 1888, however, he began to find the labor of the Bible teaching in Boston—with the frequent travelling it entailed—too great a tax on his time and strength, and he therefore resigned the leadership of the Tremont Temple class. He continued for a short time after this to contribute to *The Sunday School Times*, of Philadelphia, a series of weekly articles based upon these Bible studies and entitled, "A Layman's Hints." During the two or three years that followed, he wrote and delivered several times a lecture on "Cobwebs in the Church" and at Yale Theological Seminary gave, by invitation, two lectures on "How to Study" and "How to Teach" the Bible.<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime, the Bible-class in the Edwards church had grown to such proportions that the need of a larger audience-room was felt. And in November, 1888, my father wrote: "Went to a meeting of town pastors called at my request to consider my starting a City Hall Bible class open to Tom, Dick & Harry; also to Sarah Jane. No enthusiasm; some of them would just as lief I wouldn't start it. Mr. L—— wouldn't even attend the meeting. They don't jump at the idea of supporting the public Bible meetings and letting those meetings take up collections for missions. Still, I hope to start the class. My church class

<sup>1</sup>"How to Study the Bible" appeared in *The Sunday School Times*, November 15, 1890; "How to Teach the Bible," in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, February, March, April, 1891.

numbered 133 last Sunday. That means 500 in the town hall, fully. Yesterday, H—— came in & I sent him off to hire the City Hall for every Sunday afternoon this season up to next May, & announce the Bible-class in his paper & tell the other papers & have the fire-bells rung, etc.”

The City Hall Bible-class thus became a reality, starting, its first Sunday, with an audience of four hundred persons and rapidly growing until it numbered nearly seven hundred. They came from the various churches of the town—or from none—and continued to come through that winter and the following spring, when, again because of the pressure of his other work, my father was at last compelled to give up the Bible teaching permanently.

Years afterward, in the mature light of his late fifties, he put what was beyond doubt his own personal creed—a “simpler gospel,” as he termed it—into the words of one of the heroines of his imagination: “I know that we can’t have longings, strivings, or hopes without beliefs; beliefs are what they live on. I believe in beauty and in joy. I believe they are the goal of all goodness and of all God’s work and wish. As to resurrection, punishment and reward, I can’t see what my noblest choice has to do with them; they seem to me to be God’s part of the matter; mine is to love perfect beauty and perfect joy. And above all, I believe that no beauty and no joy can be perfect apart from a love that loves the whole world’s joy better than any separate joy of any separate soul.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>“The Cavalier.”

## CHAPTER XII

### THE YEARS BETWEEN (1888-1898)

*"The years between  
Have taught some sweet, some bitter lessons."*

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

The period of five years from 1888 to 1893 was, perhaps, one of the busiest periods of my father's life. His literary production, though slow, continued steadily on; the three Acadian stories, "Carancro," "Grande Pointe" and "Au Large," were published, first in the *Century Magazine* and later, in book form, as "Bonaventure"; in 1889 came out "Strange True Stories of Louisiana," the product largely of his editorship, but also, in part, of his own creation; and in *Scribner's Magazine* for January, 1894, his novel, "John March, Southerner," began to appear serially. He had launched the Home-Culture Clubs and was himself one of the most assiduous workers for the success of that project. He was conducting a large class for Bible study every Sunday afternoon in Northampton, and was journeying to Boston every week to hold a similar, but much larger, class there on Saturday afternoons. He was giving readings and lectures from the Atlantic Coast to the Pacific Slope, making three separate tours to California and Oregon, besides many shorter trips North, South and West. And lastly, he was establishing himself and his family in a new home that was to be more distinctly of his own choosing than had been the house on Paradise Road.

Yet for all that, these were the lean years, the "years between." They were not such as biography is made of. They had none of the thrill of early successes or of newly won fame. His literary work had received its recognition,

and he had no thought of regarding anything but literature as his profession. But he considered it unwise, in view of that very fact, for a writer of fiction to seclude himself too closely in his study. He felt the need of occasional contact with others of his own profession; and even more, of the varied contacts afforded him through his reading and lecturing. So he continued to seek the lecture-field, even while he deplored the limitations necessarily set upon his literary output.

*To L. S. C.*

*[From a diary letter, written on the train.]*

Sep 3, [1888.] Under way for the far west. A long line of sleeping-cars with dining-car, coach &c in front. Prairie lands to every horizon, all green and yellow with low-slanting sunlight. Wide cornfields; abundant wildflowers, yellow and purple; train going so fast I can identify only goldenrod. Farmhouses have planted groves. The sunset on the prairie is most beautiful. The different kinds of grasses and weeds, here one mass, there another, with the mellow sunlight stretched across make a mother-o'-pearl effect.

. . . Before I was done writing the foregoing, a gentleman came & sat down to make acquaintance. I thought he knew me, but quickly found he did not. "Now," he said, "this station is called Cable."

I replied, "Probably named for Ransom Cable, President of the Rock Island R. R."

"Yes," he said, "or else that Boston writer, Cable. Oh! what *are* his initials?"

"G. W.?" I asked.

"Yes! I knew them well enough! But they slipped me at the moment. I read him. I've seen him. Heard him read."

I called his attention to the beauties of the sunset.

. . . Later. The porter of the car, a very bright & en-

gaging young chap, comes to me & says, "Isn't this Mr. Cable?" (The passenger was gone.)

"Yes, what do you know about me?"

"Oh! I knew it was you. I heard your address at Berea College."<sup>1</sup>

So we were good friends in a moment, and he says he will not tell on me. With passengers contemplating 3 days' imprisonment on a sleeper I shall have no chance for work if I am known as one whose name belongs to the newspapers.

*To his mother*

The Dalles, Oregon  
Sepr. 10, 1888.

DEAR, PRECIOUS MOTHER:

I am spending my last afternoon in The Dalles, before going to Portland. In a few hours more I shall be on the platform, then to bed and then up and off down the river a little after sunrise, viewing the famed beauty of the Columbia.

Dear mother, I am farther from you than I have ever been since I was born. But the very distance draws me to you.

I have been thinking over many things of the past since I came away out here among strangers & strange scenes. Also of the future. There are nine children to think about, not one of whom has a clearly indicated future.<sup>2</sup> But I must not forget that the future is God's matter and that there is really not so much to be anxious about now as there has been for years and years. What a sweet little flock we have got, indeed!

<sup>1</sup>Berea College, Berea, Kentucky, a college for colored students, in which, for years, my father had taken an active interest.

<sup>2</sup>His own five girls and one boy—his youngest daughter was not born until the following year—and the three children of his widowed sister. His mother, his two sisters and these three children had come from New Orleans to live in Northampton during the preceding year, 1887.

I crossed Columbia river today into Washington Territory, on a ferry-flat, along with some moving families in their wagons, some loose horses and some Indians. It was no less than awful to look out upon the wide desert that the Indiana emigrants used to cross in wagons in order to reach this land. But this region is very productive; a strong temptation to farmers. As for me, let me get back to New England and I will stay there.

Good-bye, beloved mother, for a little while. Give tender messages to everyone. Add kisses, and taking a big share for yourself, remember without anxiety

Your affectionate son,

GEORGE

*To L. S. C.*

Cleveland, O., Nov. 2d, 1889.

Well! Guess where I've been. I thought I'd walk out a step or two & get some fresh air. I went; but the fresh air so invigorated me that I thought I'd walk up Euclid avenue and drop in on John Hay. I did so. He had company—a small dinner-party to the newly-elected bishop—but he received me & would have me in to where the gentlemen were smoking. I stayed only about 5 minutes, but then he hustled me in (when I would have departed) to the ladies, Mrs. Hay and—I forget their names. Saw three of their four children, glorious specimens—beautifully & picturesquely dressed. I lunched with the family tomorrow at one. Of course I got out almost as soon as I had got in. Hay would have presided at the big mass meeting tonight—John Sherman speaks—but this little party to the bishop prevented.

I enjoyed the few moments I was with them. They have always been a little more cordial to me than I can account for. I like them for themselves; & yet I cannot help enjoying, too, to see and hear one who spent his time daily in the presence & confidence of Abraham Lincoln.



*To the same*

Cleveland, O., Nov. 3, 1889.

I went to John Hay's to luncheon. Had a very happy time with him, his wife & the four children. Such good, sweet children they are. Then a long, quiet chat with Hay & his wife—mainly Hay—about Mr. Lincoln in his private life. He showed me a life-mask of Lincoln taken only some 60 days before his assassination. I was deeply impressed by it. I asked him about his own experiences the night the President was killed & he gave me an account of them. One thing that he probably never will print is that Mr. Lincoln used—in sleepless hours—to lie reading or thinking & if he hit upon something very amusing would rise & come down the whole length of a long corridor to his (Hay's) room, enter, wake him up, & tell the matter for pure fun's sake. He says this was a frequent habit.

When I rose to go Hay said he'd walk with me. So he did & we spent another hour together in the street. Then I bade him goodbye at my hotel & found ——— waiting to see me & take me away up town to see his wife, sister & children.

I went & found a very bright little home & four good-looking, well-behaved children. I was heartily pleased. He had me look at some of his MS. and I got to making suggestions until tea was ready & I stayed to tea. The quiet ease & dignity with which they managed their humble but admirable hospitality was worth seeing.

*To the same*Toronto, Canada,  
Nov. 12, 1889.

Left Cleveland at 1 o'clock Monday morning, arrived in Buffalo at 7 a.m. Had made affinity with a delightful Englishman, a Fellow of the College of Antiquarians (of London, I believe). Took a walk with him, talked social

science, returned to station, breakfasted with him, & at 9 o'clock put off for Niagara Falls on my way to Toronto.

At the falls I found I must perforce wait  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours for the Toronto connection. So off we went to do the falls. O the glory of them!

People talk about the "grandeur" of them. But the grandeur is utterly forgotten in their heavenly beauty. People talk of their roar & thunder. Their noise is not great, or at most is lost in contemplation of their sweet majesty. One forgets, almost, to be awed, in the presence of so much exquisite charm. The color & *play* of color & light is past all dreaming.

*To his mother*

DEAR MOTHER:

Madison, Wis., July 29th, 1890.

This is to make you grin, & keep you saucy. I have nothing in particular to tell except that I passed through Chicago & Evanston without molestation.

Did you ever travel at the rate of 80 miles an hour? I did, this trip, for two miles. Isn't that the wings of the wind? We made 2 miles at that rate &  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles at the rate of  $70\frac{8}{13}$  miles an hour. No ox-team has ever beaten this record. So you see common steam—ha, ha, ha!—is faster than ox-team—ha, ha, ha!! Funny but true.

Now, good night. And may God's gracious care preserve you and you remember me while far away & welcome me home when I return, is the prayer of your son

GEORGE

*To L. S. C.*

No. 2 Banks Street<sup>1</sup>  
Chicago, Ill., Jan. 16, '92.

We had a day of delights yesterday. Russell & Jefferson<sup>2</sup> were here from  $12\frac{1}{2}$  till four o'clock, and most delightful company they were. Russell gave us a reading &

<sup>1</sup>The home of Mr. Franklin Head, of Chicago.

<sup>2</sup>Sol Smith Russell and Joseph Jefferson, the actors.

sang us a song. I never conceived the art of mimicry attempting—to say nothing of achieving—such things as he does.

In the evening the reception filled the house with 150 people. Miss Medora Head (cousin) just from Naples, sang gloriously. I read for them—Ristofalo's courtship. Today we go to hear Jefferson in *The Rivals* at 2 & *The Heir at Law* at 8.

*To the same*

Baldwin, Kansas, Feby 8, '92.

We have to take the lean with the fat and the bitter with the sweet. I am just now in a "Hotel" whose proprietor is also its clerk, steward, head-waiter, porter, fireman and bell-boy. A woman in the kitchen seems to be his wife, chamber-maid, and cook. Behind the counter in the main office, which is also the baggage room and lavatory—there is no boot-room—is a set of pine shelves. On the topmost shelf are some old newspapers; on the next below, a dust-pan; on the next a bunch of turkey-feathers & a broken sugarbowl; on the next the dismantled bowl of a kerosene lamp and five shot-gun cartridge shells, and the lowest holds the books of the hotel.

The landlord wears shiny diagonal black trousers, a black doeskin vest (well oiled), blue flannel shirt, and a long goatee. He has just carried a sack of vegetables through the office and dining-room to the kitchen. In a small glass showcase on the counter you can see, but alas! cannot reach & appropriate, a pile of meal-tickets each "Good for One Meal, price 35 cents." The only decorative legend on the wall is, "Chew Climax Tobacco."

I have just dined. I missed my breakfast at Atchison, the hotel cooks being so late getting to their posts (*Blue Monday*) that I could get only half a tumbler of milk and an apple. For dinner, boiled pork; canned corn and tomatoes; milk in a heavy glass goblet with four chips off its

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foot; cabinet pudding, tepid; mince pie, pallid; and sugar, cream and spoons in a glass "set" of the kind given away to whoever buys five pounds of "tea." I wish you could see the wallpapers; I can't describe them; I mustn't fatigue myself.

The young man who meets me in the name of the lecture bureau says this is a university town. The "university" chapel has front doors with grained oilcloth panels. Good-bye; I have a letter from —— to answer; and besides, a ragged man with a long shaggy beard is roasting a piece of codfish on the end of the poker in the office stove and—can't you smell it?

*To the same*

Lake Shore & M. S. R. R. ex Chicago,  
Jan'y 11, '93.

When the train begins to carry my letter toward its destination the instant I begin to write it that is quick delivery, isn't it?

Yesterday was a great day in my experience. But I should begin further back to tell all my pleasures in Chicago, this trip. Sunday evening about 6 I made a third call at the Heads', and invited myself to tea. But before tea, ran around & called on Mrs. Coonly. Mrs. Wynne came in. I went with her to her home & saw our dear Mrs. Yale & her eldest son, Julian Yale (about 40 years old, I guess,) with whom I arranged to go and see the Exposition buildings on Tuesday. After tea, I went to my hotel, not supposing that Eugene Field,<sup>1</sup> his great friend Melville Stone, Richard Malcolm Johnston, Sol Smith Russell and Hamlin Garland were right opposite in "The Virginia," wondering where they could find me.

Monday evening's "Uncut Leaves"<sup>2</sup> was a charming af-

<sup>1</sup>Eugene Field and my father gave some readings together, that winter.

<sup>2</sup>L. J. B. Lincoln's project of drawing-room readings given by a selected group of authors, from their unpublished writings.

fair at Mr. Henrotin's in Bellevue Place, near the Heads'. The readers were: Lincoln, with a MS. from Hopkinson Smith called *The Art of Training our Wives & Daughters*; Hamlin Garland; R. M. Johnston; Miss Munroe, as beautiful as she is gifted; and I. Lincoln had also a story from Nelson Page, but there wasn't time for it. The dear old Col. Johnston was easily best, though Garland & Miss M. & Smith's paper were all fine.

Next morning at 9 dropped into Mr. Yale's office in "The Rookery" & went with him to the Exposition Grounds. Before starting we went & saw Mr. Burnham, now world-famous as the head spirit in the architectural scheme of the Exposition. He telephoned instructions ahead of us & when we got out of the cars a Mr. Waller [met us] with a wagonette and a very skilful driver (all of whose skill was needed, for the horses were frantic, seemingly from the terribly cold wind 5 degrees below zero) and took us to the grounds. He conducted us everywhere, giving us a full account of the work and showing us everything in its best time & order. I cannot undertake to tell you of the wonder & beauty, the majesty & vastness of the works. The sight of them is one of the greatest single experiences of my life. I would rather show them to a friend than any other one sight in America. It seems trivial to mention in connection with it the exhibit shown me of 6000 plants of primroses all in full blossom in one unbroken expanse of 4800 square feet. This exhibit is made now because the primrose is only a winter bloomer.

At one I reached the clubhouse & met the following by appointment: Stone, Head, Johnston, Garland, Sol S. Russell & E. S. Willard, the actors, H. H. Kohlsaas, prop'r of the *Inter-Ocean*, James Scott, Edr. *Chicago Herald*, Eugene Field & D. A. Moulton.

The table was round. Five radii of smilax vine cut into as many segments in which white and pink carnations lay thickly strewn. In the centre was a bunch of crimson carnations as big as a great punch-bowl. It was the prettiest

luncheon I ever saw. It was fine to see how little wine was drunk where so much was offered. Everybody was truly temperate. And everybody was entertaining, while some were delightful. Garland read a poem, Field another, Johnston recited, so did I, so did Russell; Russell sang two songs; Willard was enchanting in anecdote & every man had his good yarn. We had a royal time.

Then Field, Russell & I went uptown and I got my bag from the Granada & went on up to the Heads'. I had felt it my duty to get up a small theatre quartette of Miss Bessie, Miss Durkee, Mrs. Wynne & me to hear "Sol," as they all call him, play "The Poor Relation." So I decided to stop all night with the Heads. Stone told "Sol" I was going and the gentle "Sol" gave me a box! So we dressed in grand style, Mrs. Wynne in crimson & yellow, Miss Bessie in something killing but I forget what, Miss Durkee in black lace, and I "In Plain Black & White," as Grady would say.<sup>1</sup> The play was ever & ever so funny & ever and ever so painfully pathetic. When poor "Sol" staggered, fell and fainted away with hunger, I was glad I had seen him eat ten courses a few hours before & knew he had supper at a ten-story hotel on the American Plan.

Mr. Stryker is on the train. He just now brings me an *Inter-Ocean* with a notice of the luncheon. By it I see to my positive surprise that the feast was given to me. I didn't understand it so & have not said a word to Mr. Stone to show that I so recognize it. Isn't that a pretty fix!

All this time, in stolen intervals between public readings, private entertaining and many days of heavy travelling, a new novel was being written. When, in August, 1890, it was first submitted to the Century Company, Mr. Gilder

<sup>1</sup>The *Times-Democrat* (New Orleans) for March 11, 1885, had published the statement that, "The April *Century* will contain a reply to Mr. George W. Cable's recently published and much discussed article on 'The Freedman's Case in Equity.' It is entitled 'In Plain Black and White,' and is written by Mr. Henry W. Grady, one of the editors of the *Atlanta Constitution*."

read it and wrung his hands in despair. He could make nothing out of it—it was “a tract, not a story”—“instead of a return *to* literature, an attempt to fetch everything into literature save and except literature itself.” “I fear you have hoped,” he wrote, “to put much of your most serious thought on public, political and humanitarian questions into just this form; and that it must be worked off in this way and not merely in essays and addresses.”

The novel was sent home and after three years was returned, entirely rewritten. Still Mr. Gilder was unsatisfied. It had “less charm than any” of the earlier stories, and did not “seem to have its origin in a deep sense of art.” He admitted that “the book has not had all your thought put into it for nothing. As a whole it will be much talked of”; but, finally, it was not “cut-up-able into *drawing* numbers” for serial publication.

That Mr. Gilder was right, my father was convinced. Mr. Gilder was usually right in such matters. He *had* put into this novel, whether consciously or not, much of his serious thought on the questions of the day. His writings on the Southern Problem were still fresh in his own mind, and would not be put entirely away. He knew, too, under what difficulties the writing of it had been done. The story, however, found approval with other editors and, with certain further changes, to adapt it to magazine use, it was begun as a serial in *Scribner's Magazine* for January, 1894, and later published in book form. Its name, which was first “John Rebb,” and then—until the very eve of its appearance in the magazine—“Widewood,” was finally “John March, Southerner.” Of it, as it neared its completion, my father wrote, “What it is to be when it is too late to mend it, I wish I knew. But what I wish it were is this: A pleasing story of the heroic in imagined lives; truth of the passions and affections, not advocated, but portrayed; a book with every page good prose, and each of its chapters, as a chapter, good poetry; a book able to keep you—not me, merely—always emotionally interested,

and leave you profited; a story written for all readers, to all, and at none. I should call that a good novel, but alas——!"

*To L. S. C.*

Sacramento, Cal., Octo. 30, 1893.

On my way north again. Stop here three hours. Had an enchanting evening yesterday with John Muir, the great student of glaciers. He is the most captivating talker, the sweetest, gentlest, manliest, most fearless explorer, and most poetic nature, the strangest, most unconsciously skilful word painter I ever talked to—a perfect marvel and delight.

*To John Muir*

Dryads' Green,  
Northampton, Mass.,  
December 18, 1893.

MY DEAR MR. MUIR:

I am only now really settled down at home for a stay of a few weeks. I wanted to have sent to you long ago the book I mail now and which you kindly consented to accept from me—Lanier's poems. There are in Lanier such wonderful odors of pine, and hay, and salt sands and cedar, and corn, and such whisperings of Aeolian strains and every outdoor sound—I think you would have had great joy in one another's personal acquaintance.

And this makes me think how much I have in yours. Your face and voice, your true, rich words, are close to my senses now as I write, and I cry hungrily for more. The snow is on us everywhere now, and as I look across the white, crusted waste I see such mellowness of yellow sunlight and long blue and purple shadows that I want some adequate manly partnership to help me reap the rapture of such beauty. In one place a stretch of yellow grass standing above the snow or blown clear of it glows golden in the slant light. The heavens are blue as my love's eyes



and the elms are black lace against their infinite distance.

Last night I walked across the frozen white under a moonlight and starlight that made the way seem through the wastes of a stellar universe and not along the surface of one poor planet.

Write and tell me, I pray you, what those big brothers of yours, the mountains, have been saying to you of late. It will compensate in part, but only in part, for the absence of your spoken words.

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

The heading of the preceding letter indicates an important change of abode. Early in 1892 the building of the new house had been completed and my father, on his return from a second reading-tour on the Pacific Slope, moved his family from "Red House" on Paradise Road to "Tarryawhile" on Dryads' Green. In naming the new house "Tarryawhile" his thought was of those who should come to it as guests; but it was better named than he knew, for this was to be his home for the remainder of his long life. Distant from "Red House" by only a few hundred yards, it was yet much nearer than the first home to the beautiful woods in which he so delighted. In speaking of this, shortly after he had moved thither, he said: "I found such a source of delight in their extraordinary beauty and variety that I early took steps to secure their preservation, and at length, in conjunction with one of my neighbors, bought a part of them, not intending to do anything but save them from the cordwood-cutter's ax. I naturally became a student of the growth in Paradise woods, and made them my haunt, even when I was busy writing.

"As my family grew and my house became insufficient, I was so fortunate as to make it advantageous to build close against the woods on a new street opened behind my earlier home. Here I had a chance to give myself an abundance of lawn-room and to build a house much to my taste,

though in the old New England style, gabled roof, Dutch door and all that. I named the place "Tarryawhile" because it seemed to indicate a great many pleasant things. The first was the intimation that however pleasantly a man may establish himself in a home, his life at the longest is short, and he might as well realize, when he settles down anywhere that it will not be a great while before he will be called to settle up. A Southerner who has lived over forty years of his life on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico, finds an appropriateness, when he makes a home 2000 miles away, in saying in his mind, if not in his mouth, 'I'm a pilgrim and a stranger and can tarry but a night.' Then, too, there is a feeling of fellowship with friends and with strangers as fellow-creatures, that makes any man feel hospitable when his home is even but a little way removed from the crowded street, and those who are good enough to visit him have had to come an unaccustomed distance."

As to the name of the street, he once said, "I was the first settler on this street and was invited to name it. I had once resided for a short time on Dryad street in New Orleans. It never was a very attractive street, and I would not have named this street after it for its own sake, but the name has a good rythm, and at the same time the street promises to be so pleasantly finished in architectural character, that I thought the name of 'Dryads' Green' appropriate. We have the oaks just across the green and if any one denies that the dryads are in them, I think the burden of proof ought to be with him."

Later, indeed, the dryads had their trees directly on the street itself, when my father, bringing a tree-lifter from California for the purpose, planted a row of large white, red and post oaks along its entire length.

"Tarryawhile" became a home more loved than any other my father had ever had, and into the development of its grounds, including the woods, he put his devoted thought and energy for many years. "I never in my life," he wrote, when temporarily away from it, "expected so to



"TARRYAWHILE," NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

love a spot of ground as I love our home of to-day." Here at last were the material and scope for a garden such as all his life he had dreamed of possessing, and every hour that could be spared from his writing, or his other duties, was happily spent in planning its lawns, its paths, its growth of trees and shrubs and flowers.

Among the earliest guests at "Tarryawhile" were A. Conan Doyle and his brother; and two years later, in October of 1896, came J. M. Barrie for an unforgettable visit. An acquaintance of my father had written to him in September: "I took tea with Mr. Barrie in London a few weeks ago, and he expressed the desire to see you when in this country. He arrives in about a week and it occurred to me you might like to invite him to call on you on his way between New York and Boston."

He came—he and Mrs. Barrie and their friend, Dr. W. Robertson Nicoll—and my father and he were warm friends at sight. My father's record of that too brief visit, which opened the way to another of even greater importance to himself, may be of interest here:

"It was my good fortune to have Mr. and Mrs. Barrie as guests for three days about a week after their arrival in America on this, their first visit to our shores. I had never seen Mr. Barrie until I met him at the train which brought him to Northampton in company with Mrs. Barrie and his friend Dr. W. Robertson Nicoll, the famous Scotchman and literary critic, editor of the *London British Quarterly* and early discoverer of both Barrie and Watson. In the author of 'A Window in Thrums,' I found a smallish, sedate, reticent man of a breadth and squareness of brow that would claim the attention of any passing stranger. When he spoke, his words came in slow procession as though he were writing them, and yet with an effect neither studied nor languorous. His slow smile is never far off, and, when surprised by some sudden call for a pointed utterance, the flash of his wit is as bright as it is kind. When I told him that his noted unwillingness to

speaking to an assemblage would not prevent his being solicited to address our nine hundred students of Smith College he said they would not hear him if he spoke; that the only time he ever did speak to an audience certain persons cried, 'We can't hear you! We can't hear you!'

"'What did you do?' I inquired, and he answered in his slow, gentle manner, 'I told them that in that case they were getting much the best of it.'

"I doubt if any one, in those three days to me so filled with pleasure, had any revealing converse with Mr. Barrie as to his views on the literary art or his methods of writing. To me he was simply a quiet, sun-lit, incarnated holiday. We planted an elm together at 'Tarryawhile' between Felix Adler's hemlock-spruce and Conan Doyle's maple. We drove, all of us, through the Old Hadley meadows and village, crossing the Connecticut on a bridge and re-crossing, at Hatfield, on a scow. It was the most royal week of royal October, and no other man from either side of the Atlantic have I ever seen drink deeper from the colors of our Autumn landscape. 'It is not the yellows,' he more than once exclaimed, 'we have those on the other side; it's the reds that fill me with wonder.'

"Certain it is that nothing during his stay in beautiful Northampton so drew him out of himself and made him a delightful surprise to his wife and Scottish friend and fellow-traveller, as the fair population of Smith College. The conspiracy that drew him step by step to the point of 'speaking in chapel' was one of the most permanently satisfactory crimes the present writer ever had a hand in."

When the three guests had gone, the guest-book lay open on Mr. Barrie's desk at the printed quotation:

"Intelligence and courtesy not always are combined;  
Often in a wooden house a golden room we find."

Under this he had written: "If you would find this golden room, take the train to Northampton, Mass., go up Elm Street, turn into Dryads' Green, house right-hand corner,



JAMES M. BARRIE, GEORGE W. CABLE AND W. ROBERTSON NICOLL, IN  
NORTHAMPTON, 1896.

enter, go upstairs and take the last door on the left. A golden room—a golden memory.

J. M. BARRIE, Oct. 13, 1896”

*To Charles Scribner*

Dryads' Green,  
Northampton, Mass.,  
Dec. 8, '96.

MY DEAR MR. SCRIBNER:

I have to thank your house for a copy of “Margaret Ogilvy,” and as I am just writing Mr. Barrie how greatly I have enjoyed it I must write you, too, who told how much I might expect of it.

It is a book little short of wonderful for its simplicity and for the richness its author is able to find in lives that are simply of a sort with the lives of everyone. The simplicity of the story is a great achievement. The perfect artistic beauty of a narrative absolutely true to fact shows the hand of genius; and no one can rise from the book without a new and sweeter realization than he had, that heroes and heroines are not of necessity made by prodigies of valor or prodigies of virtue, alone, but just as easily and finely by prodigious powers of loving.

I expect to see you in a few days.

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

In connection with the Home-Culture Clubs in Northampton my father had been carrying on a slender little magazine as an organ of the club work, called *The Letter*. At first this was devoted largely to reports of the clubs and to subjects of particular interest to their members, but in the autumn of 1896 it blossomed into a general literary magazine and changed its name to *The Symposium*. The career of *The Symposium*, however, was of the briefest, for after the third number had been issued, for December, 1896, its editor-in-chief accepted an invitation to under-

take the editorship of *Current Literature*, and early in 1897, went to New York to assume his new duties, having transferred *The Symposium* to the Scribner publication, *The Book-Buyer*.

These editorial duties engrossed him for the next eight months, almost to the exclusion of his imaginative writing. He found a genuine pleasure and satisfaction in the work; but the magazine had been struggling against financial difficulties for some time and it was impossible for its owners to form an arrangement satisfactory to my father. So, by the end of the summer he reluctantly gave up the editorship, quit his office-desk and returned to his home in Northampton and to his own creative writing. It had been a mere interlude, but it had had its value to him, for it took him—though for ever so brief a time—out of what he termed his “recluse’s life,” and put him more closely in touch with the world of men and affairs. During his term at his editor’s desk he had been able to finish one short story, “The Entomologist,”—“the best story, I believe,” he wrote his publishers, “that I have written since Grande Pointe.”

The following spring he made a journey to England, to fulfil an engagement entered into with Mr. Barrie and Dr. Nicoll. From the time of their visit to this country they had been urging him to come to London, with the promise that they would arrange for him, there, a series of drawing-room readings from his own stories. And in April of 1898, he went, like a boy freed from school, for his first voyage across the Atlantic and his first sight of a land other than his own. To him, at fifty-four years of age, it could not be less than a rare adventure, each day bringing him so many new experiences that he sent home to his family a diary-letter wherein was recorded an almost hourly recital of his happy times.



## CHAPTER XIII

### FIRST VISIT TO ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND (1898)

*"I travelled on,  
Giving my mind up to the world without,  
Which poured in strange ideas of strange things,—  
New towns, new churches, new inhabitants."*

HENRY ALFORD.

R. M. S. "Majestic,"  
April 20, '98.

I have now been 8 hours on shipboard and 7 hours on the shoreless sea. It is always beautiful to me, but I do not find it more, but rather less, so because of the vastness of the ship.

How good it is to know the stars by name; they never leave you—are always "going your way" and glad to pass the hour with you. I go in and come out again on deck—ah! Aldebaran! Ah! Cassiopeia! still here and as ready for a half-hour's promenade as though we were still in Paradise Woods.

London, Apl. 28, '98.

I have spent the night and breakfasted in Barrie's house. A beautiful little house of three storeys charmingly arranged and as charmingly finished and decorated; formerly the home of the poet Praed.

A large proportion of all our passengers sat up till we reached Queenstown, to hear the news as to our war, and as the tender came alongside, the wild cries for the first word were more like the days of 1861-'5 than anything I have heard in many a year.

And the word was War; a sad word, and one that can bring America little honor unless it ends in results far nobler than most contests end in; for we are fighting an

old, sick woman, and our only credit is that we are doing so not because we would but because we must.

April 30.—Doctor Nicoll came in yesterday afternoon and made me a very pleasant call in Barrie's study. Then we went downstairs and all four fell to work arranging programmes, tickets and dates for the impending crises. In due time Barrie and I dressed and took a hansom for the House of Commons. It was a soul-stirring sight to look upon the exquisite grace of Westminster, and a moving experience to stand on the stone terrace overlooking the Thames and gaze across to old Lambeth Palace. We had come to dine with Mr. McArthur, the Liberal whip. He met us at the entrance and took us down into the ancient crypt of St. Stephen, where we saw a most wonderful arched passage of delicately carven marble, elaborate and exquisite. We dined in a central dining-hall.

After dinner we took coffee in a smoking-room. Then Mr. McArthur took me alone into the Gallery of the House and set me down where I could look below upon Goschen and Balfour, Dilke and Michael Davitt and young Sir Edward Grey, the hope and eager expectation of the Liberal party. Mr. McArthur went down and spoke to certain ones and by and by disappeared. Later he came and asked me to come to his room and see Mr. Morley. So I went and sat by the fireside with John Morley (did I ever think I would!) and we talked together—how much easier it is for anybody, whomsoever, to talk with a great man than with a little one. We discussed the Spanish-American war and he said that if the President and the Spanish Queen Regent had had the matter in their hands alone they could have settled it peaceably. I said perhaps and yet I supposed if ever war is to be banished finally from the world it must be through democracies. He warmed up and gesticulated emotionally yet with a radiant face, saying, "Thirty years ago, Mr. Cable, twenty years ago, ten, yes, five years ago, I should have said so; now—I don't know! I don't know!"

Well, of course, he soon rose to go back to the House, saying he hoped, nay, he knew we were presently to meet again.

Wednesday, May 4, afternoon.—I was talking to Barrie just now; trying to discover some weak place in his furnishment as a writer into which I could thrust some book of reference which he may have been promising himself. He said, in his slow drawl, "Before I was married, when my habit was to spend two months or so in London, then two in the country, then two in London again and so on continually—for that is how I did—I had but one book, a dictionary. And this I used not for reference, but to write on, because it was just a good length and breadth. It's very badly worn out now, not from any turning of the leaves, but by my wrist and elbow, from serving so long as a desk. In those days, when I had made up my mind to write on some subject requiring the consultation of books, I used to think the matter over very thoroughly for some days and then decide to write about something else. In that way one can get along with very few books."

Monday, May 16, '98.—On Thursday I dined with Mr. Whale, at the Devonshire Club—one of the most charming evenings I ever had anywhere. Here I met the novelist—Barrie calls him one of England's very best—George Gissing. He is tall, blond, handsome, graceful, modest, mild. I met him again next day, when Barrie took me to Box Hill to see the man they all reverence (George Meredith). The country around [Box Hill] is the most broken and the most beautiful I have yet seen in England. Barrie led me across fields to the house, pointing out as we went into the front garden the separate study, off on the right, where for twenty years the master has written his wonderful pages. We found him in his parlor, talking buoyantly to Gissing. He pulled himself up with much effort and welcomed me with a warmth that made me very grateful.

Whatever he was talking about, he dropped it to expatiate upon my African chieftain, Bras-Coupé, and to ask questions about my writing the episode. He said, "I have wanted long to meet you." His being deaf makes it very hard to converse with him, for his own manner is so animated, so joyous, so kaleidoscopic and brilliant, so witty and so kind, that to do one's corresponding part silences the rest of the company. I said after we were gone to Barrie, "Why didn't you tell me I was going to meet the most wonderful talker I have ever heard?" Barrie smiled and drawled, "I've heard a great many crack talkers say they knock under to him; he is the most brilliant conversationalist in England."

The first American Mr. Meredith asked me about was Dr. Weir Mitchell, whose prose he likes pointedly and whose personality, I fancy, he likes still better. He spoke of others, male and female, whose names I am afraid to risk in writing, for his way with them was to say something very merry about them and then to burst into a soft, open-mouthed "haw-haw" and sigh, "poo-ah dee-ah!" It was so he did, for instance, in alluding to a certain poetess, who on meeting him for the first time kissed his hand. If she could have heard that laugh and that "poo-ah dee-ah," which he had shortly before applied to a very ugly little pet dog cracking chicken-bones under his chair—I think she would have given seven years' royalties to have got that unlucky kiss back again.—"Mr. Cable, does that cracking of bones annoy you? It does seem to bring us rather close to Golgotha Ditch! I don't mind it—yes, that's right; chew on, poo-ah dee-ah!"

His son, a beautifully framed, handsome fellow, married and with two children, had come out from town to be one of our number. It was lovely to see the camaraderie between them. Every moment it was—"Will, my dee-ah"—this or that gibe or this or that business question or political query, and always the same overflowing mirth. Mirth, yes, but always mirth with thought and kind consideration

behind it. Suddenly—"Will, my dee-ah! do you not think Bruno"—another little waddling Dachshund—"had better be turned out? He's really not interesting, you know, my dee-ah, and seems to have no desire but to toast his back before the fire. And he's been wet—I'm sure he's been wet—and when he gets too near the blazing coals—truly, I never can like the smell of toasted Bruno. I never saw a dog so devoid of individual character. He never seeks a caress; he merely comes in and squares his back to you and is still! He seems to have striven for character and can't attain unto it. He hunts rabbits, but never catches them. At times he does nose out a carrion rabbit in some burrow and paws at it until he achieves a fortnight's measure of noble dyspepsia. But altogether his life is a failure. Now, Will, my dee-ah, truly I'd like him best outside. Go, Bruno; you know you really don't care—poo-ah dee-ah!"

Wednesday, May 18, '98.—Sunday afternoon we went, Mrs. Barrie and I, to Westminster Abbey and heard a strong, brave, wise sermon from Canon Wilberforce. The organ and the singing and the comparatively simple service were extremely beautiful. The Abbey—well, I can't talk about what everyone sees and praises; I can only use the commonest adjectives of admiration. But when I came to stand among the great dead of all the ages—Chaucer, Spenser and so many more—my blood seemed to stand still in my veins. We had only a few minutes, the beadles were presently closing up, and so we went away promising each other to come as soon as possible again when we can stay longer.

Yesterday I kept myself fresh for the all-important business of the afternoon—the reading.<sup>1</sup> There were sixty-

<sup>1</sup>At the house of Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Barrie. It was at the time of these readings that the following paragraph appeared in a London newspaper:

"Less than a month ago there were reputable booksellers in Lon-

nine seats in the house, and there were seventy-one sold. Mrs. Barrie had sold out every seat several days ago. The famous Mr. Augustine Birrell, M. P., was my chairman. His introduction was delightfully complimentary and graceful. The reading was a complete success. I knew that when the applause came, after that quiet description of the opening of summer in N. O. After I finished Sir John Lang rose and moved the vote of thanks to Mr. Birrell, Mr. and Mrs. Barrie and to me, in a very neat speech, and then I had the pleasure of shaking hands with any number of charming ladies and clever gentlemen.

Then I took a walk in Kensington Gardens with Barrie. Then back to dress and off under an umbrella—it must rain just a little every day to keep up the habit—to dine with the Stanleys.<sup>1</sup>

Sunday, May 22, 1898.—On the 19th I went to the House of Commons with my pass from Mr. Bryce and saw one of the most memorable adjournments in its history. It was all begun and finished within a short five minutes. Those who were to be admitted were kept waiting a few minutes at the barriers; then a sergeant cried, “The Speaker is in the Chair,” and we were let in, passed down the broad corridor, entered and sat down with hats off. The House, of course, sat with hats on. The white-wigged Speaker sat on the woosack and there was a great and unwonted stillness. Then the Speaker said—and this was unusual if not almost unprecedented—“Hats off!” With one movement the Commons uncovered. With this word came, so closely following as to seem all one sentence with it, the announcement—“The First Lord of the Treasury,” and

don who denied that such novels as ‘The Grandissimes’ and ‘Dr. Sevier’ ever existed. They had heard in a vague way of ‘Old Creole Days’ and were under the impression that the author of those charming stories was a colored gentleman hailing from New Orleans. Now there is a regular Cable boom, and new editions of ‘The Grandissimes’ and ‘Dr. Sevier’ are being rushed to meet the extraordinary demand.”

<sup>1</sup>Henry M. Stanley, the African explorer, and his wife.

Mr. Balfour rose from his seat just below the clerks. His words were few, studied, halting, doubled back on one another and spoken with a scholar's precision, yet they would not be robbed, by these drawbacks, of their dignity and solemnity. He announced the death of William Ewart Gladstone, said that the present moment was not the time for extended utterances—that time would be on the morrow—but that in honor, etc., he would move an adjournment of the House and would withhold his motion only until there might be read a resolution on which he would call for action the next day, praying the Queen that, if found compatible with the preferences of the bereaved kindred of Mr. Gladstone, a public funeral be ordered in St. Peter's of Westminster (Westminster Abbey) and that a monument be erected to the memory of Mr. Gladstone there, and assuring Her Majesty of the readiness of the House to meet the cost of this tribute. The Speaker himself then read this resolution—you may have seen it in print, worded in strict conformity to ancient precedent—and passed it down to the clerk directly in front of him. Then Sir William Vernon Harcourt rose from the seat opposite Mr. Balfour and in equally dispassionate and brief words expressed his sense of the common loss, seconded the motion and sat down. The Speaker put the motion, there came a soft rushing sound of "Aye!" The Speaker said merely, "The ayes"—and in accordance with the closing words of Mr. Balfour which I have omitted above, "that the House do then adjourn," the whole assemblage rose and covered and the ushers at all doors began repeating, "Strangers, please pass out," and the event was finished.

On Friday, the 20, I went to lunch with Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Lang. Lang, as you know, is tall, slender, thin-haired, gray, with eyes of two sizes and directions, yet handsome, winning, and every inch the scholar, within and without. He had said, "There won't be anybody else but the books," and the only other guest was a young man on the staff of the *St. James Gazette*, Theodore Andrea

Cook, whom I found very pleasant. Lang asked me if I had been much interviewed by the papers, and by and by said he had never been interviewed in his life. I asked how he avoided it so completely, to which he replied, lifting his brows till they wrinkled, looking both ways at once, and faintly smiling as he dropped the ash from his poised cigarette, "O I just tell them to be gone and be——"

It is amusing to see what a blow he can strike with the silken whip of his learned speech. Which reminds me that I have never seen a man have everything he knows so perfectly at his command. I asked where he did the bulk of his work. He said up in Scotland. The trouble with London was the lack of "any place whatever where you can borrow a room full of books at once." Then he adds, in his student's voice, that breaks constantly into falsetto,— "There really isn't any such place in London." Scandalous privation! thinks I.

Altogether the visit was delightful and I parted very much as friend from friend with the one living critic of English of whom I stood in genuine fear.

Yesterday, the 21st, I gave my reading at Doctor Nicoll's beautiful home in Frognaal. It would not be possible to imagine anything more charming in tree-gardening than the view that opens as one steps out of the front door of Bay Tree Lodge. Dr. N. has built a large study and library three stores up, and here, before about a hundred ladies and gentlemen, I read Parson Jones. I was introduced by Sir Walter Besant and the vote of thanks was offered by Percy William Bunting, Editor of the *Contemporary Review*. Beatrice Harraden was there, looking like some unhuman creature from some dark planet, or as if she were of a burrowing race and had just come to the surface of the ground (the first time in a week or so) for a little herbage.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In an earlier part of the diary, he writes: "I met Beatrice Harraden—had been wondering for an hour who that frail, olive-skinned, thought-devoured little woman was. She has an attractive, genuine manner. I am to meet her again."



Today—all the forenoon—it rained. This afternoon the sun is out, a rare sight. They say this is not a normal London May, but a very dark, damp, dismal one. It's good enough for me! The groves, gardens, and parks are unspeakably beautiful. The horse-chestnuts, white and pink, are in full bloom and in great numbers; the hawthorns, or as they say here, the May-trees, white and pink, are covered with bloom that would be solid color but for the fretting of their delicate pale-green leaves; the laburnum hangs heavy with its yellow clusters of flowers, a mass of blossoms only faintly reticulated with its tender green stems and foliage.

Wednesday, June 1, '98.—On Thursday lunched with the Barries and then was off to Sir George Lewis's for my third reading. The company was one of the most brilliant I ever stood before. Lord Somebody was there, I forget the name, and Sir This and Sir That, and Ladies So and So and So and So, and Brandon Thomas, author of "Charlie's Aunt," and in a front seat our American Ambassador.<sup>1</sup> And Lady Lewis said that the wonder of wonders was that Sir George himself had come from his exacting work, a thing that had happened only two or three times in all her knowledge. Hawkins<sup>2</sup> was there. And Sir Henry Irving was in the chair. He spoke with his words written, in his hand, but ever so gracefully; and afterward, when we were alone, I asked him for the MS. and he not only gave it, but voluntarily wrote on it, "To G. W. C. with love and esteem of Henry Irving."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>John Hay.

<sup>2</sup>Anthony Hope Hawkins.

<sup>3</sup>Sir Henry Irving's MS. was as follows: "It is a very great pleasure to me to be present at the reading of some of his own work by my friend Mr. G. W. Cable. What that work is we all know. It is beloved on two continents. Wherever indeed the English language is spoken the charm which Mr. Cable has thrown over the life of the Louisiana Creole is known. He has with a poetic eye seen the beauty of the inner life of these fascinating people & of the time which was essentially their own—and he has handed down for the pleasure &

I read from "Grande Pointe." He sat just at my left hand, and sometimes as I thought what I was doing—reading in the capital of the world before its lords and ladies and authors and critics and the greatest theatrical manager and English-speaking actor living, I wondered why the floor didn't open up under my feet.



I must pause here to say that I am writing this in Rudyard Kipling's study at Rottingdean and that the above outline is he silhouetted against a bay-window at my right while I front the small fire of sea-coals in the grate. He is busy, I suppose, but all I hear is his pipe.

Kipling is a glad, ardent, overflowing spirit, telling his likes and dislikes without pause, and taking a personal interest every moment in every part of the world—India, America, Africa, Ireland, the Continent, the Philippines.

The only guest in the house besides me is Ambrose

utility of future generations certain delightful types which he has made instinct with life. Madame Delphine will never, can never die & the picturesque environment in which all the characters which he has wrought, have lived & had their being will continue to be always a grace & a delight.

"We are pleased & happy to see him amongst us—to give him a right hearty welcome & to show him how we appreciate the added charm of hearing him tell with the light of his own personality the stories that we already love."

[Signed] Henry Irving.

26 May, 1898.

Poynter, son of the great painter Poynter, the President of the Royal Academy. Kipling, Poynter (a man somewhere in the early thirties or late twenties) and I went out upon the seashore for a walk over the downs. No trees, only billows of vast green hills, the home of shepherds and their sheep. From the top of a chalk cliff I looked down upon the wrinkled sea and across to the horizon under which lay France. It stirred me deeply to come down upon the shingly beach and lay my hand upon that perpendicular pale face that England forever turns toward that ceaselessly troubled and troublesome Continent.

Monday, June 6, '98.—On Thursday, June 2, Barrie and I went to tea to Henry James's rooms in De Vere Gardens. James was attractive beyond all expectations and beyond all account I had ever had of him. I am glad Barrie likes him so thoroughly. One thing happened which made me gasp for the desolation of the Downs, wherein I might run and whoop my laughter—for I dared not even smile at it where I was: We were talking of the underground railway system of London, which James said he liked, when Harlan [another guest] was so unlucky as to speak of our host's "passion" for the "Underground." James winced as if a whip had been cracked at him and in his worst stammer mildly repudiated the word. It was too howling funny to see his polite distress at the idea of his having a passion for anything under the heavens or elsewhere. His manner of speech is very amusing and strongly indicative of the studious finish of his writing. He will say, "Hm-m—I walked-eh-I walked to the—hm-m—the-eh—hm-m-m—the—what shall I say?—the corner! and took a—hm-m—a—I suppose I may call it—hm-m—a hansom cab!" But all the time the man impresses you as bringing honor to the name of gentleman; a clean, true man who always feels more than he says.

In the evening Mr. and Mrs. Barrie and I went to dinner to Mrs. Halsey. After dinner I had the one delightful

pleasure and honor of conversing with Mrs. Humphrey Ward. You know her portraits; she is like them, gentle, large, dignified, human, ripe-minded, simple, catholic. This is only a first impression, for I could not talk with her long, not meeting till after dinner. Besides, she had never met Barrie—did not know he was in the room; so I went and got him, and left them together. It is just such self-denials as this that are undermining my health.

June 14, '98.—On Wednesday, the 8, I went to Edinburgh. Was met at the Edinburgh [station] by young James Simpson, son of Prof. Simpson, and with him drove to the home in Queen street, the famous 52 Queen St., where Sir William Simpson, the great medical discoverer, first revealed the priceless value of chloroform. The next day my reading was in the same room where he and his two assistants, Duncan and Keith, were put under the table by their first experimentary inhalations of it. The present Professor Simpson is his nephew, himself one of the most noted physicians in Great Britain.

The first evening James and I went to dine with Mr. & Mrs. David Douglas, my old friend, until now never seen, the Scottish publisher of *Old Creole Days*, *Carancro*, *Grande Pointe* and *Madame Delphine* and Dr. Sevier.

Mrs. Simpson had first planned a dinner for me, but changed it to a trip into the Highlands. So on Friday, the 10, James and I took a trip through Glasgow, and at Balloch embarked in a little steamer on Loch Lomond.

We sailed about two-thirds the length of the loch, passing mighty Ben Lomond and other heights only less famous and classic and at — took stage for—I don't like to tell you; it is too nice! We took stage, front seat, beside the driver, behind five big horses, for—promise me you won't scream—for Loch Katrine! I can't recount my sensations; it is a delight which taxes one's thinking powers to define correctly, to see great beauty mated to classic fame, and see and hear it fulfil the inspired pages of

poetry, history and romance. The charm grew as we neared the western end; on the left,—

. . . “through middle air,  
Ben An heaved high his forehead bare.”

I quote from memory, with no certainty of correctness; on the right towered Ben Venue at whose foot the poet's eye rested with awe upon the huge broken masses—

. . . “together hurled,  
The fragments of an earlier world.”

O sister Mary, do you not remember how our little mother, she of the invincible will, the inextinguishable joy, still young and romantic as she was genuine and practical, gathered her children around her in the evenings, I being then Dorothea's present age,<sup>1</sup> and read to us—

“The stag at eve had drunk his fill  
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill”?

Think what her delight would have been if she could have known that even but one of those youngsters at her knee was going one day to “push the light shallop from the shore” and row himself to Ellen's Isle. Yes, I did it, the day after this trip by steamer. And I roamed those Trossachs where Snowdoun's knight lost the stag and where—

. . . “touched with pity and remorse,  
He sorrowed o'er the expiring horse.”

James Simpson was with me, a gentle, noble, youthful, scholarly, and widely travelled companion and fellow-writer. Also we walked together round Loch Achray, first under that steep side of Ben Venue where Fitz-James thought the game must stand at bay, which, instead,

“In the deep Trossachs' wildest nook  
Its solitary refuge took”—;

<sup>1</sup>Dorothea, his youngest daughter, was then nine years old.

and then across the "brig" where a little earlier his last companions failed him; for you remember—

"And when the Brig of Turk was won  
The headmost horseman rode alone."

June 18, Sat'y.—I pass unrecounted the details of our<sup>1</sup> journey up to Bonar Bridge and Skibo,<sup>2</sup> or rather to Inverness, where we stopped over night. Leaving Aberdeen on Thursday at 10:35 we reached Bonar Bridge about one and found Mr. Carnegie's coach waiting for us. Piling our bags into it, we climbed to the top, beside the driver, and drove for Skibo Castle, 10 miles away. The way was over a road perfect enough to be worthy of a public park; smooth, hard, broad, and shaded with trees the whole way. It is the public road and goes on indefinitely around the island. It was very pleasant to see the flag floating over the castle showing the union-jack on one side and the stars and stripes on the other, a happy conceit invented by Mr. Carnegie, I understand. So here we are.

The castle is beautifully situated. Far eastward the land runs out into tide-flats beyond which shine the blue waters of Dornoch Firth, beyond which again higher lands, very green, divide it from, and hide from us, the Firth of Cromarty. Southwestward is a mountain skyline and westward and northward the more than 20,000 acres of Skibo Castle run away in woods and pastures and great billows of moor whose lochs are full of trout that, through Mr. Carnegie, pay almost constant toll to the tables of the castle; run on and on for miles, until finally bounded in those directions by the estate of the Duke of Sutherland. By the by, let me say while I think of it that Holly and Warren had both better get liveries for the drivers they send to Tarryawhile, for I really don't think I can stand

<sup>1</sup>James Y. Simpson had been included in the invitation to Skibo.

<sup>2</sup>The Scottish home of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Carnegie.

being driven in the future by un-uniformed men—it's been so long since I've had to put up with such disreputable nonsense. However, we can discuss that on my return. I shall probably require also that Lottie be dressed in male attire, blue, buff and brass, with knee-breeches and pigeon-tails and that she lay out my clothes twice a day and take them away to brush them every time I take them off. I must also have a bell to my study—same as I have here, it's quite good enough—and another to my bedroom. Certain other things here I count almost as luxuries. For instance, I must go in a few minutes to dress for dinner; that's a necessity; but then at the sound of the sackbut—no, no! the bagpipes!—I must go downstairs into the great hall (windows above windows and the ceiling 20 feet away) and from every direction the household and guests will come pouring in as I do—I shall pour, you understand,—and Mr. Carnegie will give his arm to Mrs. Rintoul, and there will be couples & couples and Mrs. C. and I will bring up the rear, and we'll all be hungry as bears and merry as larks, and the piper, all tartan and windbag and pipes and silver clasps and buckles and streamers, will meantime be strutting round and round the long board in the dining-room, and as he comes by the door Mr. Carnegie (who always wants to dance) will catch on behind and away we'll go after the piper, each couple dropping out at their seats and the piper vanishing in the hall, but keeping up the tune. Yesterday the tune was "All the blue bonnets over the border"—*imagine it!* But oh! if you could see the strut of his naked knees, and the twitch of his hips and the swish of his kilt to right and left behind him and the ribbons streaming from his bonnet and pipes, and his chin in the air, and the air about him all turned into one solid buzz! Every morning he struts up and down in front of the castle in this fashion, waking us with a bunch of tunes, the first of which is always "The Piper o' Dundee," because the piper of Dundee was a Carnegie, who under a piper's disguise entered the camp of the

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enemy and brought away information that resulted in victory the next day.

“Wasn't he a roguie, a roguie, a roguie,  
And wasn't he a roguie, the piper o' Dundee!”

It is eleven p. m. and would be getting dark if it were going to get dark at all in this land where the June sun rises yesterday and doesn't set till tomorrow. I am in my study and the fire talks softly to my right ear, and somebody overhead walks a few steps now and then. So I'll put out the lamp and walk along a corridor full of horned heads, and so into the central hall, up a great stair, into a door in the wall and up a tower stair, round & round & round, lighted by the candle in my hand and seeing the poetical light of the persistent day through the slits in the tower wall making the landscape strangely beautiful; and so, good night.

This morning Simpson, Beattie & I walked four miles, to Dornoch, to see a service of worship in Gaelic and in the open air—a yearly event. The sermon was interminable, unintelligible to us, of course, and fiercely vehement. The preacher preached from a small hooded pulpit-box open only in front. The people sat, mostly, on benches and chairs on a golf-links with the distant sea on one side gleaming over the low swells of green turf gold-dusted with buttercups, and on the other side the near hills yellow-splashed with blossoming broom beyond which, far away, the blue-brown mountain-tops showed streaks of snow. After the sermon we heard the precentor and the people sing a wild Gaelic minor hymn. It was very strange, but not so fine as our piper, the trim young dandy figure of Angus McPherson tripping martially back & forth on the lawn under the castle windows with his—





On our way home we saw a lovely sight. A shepherd's boy and his dog moving a flock of sheep, 60 or 70, from one meadow to another. After they had been driving them for some distance, and for several minutes, the boy ran ahead a long way and opened two gates and that precious dog drove all those sheep gently through those open gates. One attempted to bolt, but the dog was in his way like a baseball short-stop. Even Simpson exclaimed with admiration and delight.

Friday, June 24, '98.—I have just left Skibo Castle and its merry crew and am on the way back to Edinburgh. My first turn homeward!

Tuesday evening I sang for the circle in the drawing-room, and gave such unmistakable pleasure that I ventured next day to offer Mrs. C. a reading. She asked if she might invite the servants of the castle; there are 16 house-servants alone. So last night we had a great time. I had shown such delight in the piper that I was promised he should dance for me. His breast is covered with prize medals taken mainly for dancing. There is a huge unfurnished room in the midst of the castle, where travelling-boxes stand round the walls—the play-room, so-called. Here the host, hostess and guests assembled after dinner yesterday, Sir Rennie Watson & his lady now being of our number, and with another servant of the place for piper in comes Angus McPherson in all that plaid and silver can do for man and danced the Highland Fling for a starter and then the Sword Dance! It was great. An Irish jig to end with was a mere *lagnappe*.<sup>1</sup> Then we went to the hall where a platform had been made for me and after the company were seated the servants filed in and filled the rear chairs and I read them Parson Jones. At the close I told them that I should have to ask for an encore as I had

<sup>1</sup>The pleasant institution of *napa*—the petty gratuity added by the retailer to anything bought—grew the pleasanter, drawn out into Gallicized *lagnappe*.—"Creoles of Louisiana."

produced a response for the occasion. Then, after due expressions of surprise at being encored and due protestations of unpreparedness, I read them this:—

The great man is rewarded  
By being great. He loses  
The lesser joys regarded  
By lesser minds. There's Moses :

Great Moses viewed from Nebo  
The Promised Land afar ;  
But when *we* get to *Skibo*  
We're in it ! There we are !

Well, at last came the day for leaving. And out comes for the first time this season the coach and four, and the whole company mounted to the top and went careering and galloping, whip-cracking and horn-blowing, in to Bonar Bridge (9 miles) to send me off with all the flourish possible. I certainly never saw a household so intemperately glad to get rid of anybody in all my days. Mrs. Carnegie and I were on the front seat, then came Sir Rennie & Lady Watson, and then Mr. Carnegie and the four Lauders.<sup>1</sup>

“Good-bye,” said old Mr. Lauder, as I finally got down from the coach and reached up and grasped hands with him, “I feel juist as though I were bidding guid-bye to my sweethear-r-t !”

It was a beautiful sight to see the beautiful equipage & its gay company as it came into sight after awhile crossing the long stone bridge over the Firth of Cromarty and pricking up a hill on the far side, the four horses at a gallop, Douglas & Marmion next the wheels and Ivanhoe and Prince Charlie in the lead, huge, but quick, clean-footed fellows, flashing at last among the thickening trees and disappearing on the way back to the castle.

Edinburgh, June 28, '98; Tuesday.—I am today, and was yesterday, the guest of Mr. David Douglas, who ten

<sup>1</sup>Cousins of Mr. Carnegie, living on a neighboring estate.

or twelve years ago began to publish my books in Britain. On Saturday James Simpson and I went across the (?) Bridge into the old Edinburgh. I have not stopped to say how imposingly picturesque the old town is, looking across from Prince's street, across the deep valley where the rail-ways lie—and public gardens—and seeing the lofty gray houses rising in the upper sky and the castle on its vast, precipitous rock, and the Salisbury Crags and Arthur's Seat; for what is the use unless you have seen them yourself, and if you've seen them yourself, what's the use?

On Monday, June 27, Mr. Douglas and I went together to Abbotsford. What a day that was in this small boy's existence! We took a one-horse public carriage driven by a small boy wearing very large stag's-head brass buttons, a weary cylinder hat, and an ascetic countenance. His tongue rolled and rumbled with the Scotch brogue. Driving to a point on the highroad which my conductor, Mr. Douglas, had told him to stop at we alighted, bade him meet us at another point, crossed by stiles and a footpath down to the river's edge and I found myself walking along the banks of the Tweed. The scene was very lovely. On our left the meadows & grain fields rose gently in varying tints spattered with bright wildflowers. On our right the groves of an extensive private park rose up the abrupt steeps that bounded the river in closely, and between, at our feet, the broad clear waters of the Tweed rippled in long, sparkling shoals over their beds of polished gravel. By and by we found our own banks steep and difficult and, turning into a field path, regained the road and our carriage.

When we alighted a second time it was at the gate of Abbotsford. So had Washington Irving once alighted and Scott and his favorite Scottish hound come hurrying forward to meet him, hailing and greeting him loudly (on the master's part) as they came. But then the home was an author's pretty cottage and the building was only begun of the castle and grounds that were to cost so much trouble

and distress. Beyond the porter's lodge the gravelled path lay between high gray walls and after a few yards bends aside.

In the small waiting-room where the tour of the house begins there was a general pause (the company of visitors numbering about ten) for the guide, an attractive young girl. We lingered behind the group and Mr. Douglas became my guide, one immeasurably superior to the girl, his statements, comments and illustrations being drawn from the treasuries of a scholar and of one of the foremost living students of Scott's life & writings; and not only so, but adapted to my tastes and point of view. The contrast was so great that I felt a certain shame at being so favored.

The round of the rooms completed, Mr. Douglas asked the young girl guide to call her father—who she said was guiding another company just ahead of hers. So she did and he came. Mr. Douglas knew him and asked to be allowed to take me down into the castle garden and along the river border where the garden lies along its edge. This we were allowed, taking pains first to let the group of tourists get beyond sight. So we walked by the lovely bank of the stream. At one place on the lowest of three exquisite green & flowery terraces, on a bit of stone masonry wall of rich subdued yellow, if I remember correctly, just beside a broad stone urn that surmounted its outer right-angle, a peacock had perched with his back to us, his tail hanging down the stone wall. Beyond him the background was a meadow and the Tweed. Such a picture of fortune's own making one cannot hope to see many times in one life. On the far side of the river a boy, under the wooded cliffs, was casting his fly for trout, and overhead the gray and silver clouds were feathery and flossy on a sky of summer blue.

We passed beyond the garden, and under trees of the great author's own planting passed into the denser part of the park and up a hill by the bowery path he made to a

lofty point and outlook which he named Turnagain. Here we threw ourselves on the grass. Far below us men and women were working in a planted field; elsewhere at right, at left and beyond, different crops made different greens and billowed softly under their ribs of stone wall, and well away in the middle of the valley sparkled the broad shoal gravelly river; for this was the vale of the Tweed, and the spot where we lay nibbling the sandwiches my canny Scotch companion drew from the pocket of his mackintosh, and sipping Burgundy from one little glass between us turn & turn about, this spot was where the great master of Abbotsford had sat many and many a time and fed upon beauty and drank the warm delight of this same sky. In his day one could see Melrose Abbey from here, Mr. Douglas thinks; but now something has grown up, or been built up, that shuts out the view of it.

Monday, July 11, '98.—Off the Needles, Isle of Wight. On the way home! Beautiful England is fading, fading. Shall I ever see it again?

[On Monday, the fourth] I took train for Glasgow, where I found Craibe Angus and Neil Munro waiting for me, to go with me to Ayr and the haunts of Burns. We went. I was glad to see my big blustering Angus<sup>1</sup> again and also to meet the new novelist. Munro is a young good-looking man with a very large head; a head difficult to live up to. On the way I recalled the fact that Angus had written me that I should be asked to write in the visitor's book at the Burns birthplace cottage. I hadn't given the matter a thought, so I said, "You two, now, go on with the talk & I'll sit here in this corner of the railway carriage & see if I can first get the right thought & then put it into a quatrain. This I did and when we presently alighted at Ayr I had my quatrain. In the town we took a carriage and went first to see the Burns statue. Thence we went to

<sup>1</sup>Craibe Angus, a Scottish lawyer, had been a fellow-guest at Skibo.

a house and into an upper room which was once one of Burns's "howfs." Here we sat down at the table and drank a favorite Scotch temperance drink—lime-juice & potash, or "pote-ash" as they say. Then we crossed the new Brig of Ayr, the successor of that new one which the Auld Brig in Burns's poem prophesied would fall while itself should yet be standing. So it did, and the Auld Brig is a fine old monument to Burns's genius, for the authorities were going to destroy it, but the people begged for it in both prose and verse and it is spared. We had a fine view of it from the new Brig and then went and crossed it on foot and went into another of Burns's "howfs." Here I took another of my abstemious friends' "pote-ashes" and promised myself not to touch another that day.

Then we drove to Burns's cottage and I stood silent with reverence & deeply touched before the humble, *most* humble little bed in the wall, wherein Robert Burns was born.

This is what I wrote in the book :

Of heavenly stature, but most human smile,  
Gyved with our faults, he stands,  
Truth's white and Love's red roses offering us,  
Whose thorns are in his hands.

The day was far gone, but one great joy remained, and this was found when at the refreshment house where we stopped for some crackers and cheese I read the happy news of the great naval victory at Santiago de Cuba.

Next morning I bade farewell to London. The day before I had written in a copy of *The Grandissimes*, sent to Henry Norman, of the *Chronicle*,—

I hear Queen London's Sabbath bells  
Chime, "Get ye gone, gay rover";  
And in my heart the echo swells—  
"At least, I was your lover."

Yes, it was a sweet and most innocent flirtation I had, in my small way, with the biggest city in the world. The joy of it ought to last me all my life.

We are having—this being, now, the third day out, a delightful voyage. I sit with my pencil poised. Have I really finished? I believe I have. How can I hope for heaven when I feel that this world, just as it is, is far too good for me? I never have lived up to it, I don't see that I ever shall. Still, I'm willing to try.

## CHAPTER XIV

### "THE CAVALIER," NOVEL AND PLAY: SECOND VISIT TO ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND (1899-1905)

*"His head,  
Not yet by time completely silvered o'er,  
Bespoke him past the bounds of freakish youth,  
But strong for service still, and unimpaired."*

COWPER.

Several months previous to the visit to England and Scotland, my father had made a hurried journey to New Orleans. This was his first sight of his native city since he had left it, thirteen years before, to make his home in New England. And on his return to Northampton he remarked, "What charmed me most was the reception met among my old friends and associates. They had taken offense long ago at my political attitude and at the pictures I had drawn in my stories, of Creole society, and I had no right to expect the gloriously warm and gracious reception I received." He had gone thither, he said, "to collect material for two new stories, one of which I have only projected. Both of them are war stories, one based on the Federal occupation of the city and the other on the cavalry movements at the same time in Louisiana and Mississippi. There is nothing published in that line yet, and I was an eye-witness to both events, being part of the time in the city under the Butler and Banks administration, and part of the time in the Mississippi Cavalry."

Of the two stories mentioned, only one ever was brought to completion,—“one whose scenes are laid in the country between [New Orleans] and Holly Springs, Miss.—the



section which was occupied by a division of Mississippi cavalry after the fall of Vicksburg in order to retain it as a source of supplies to the Confederates, and in order to protect the railroads of the section—the Mississippi Central, the old Jackson Railroad and the Mobile & Ohio; a story of that region of the war, of the brave cavalymen and their sweethearts.”

In the early months of 1900 he wrote, “‘The Cavalier’ is in its last pages; but O what toil to make them good! The *Encyclopædia Britannica* (*London Times*) wants me to write a supplementary article on New Orleans, covering the last twenty years of its history.<sup>1</sup> Maybe I will and maybe I won’t. *The Youth’s Companion* wants 2500 words of personal reminiscences. I shall do it as soon as Ned Ferry and Charlotte Oliver make up their minds whether to marry or not. How I yearn to reach that finish where I can hold the work off at arm’s length and see how I have succeeded. I think I have done a beautiful thing. Certainly it is far better than John March.”

It was a full year later, however, before the manuscript was actually ready for the printer. Then it was published directly in book form, the first one of my father’s stories that did not make its preliminary appearance in a magazine.

In the meantime he had been at work on several short stories,—“Gregory’s Island,”<sup>2</sup> “The Taxidermist” and “The Entomologist.” As a matter of fact, “The Cavalier” had been in the making for a number of years before it was finished. It was really the last in a series of four stories, all supposed to be told by Richard Thorndyke Smith, and all drawn from a general plot which had been perfected before the days of the Chicago Exposition. The original story “threatened to be long” without containing

<sup>1</sup>He had already published, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, one article on New Orleans, bringing its history up to about the year 1880.

<sup>2</sup>This story was called “The Solitary,” when later republished in “Strong Hearts.”

enough strong character delineation; hence it was laid aside and the shorter tales were written. The full draft of "The Cavalier" was finished in 1899 and a revision of it was almost immediately made. This was completed in the spring of 1901.

"If I had published 'The Grandissimes' last October," said my father in reply to some printed comments<sup>1</sup> of reviewers which suggested a deliberate change of style in the interest of popularity, "instead of twenty-five years ago, it would have seemed as if I certainly had written it to 'catch the market.' Oh, no, I am too slow a story-teller to do that sort of thing successfully, or even to try it. From first to last 'The Cavalier' was in the egg about nine years before I succeeded in hatching it, and I sitting on it (rather painfully) all the time."

*To L. S. C.*

Hazlehurst, Miss., May 28, '99.

I have been here just twenty-four hours, it being Sunday, 4:15 p.m. I went yesterday afternoon to the old campground where I first joined my command. Tomorrow, very early, I set out across country westward toward old Franklin and Fayette and shall be two days, or possibly three, in the saddle during the cooler hours of morning & afternoon. It is very restful to spend the Sabbath with my old comrade.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>These comments may have been prompted by the reports of the sales of "The Cavalier," which were far in advance of any of his earlier books.

<sup>2</sup>Mr. J. A. Covington, of Hazlehurst, an old soldier friend, who had written, on hearing of the projected story, "At old Gallatin a few miles from where I now sit, you came to us, and we were thrown together—in fact shared the same blanket. I recollect asking you one evening when we were about to retire, how it was you could get down on your knees in prayer when there was so much revelry going on around you. Your reply was, 'I promised Mother to pray for her every day.'"

I have been thinking of you a great deal lately  
 and wondering how you are getting on  
 I hope you are well and happy  
 I have been very busy lately  
 but I have not forgotten you  
 I have been thinking of you a great deal lately  
 and wondering how you are getting on  
 I hope you are well and happy  
 I have been very busy lately  
 but I have not forgotten you  
 I have been thinking of you a great deal lately  
 and wondering how you are getting on  
 I hope you are well and happy  
 I have been very busy lately  
 but I have not forgotten you

FROM "THE CAVALIER"—FIRST DRAFT.  
 Written with the left hand.

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*To Charles Scribner*

Dryads' Green,  
Northampton, Mass.,  
June 8, '99.

DEAR MR. SCRIBNER:

Thank you for arranging contract for "Strong Hearts" with H. & S. (London).<sup>1</sup> I shall be glad to receive the document when it comes.

I have just come home from a trip in the South. I went to the scenes of "The Cavalier" in the week in which nearly the whole movement of the story lies. The experience was invaluable although my hardships were extraordinary. I can claim to have had a little Santiago campaign of my own. Now I resume work on the story, with nothing to do but push it to a finish.

To speak one last word of "The Cavalier," I am determined to give you, in it, as fine a piece of work as my pen shall have ever put out. So there!

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

The following letter may seem a step aside from the direct path of this chapter, but it was written shortly after the completion of "The Cavalier," and its interest lies partly in that fact, but also in the fact that it gives my father's estimate of his own work at this time.

*To Waitman Barbe*

PROF. WAITMAN BARBE,

New York, April 7, 1900.

DEAR SIR:

At last I am free from the work that has so long taxed me for my entire time, and am—as to time—able to answer your letter of 21st Feb.

You ask what I consider my best book or best two

<sup>1</sup>The English publishing firm of Hodder & Stoughton.

books. I wish I knew. I rather incline to believe that my *Old Creole Days* is approved above its comparative merits because it is my first work, the book by which I became known. I should never choose it before *The Grandissimes* or *Dr. Sevier*. I don't think it is as well written as *Bona-venture* or shows the constructive power of that book. It has many faults that disappear in *Strong Hearts*. I think the question of highest merit should lie between *Dr. Sevier* and *The Grandissimes*. Of the long novel I have just completed I need not speak, as it will not appear, at the nearest, for nearly a year. My hopes of it are great.

What ought to be the purpose of a novel? A novel's most obvious aim—the aim which should never for a moment be evidently directed by any other purpose—should be to entertain, not to inform. It may have whatever other purpose it chooses, or it may have no other, but its *perpetually manifest* purpose should be to amuse. The more nobly it amuses, or rather the more nobly amusing it is, the higher does it rise in greatness and in profitableness. If it is a book whose informational value exceeds its value for entertainment it is a book out of its proper form and should never have been a novel. It may effect the purpose of its writer, but it is not good art, and effects its purpose only through the accommodation of bad habits of reading to it and of it to bad habits of reading. As a measure of utility it may therefore deserve high praise and warm congratulation; but it has not helped the world on to better order in art and must bear the blame of that, whatever good it may, nevertheless, have accomplished.

Here I touch all I feel like saying in reply to your question how I interpret the spirit and tendency of the American literature of today. It has the huge faults and the great virtues of Democracy. The vast part of it is not, in the sense of an art purpose, literature at all. The debauching of a language is no small crime. Its penalties are remote, but they are probable, if not certain. I must not try to follow this thought out, but I wish it might be recognized

that to vulgarize language is to vulgarize thought, and that to make reading a less exalted delight than it has been is to flat the key of civilization.

Yours truly,

Geo. W. Cable

Immediately upon getting "The Cavalier" off his hands, my father began a piece of work which was to develop into something more than a short story, yet less than a novel. This was the result of a dinner-table conversation, during a visit of Dr. S. Weir Mitchell at "Tarryawhile," several years before.

Dr. Mitchell had related an experience of his own medical practice, showing the tragic effect of uncontrolled jealousy, and my father, struck with its potential value to a story-teller, said to his guest: "Why don't you write that up?—make a story of it? It's powerful." "No," replied Dr. Mitchell; "I couldn't. It would not be proper for me to make use of it. But I'll give it to you. *You* can do with it as you please." So, on his return to his home in Philadelphia, Dr. Mitchell sent the following letter, together with a typewritten copy of the incident as he had told it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Mitchell's typewritten copy was this:—

A young New England clergyman of the Episcopal Church, of rather high-church tendencies and of the highest education and accomplishments, and of good ancestry, met a typical Southern woman at a summer watering-place and fell desperately in love with her. She was tender, gentle, self-indulgent, pretty and longed for sympathy.

They were married, and he went to his first parish in a New England village. The house was situated in a well-kept garden running down to an old mill-dam, which had long since ceased to be useful. The clergyman was liked in the neighborhood, and particularly was he thought well of by one of his churchwardens, a handsome young man, a lawyer, and belonging to well-known people in the village.

The lawyer became intimate with the clergyman and his wife, and grew attached to them. A child was born about a year after the marriage.

One day, after about three years' acquaintance, the clergyman became possessed with the idea that too close an intimacy existed between the lawyer and his wife. There was no foundation of truth in this. But coming from a neurotic family his tendency to morbidness

*From S. Weir Mitchell to G. W. C.*

Philadelphia, Nov. 18, '96.

MY DEAR MR. CABLE:

It gives me great pleasure to fulfil my post-prandial promise, and in a way that such promises are not usually honored. The story is a simple one, and the person who

became more and more apparent and he watched closely to acquire some distinct cause for his suspicions. Finally he told the warden friend that he must no longer visit his wife and became more and more suspicious until he developed an insanity with fixed delusions on the subject, and exhibited all the cunning and care to conceal his feelings which are exercised by this class of people. Accidentally he saw his wife and the lawyer in conversation (they having met by pure chance) and he was filled with rage.

At this time he dreamed often of his suspicions, dreamed of murder, and his wife became frightened at his unusual actions. At last under the effects of a dream he seized his wife by the throat. Then he awakened. In awful alarm she got under the bed and he was left under the dreamed impression that he had killed her. Much excited, he went from room [to room] in search of her, the wife meanwhile having fled for security to another part of the house. He was more and more filled with the idea that he had killed her and had carried the body down to the old mill-pond and there weighted it with stone, etc.

Meanwhile the wife had fled from the house in her thin night-clothes, seeking shelter in her mother's house, which adjoined her own. Her mother sheltered her and listened to the terrible story which she told of suspicion, fear and of having been choked.

The next morning the husband called to state that his wife had disappeared, and the mother claimed to know nothing of her whereabouts. The mother wished to look after the child, but the clergyman refused to give it up. Wife in terror left the town unseen and went to the South until maternal instinct overcame fear. Excuses for absence easy on part of husband and mother.

Meanwhile he became sadder and sadder, and one evening on returning to his home he found his wife standing by the side of the child's cradle. Being convinced that she was dead, he thought what he saw her ghost, and went so violently insane that he was obliged to be restrained in an asylum, where he remained for two years. During this time his wife, her child and her mother were killed in a railroad accident, and when he was discharged from the asylum as cured he was alone in the world.

Ten or fifteen years after this he consulted me as to whether I thought it right for him to marry again. After his recovery he was told the truth of the matter.

related it to me was exceedingly desirous that it should be put in print. All the parties concerned are long since dead, and I feel no hesitation in putting the material in your hands for use. It is not a subject much to my taste; perhaps because I see too much of the morbid side of life.

Very sincerely yours,

WEIR MITCHELL

At the end of the typewritten letter he added, in his own handwriting, "My dear Fictioner, you will need some coaching on insanity & if in any way I can help you I am at your disposal. I presumed the tale would scare the bold-est novelist."

Thus was "Bylow Hill" conceived and written and, after serial publication in *The Atlantic Monthly*, brought out in book form by the Scribners in 1902. In the meantime, in August, 1901, there appeared in the *Century Magazine*, "the other side of an old story"—"Père Raphaël." This was in the nature of a sequel to "Posson Jone'," published many years before, and the two were later published, in 1909, as one book,—"Posson Jone' and Père Raphaël."

But far more eventful than these publications was, to my father's mind, the dramatization of his latest novel, "The Cavalier." Ever since the writing of "Bonaventure," when he himself had tried unsuccessfully to make a play out of his Acadian stories, he had longed to see some work of his made possible for the stage. Others, more or less skilled as playwrights, at various times had essayed the task, but somehow the stories that were so full of dramatic incident as stories, did not seem to be the stuff that good plays are made on. They lost much, also, of their own peculiar quality when transferred to another medium. And one after another they had perforce been given up. Now, however, there seemed to be more reason to hope for final success. Julia Marlowe had interested herself in



the stage possibilities of "The Cavalier" and Paul Kester had begun the work of dramatizing it for her. My father became engrossed in the procedure. "Miss Marlowe," he wrote, after talking with her, "says she thinks Charlotte Oliver will be finer than Barbara Frietchie."

To L. S. C.

New York, Jan'y 18, 1902.

Went over to Brooklyn and to the navy-yard to lunch with Admiral and Mrs. Barker. Louise came too. After lunch Capt. West took Louise and me to see the great dry-docks, marvelous affairs, and the cruiser *Cincinnati*. Here we saw those amazing rapid-fire guns of which we read in the Spanish war. Ask Willie to fancy a gun as long as our parlor, sending forth shells as long as one's arm and thick as one's head (and one's head, you know, may be very thick at times) and sending them four miles and in such rapid succession that the tenth shell has started before the first has reached its goal. Is it not prodigious?

Commander McLean showed us through the beautiful terror, and with him, and us, was the famous Lieutenant Gilmore who was so long a captive among the Filipinos.

Also I had the pleasure of seeing once more the *Hartford*, now a school-ship; the last time I saw her [she was] the flag-ship of the conquering fleet that sailed up and cast anchor opposite New Orleans. I looked long and sentimentally at that old poop-deck where I had once seen Farragut standing in the midst of his staff!

Returning to the house we took seats with Admiral Barker and Mrs. Barker in their carriage and drove over to the city. They let me down at 301 Lexington. Here I found Mr. Kester awaiting me, a young man of, say, twenty-eight or thirty. We talked from three-fifteen till five-forty-five and he comes Monday to begin work with pen and paper. So you may know I am happy—the dramatization of "The Cavalier" being actually begun.

*To the same .*

Northampton, Mass., April 3, 1902.

Margaret and I went last night to hear John Drew in "The Second in Command," and enjoyed him thoroughly—the play not quite so well. We went behind the stage after the play and saw him and his daughter, an attractive girl of eighteen who plays with him. He said, "This is the first time I've had a chance to tell you how I cried over 'The Cavalier'—over the Captain's death." I said, "You make me proud! Did you cry?" He said, "Cry? I bawled!"

*To the same*

New York, Jan'y 8, 1903.

On Monday evening I took Louise and Lucy to see the glorious Julia, alias Charlotte.<sup>1</sup> The play is ever so much better than it was, and, oddly enough, one of the most conspicuous improvements is the omission of the song, The Star-spangled Banner, by the prisoners and by Charlotte. Anyone who had proposed to dramatize the book leaving out that song would have been thought foolish enough. But the very availability of it for stage-purposes became a snare and Kester wrote straight up to it and stepped aboard of it as if he had come to a ferry. With what result? That the play went no longer on its own wings or feet, but rode astride of a song and scene which had not been made a vital part of the action. It is easy enough to see this now, but everybody—every Thomas, Richard and Henry of us, including Charles Frohman himself—totally failed to see this until it began to fail of proper effect upon audiences. You may remember, however, that Dillingham sent for me one day in the time of the rehearsals and asked me for an exit line for Miss Mar-  
<sup>1</sup>"The Cavalier" had then been running for about one month.

lowe after the singing scene; which I gave, and he was pleased with, but she rejected. I gave another and she rejected that also. All of which means, we now know, that we were feeling the fault we did not quite discover. Interesting, isn't it?

What is even more interesting is that here was a writer who, twenty years before, had wrestled with his sense of right and duty in an attempt to "settle a great moral question"—whether or not the theatre and those connected with it were a moral evil and a menace to society; for such had been the teaching of his youthful days. To be sure, he had settled it then in favor of the theatre, so that he was not now going against any principles or scruples of his own.

After this the play went successfully on through the season in New York, and my father turned back to his literary work and to the beginning of another novel—"Kincaid's Battery"—a story of the artillery arm of the Confederate forces in the Civil War, as the earlier one had been of the cavalry.

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In February of 1904 there came into my father's life the greatest sorrow he had ever known, in the death of my mother. During the early years of their married life, in the enervating climate of New Orleans, her health had been frail. Indeed, the first time my father brought his family to the Northern mountains for the summer, her life had seemed to hang by a slender thread. And although she had gained, after some years of life in New England, a physical vigor that had hardly been dreamed of in her Southern home, this was later maintained only with persistent endeavor.

Despite the bravery of repeated assertions to friends

that this was "but my share of the common lot of humanity"—the fruit of his philosophy or of his religious faith, or of both—he had come in reality face to face with a stern loneliness which it needed all his courage to endure. The one who from his early manhood had been the closest sharer in his struggles and his successes, who had made his home a home for nearly thirty-five years, had now left that home desolate. "The place," he wrote to a friend, in describing the June beauty of his garden, "is not elegant or majestic or vast, but it is home—home yet, although there are thoughts and feelings connected with it now which I cannot write about, and have no right to burden others with. Sunday afternoons used to be—in former summers—so blissful that they scarcely seemed to be of this vexed world."

In September of that year he wrote to his son-in-law, J. Alfred Chard: "Your letter of Aug. 20 was a kind of holiday to me. What a happy feeling it must have given you to be off 'vacationing' with your son! 'Mr Wayfarer, allow me to make you acquainted with my son! He and I'—etc. But oh! *my* son, why didn't you and *your* son come up to Tarryawhile? You would have helped my very soul. August has been a lonesome month in spite of all I could do to fill it with work and play. I tell you so confidentially; I don't tell myself so, because that sort of thing spoils myself."

For more than a year there came no product from his pen. The novel that had been begun almost on the heels of "The Cavalier" was taken up time after time, only to be laid aside, with no real progress made. Then, in April, 1905, came Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Carnegie to "Tarryawhile," to be present at the dedication of the "Carnegie House" of the Home-Culture Clubs, and my father was easily induced to accept their invitation to spend a week at Skibo Castle during the following month. A holiday, perhaps, might help him to recover his working powers. But since in all his life a holiday had been almost an unknown

quantity, this one must be made to connect in some way with his work. He would go to Skibo for the pure pleasure of it; but he would go also to Dunfermline, Mr. Carnegie's birthplace, to study there the flower-gardens of the prize-competition carried on by Mr. and Mrs. Carnegie in that little Scotch town. He had, several years earlier, started a similar movement in Northampton, in conjunction with the Home-Culture Clubs, and although he had modelled it upon the Dunfermline competition, he had never yet seen the gardens there. So he set sail for England, taking with him as his companion, the eldest of his unmarried daughters—myself. This time, as on his previous visit, he kept a journal, which was sent back to the members of his family as a diary letter.

Brown's Hotel, Albemarle street, London  
May 22, 1905.

TO ALL MY DEARS:

Behold us! We got here Saturday evening at 7, persuaded into this quiet, prodigiously decent and rather costly haven by our pleasant steamer acquaintances the Vaughans. It is Derby week, which means a crowded city, and we are "frankly told" that our rooms are engaged by others from to-morrow—oh, you lucky Cables, you'll have a shillun or two left over to tyke 'ome!

We reached L'pool just inside the last hour of nine days from dock to dock. Soon we were through the customs with only one bag open, Lucy having declared with a perfectly innocent face that she had no plug-tobacco, cheroots nor tonics up her sleeve, and were off in a little railway coach with seats for eight but with only ourselves to fill them. Well, you should have seen and heard Lucy as the panorama of the English landscape and the English month of May began to sweep by, with English grass and hillslopes and sunshine and cloud-shadows and English church-towers and spires, and English canals, and every few moments a cricket-field with white-clad cricketers in

the midst and black-and-brown-clad lookers-on in swarms around the edges—it being Saturday afternoon—and little English rivers arched over with lovely little masonry bridges and fringed with tender willows where men and boys stood fishing, and English hedges,—all “’orthorn ’edges,” the courteous and attentive guard told her,—in flower, mind you!—and green slopes splotched with the black-green foliage and orange-colored bloom of the gorse, and Lichfield’s three-spired cathedral seen one ecstatic moment and then shut out again by blossoming trees, and Stafford Castle grayer than Time himself, and English churchyards and farmyards—I tell you you should have seen and heard our gentle, quiet Lucy; she did everything but swear and strike people. There were three and a half hours of it, and in the last third of the time she gave up and shut her eyes and laid her head back on the cushion.

So we came into London.

After dinner we spent the evening with the Vaughans in their large private parlor and felt very much at home. I wrote Barrie a note and got his answer, beginning, “Welcome a thousand times,” and with that for a night-cap went to bed.

Sunday morning found us up at the first streak of half-past ten. Oh, but—after nine nights—to sleep with solid earth under you and the walls standing plumb! We went in for it and took eleven hours at one mouthful. And so we were too lyte for church! We had breakfast instead. After breakfast we went out for a walk up Piccadilly—if it is up—to ’Yde Park Coarners and so into the park and about and across it and back by the farther side where we saw the fashionables by thousands, every man with a thin waist and a thick stick, and every woman with a vast hat and a feather boa. But the joy of [it to] us was the gardening! I took some notes and must use them in a chapter on shrub-planting. “Well, here,” says Lucy, “why not sit down to it?” For what could be a more natural thought to her, seeing as how she began life sitting on my lap while I

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wrote? But this time we took two seats and I hadn't more than thrown in my line, so to speak, when a man stepped up and collected our fare! and we a-goin' nowheres and not even on wheels! It was so like playing cars, however, that I paid it for the sake of old times. Besides, had I refused we should have made it awkward for the poor man, as well as for the police.

Friday, May 26, 1905.

Poor diary! There is so much to see and do that there is no time to tell of it. I will try to keep the thread unbroken. After a two-o'clock lunch on that same day, Sunday, Lucy and I went to St. Paul's cathedral. We took a hansom. To-day we would take a bus. We didn't know, and we were in a hotel where nobody would any more mention a bus than he would curse. We went to divine worship in St. Paul's. The experience was one long to be remembered. In our churches at home, it seems to me now, we hardly know what the organ is or is for. Here we heard its vast melodious thunders roll up and away into the heights and depths of the majestic pile and music took on a new meaning. The anthem was Mendelssohn's. The hymn before the sermon was a familiar Alleluia suddenly made wonderful. We did not stay for the sermon, as we were out of reach of the preacher's words. We went up to the Barries. Mrs. Barrie was away somewhere, but Barrie was there and a most happy hour we had with him. When we left he walked with us across Kensington Gardens and out at its upper end. As we walked we talked of Henry James and his small winsome oddities; especially of his great economy of words, his thorough willingness to spend them lavishly to get his meaning stated, and his promptness to stop the instant he has opened the view to the point to which he is directing us; of the many phrases which he keeps in use to imply "You see the rest, yourself," and of his gentle repugnance to the wrong word anywhere and

everywhere. I told of his ending one of his statements to me with the clipped phrase, "et cet.," using only the two syllables, and Barrie told how, standing with him one day on a sidewalk and talking of a matter of no weight whatever, James began to stammer for one word out of all the king's English for which no other would serve *him* as a substitute, and, when it began to rain, said, "Come in here a moment," and drew Barrie into a cab standing at the curb. There he found the precious word and at once they parted.

Our way was in the "Broad Walk," and Lucy, remembering "The Little White Bird," asked if this was not it. Which question led him to tell us that when the book had lately been printed the city authorities gave him a key to Kensington Gardens so that he might have the freedom of them at night after the public are locked out, and that it is the only such key in private hands.

In due time behold, it was Monday. Lucy went with me to Trafalgar Square and we worshipped the Nelson Monument. It is good to see a savior of his country so splendidly commemorated. And what a humbling, self-condemning emotion it gives one, to be so reminded of how saintliness and valor and consecration and sin and folly can be bound up in one small frame and in one mighty soul!

Saturday, May 27.—Thursday we went to the Barries' to lunch—no other guests. Passed a delightful hour or two. Went thence by Underground to Hampstead to call on Robertson Nicoll in Froggnal. We were ravished with the beauty of home gardens of that quarter; nowhere could the eye turn without resting on exquisite effects of tree, wall, shrub, bed and vine. It is marvelous to see how universally the gardening is good; it shows how easily it might be so in our country. Now and then one sees a mistake, but it is rare to find.

Well, we went to Oxford. It was a delightful journey



of an hour and a quarter through a countryside of ravishing beauty to a city whose loveliness neither any writings nor pictures that I have ever seen give more than a feeble conception of. The immense age of things without ruinous decay and with only that surface corrosion which makes them venerable is what delights one so constantly in England and in Oxford. Things confess to have stood for centuries, are more venerably beautiful for it, and promise to stand yet for centuries to come. Such order and good keeping and solidity and animate energy and preserved energy are everywhere.

We have stood on the spot where the three great martyrs "gave their bodies to be burned." We have walked in the courts of that gloriously beautiful Christ Church College which Cardinal Woolsey built but, falling, left to this day unfinished and whose front was to have reached from High street to Folly Bridge. By an arched portal under the tower wherein the Lollards lay imprisoned we have gone to the room where lived John Wesley; we have walked, of course, in Addison's Walk; we have seen St. Mary's spire in its amazing beauty as it first rose into blossoming perfection in the Middle Ages; we have traversed "the High," that "most beautiful street in all Europe"; we have seven times walked the "Broad Walk" and thrice seen the garden of human life and joy and elegance and loving pride and kindly triumph, of crowded barges and richly colored banners of which the Isis' stream was the central avenue and the long keen shells of the college "eights" in single line, the one object of all attention and enthusiasm and outcry; and all these experiences have been gathered into our memory for the remainder of our days under the guidance and hospitality of one of the most winsome men and gentle scholars I ever met, Owen M. Edwards, of Lincoln College.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. and Mrs. Edwards gave us, in his room in Lincoln

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Edwards was a Fellow of Lincoln College, and my father carried a letter of introduction to him from a friend in this country.

College, a lunch, to which he brought on short notice four of the Rhodes scholars. He gives an admirable account of the Rhodes scholars one and all. When he went with us from one hoary and illustrious antiquity to another he wore cap and gown, which were our open sesame where otherwise we again and again have been barred. At one of the boat-races he introduced me to Dr. Williams, one of the great British authorities on Law, and whom I remembered as one of the speakers and a recipient of LL.D. at the Yale Bicentennial.<sup>1</sup> Williams asked me how long I had known [Edwards]. I explained and Williams remarked,—

“He’s one of the greatest living authorities on the Welsh tongue and literature.”

Also, Edwards was a pupil of the famed and beloved Jowett. I led him to tell of that great moulder of young men, and he said of him that he could never hope to meet his like again. He remarked upon his singular combination of a sweet shrewdness with as sweet a guilelessness hard to understand. One day a student in one of the colleges fell in with a man as stranger with stranger, in one of the gardens, talked with him, liked him, and invited him up to his room and to a cup of tea. They went, and over the tea-cups the well pleased and thoroughly interested youth asked his guest if he was new to these parts. “Oh, no,” said the other, “I’m Master of Balliol, my name is Jowett.” At which the young man snatched up cap and gown and fled from his own domain. It must have taken an uncommon amount of sweet shrewdness or shrewd sweetness to have taught that youngster that life-lesson so successfully. To be invited to Dr. Jowett’s country place with no task imposed was counted a special honor; to be so invited with a task was anything but complimentary. Edwards was at one time invited there with nothing to do, while Sir Robert Peel, a most unworthy grandson of the great Sir Rob-

<sup>1</sup>The honorary degree of L.H.D. had been conferred by Yale University at this same time, upon my father.

ert, was invited with the requirement that he write a paper on some theme of political economy. Dr. Jowett had allowed himself to neglect the modern American writers in this science and Peel was aware of the fact. Jowett invited Edwards to walk with him and talked of Peel, who had handed in his paper.

“Strange fellow, that,” said Jowett. “He has his faults and some of them are huge; but he has as well a most acute [mind] and power of thought. One question that puzzles me, and which neither his faults nor his abilities shed any light on is, Why does he always think in dollars and cents?”

“I did not think it best to tell him,” said Edwards to me, “that the paper was cribbed bodily from General Francis A. Walker’s pages.”

Beautiful Oxford! May we live to see it again. On our way back to London we saw a panorama of English landscapes in the light and under the skies of a sunset thunderstorm—a living gallery of Constable’s pictures. If one were Constable one might try to describe them.

Wednesday we made our closing visit to the National Gallery and spent the whole forenoon before the Turner Collection. An amazing instance of how far through life a man may toil before he truly finds himself and what a heavenly discovery he may be at last nevertheless.

London, June 4, 1905.—I have had my first glimpse of the British Museum. Both the beauty and the ruin of the Parthenon stir the depths of the soul. The havoc of that Venetian bombardment of Athens in the seventeenth century presents one more horror of war scarcely less than the greatest I had known before. Truly, and far plainer than I have ever seen the fact before, an exalted pagan civilization is no more all pagan than a Christian civilization is all Christian. After writing which remark I see how pitifully belated it is coming from a man of my years

and opportunities. I ought to have seen it and said it when I was ten years old. I will not go into further particulars, or moralizings either, as to the Museum, but it seems to me those immortal Greek cavalrymen will go caracoling through my grateful brain all my future days.

Skibo Castle, June 13, '05.—We arrived here about 11 o'clock this morning. I should like to skip Edinboro' and all that and tell of our journey yesterday while we are still vibrating from it, but I fear I shouldn't be able to pick up the dropped stitch smoothly if at all. So here's for Auld Reekie, which we are now told means not Old Smoky but the Old Royal One. Our journey was out of rainy and leaden skies into gradually brightening landscapes until in the late afternoon the full sunlight and shade of a perfect June day filled all the gliding and turning scene. We were in Scotland though still in a bland and fertile and jocund Scotland.

We reached Edinboro' about 6:30 and took another train for Dunfermline. Had a number of pleasant answers from a Dunfermline man in the carriage with us and told him, while we inquired about hotels, that we expected to be met by a friend.—“Will it be Doctor John Ross?” he asked.—“Yes.”—“Well, there he is,” he said, pointing him out on the station platform, and the next moment we were in the kindest, cheeriest custody one could hope to find or invent.

We had happy hours with him. I must remind you, he is president of Mr. Carnegie's Dunfermline Trust, the board which has in charge Pitancier Park and Glen, the Carnegie Swimming Baths, and the fund of two and a half million pounds sterling on which their maintenance rests. Very old and historical is Dunfermline, the ancient capital of Scotland. We walked in a garden resplendent with flowers and in superb keeping, which was the garden of the monks of the abbey eight hundred and fifty years ago.

It is worth while to have seen the tiny stone cottage, and low-ceiled room under the roof, where Andrew Carnegie was born, the largest dispenser of his own wealth the world has ever known.

On Thursday the 8 we returned by rail to Edinboro' and took cab for a long drive to the Simpsons' summer place, "The Inch." Next day we went early into the city to join Mr. Douglas at his office in Castle St. and go with him to see Holyrood, Edinboro' Castle, etc. We began with the Scottish National Gallery, where we had much entertainment, though, outside of one or two great portrait painters, Raeburn being easily first, the wonder is how little has been achieved in depictive art by this amazing Scottish race, or at least how little has been done by them in Scotland. Still more barren seems this land of great poets, inventors and statesmen in architectural genius or feeling. There seems never to have been an original note struck in all the architecture of all Scotland. Let me hope it is only because I am so much more ignorant than I think I am that these are my impressions. And let me stop criticizing a people to whom modern civilization owes as much, one may roughly say, as to the Hebrew, the Greek, the Roman, the Italian, French, German or English. Holyrood revisited, Ed'boro' castle revisited—I think we must pass them unnoted notwithstanding their fascinating history that runs back a thousand years. The guide-books manage these matters best.

Thinking again of that concavity in the Scottish character, that backwardness as to the fine arts, why is it that a people with a folk-song scarcely surpassed in the world should, in musical composition, never have risen any great way beyond it? It does not seem as though the Kirk alone could have so hobbled them, yet I dare say it is contributory to the default. The paraphrased psalms still in use in the public worship of the political, intellectual and spiritual capital of Scotland are two hundred years old in the

ludicrously unpoetical and inverted English, but their music is good as far as it goes. One evening James Simpson sang us a number of Scottish ballads of great beauty and which we had never heard or even heard of. But when he came to play the violin there was nothing Scotch to play. Well, to be sure, there wouldn't have been anything American either.

Off on Monday, the 12, for Bonar Bridge, as we thought, where, Mrs. Carnegie had written us, her automobile would receive us. The porter in the station, Edinboro', told by us to label our luggage for B. Bridge reported to us that he had carried out our instructions, and we green Americans let the matter go at that. As we were going into Perth a lad came to our window, examined our tickets, punched them and said nothing. In the Perth station another lad read and punched. The tickets said plainly Bonar Bridge, yet I asked, "How far does this carriage take us?" "Change at Aberdeen," said he, and on we went. Lucy was highly pleased with her book which Mr. Blaikie had left for her at the hotel the evening before, and showed me one of its maps. Which, the moment I looked at [it], showed me that we had no business going away around by Aberdeen. The next stop was Forfar. There I called a guard to the window and presently he was humbly apologizing and hurrying us out, taking my name and British and American addresses and telling the tale to the station-master with whom he left us. A train came in from the northeast and we were taken into it and carried back to Perth without charge but with the assurance that we could not reach B. Bridge that night. I telegraphed Mr. Carnegie we should reach Tain at 8:30, and after some forty minutes, wait, giving names and addresses once more, we were once more under way northward. We laughed. We had seen a beautiful bit of country we had never looked on before and may never look on again, and now were speeding through the very heart and glory of the Highlands. By and

by we were in the Pass of Killikrankie, certainly one of the most beautiful spots I ever beheld. At length we are at Inverness and a porter is conducting us and trundling our smaller baggage to another train, when all at once our eyes light on a pile of luggage set one side from an earlier train, and lo! it is ours, labelled not Bonar Bridge, but Inverness. We thanked fortune, got it labelled Tain, and took it along. We watched it go into the van and the van door *shut*.

[Arrived at Tain,] we drove up a steep, narrow, clean, rugged and thoroughly Scottish street into a broader one on an upper level, passed an old town-hall of very pleasing *French* architecture and alighted at a quaint old inn whose landlady and attendants, all as Scotch as oatmeal, treated us as if the place was ours and we had merely arrived home. "What would we order for dinner?" We were shown to rooms whose second-story windows looked down the one main street of the village, wherein were numerous members and sometimes groups of "Lovat's Horse," great strapping Highlanders and men of the western isles. In a word we were in one of the most picturesque scenes and moments of all our days, were blessing our stupid railway ticket-choppers for all their blunders, and had just been assured there was no telegram for us, when one came. "Station-master, tell Mr. Cable, guest at Royal Hotel, remain all night and leave there for Meikel Ferry at nine tomorrow. We will meet him at ten: Carnegie."

We ate a comfortable dinner and walked out along the main street. I despair of telling the quaint beauty of the place. Delightfully Scottish were all the aspects, and wonderfully beautiful in the clear bright twilight of ten o'clock two or three views off the street's high vantage ground; across beautiful shrubbery and flower-gardens hanging below on the cliff's face, across the second plateau where crouched the older St. Duthus's in gray jagged ruin and where spread the white camp of the Lovat Horse;

and on still on across the long wavering line of brown beach where the white-edged wavering line of the tide foamed inward from the great width of Dornoch Firth, on whose farther shore, miles away northward, showed minutely among its green trees and against pink and blue and green and yellow clouds the gray village and cathedral spire of Dornoch.

Near our inn, where the street jogs round and runs on again westward between it and the shop-postoffice we stopped and stood to see some of the Horse gathered round a bagpiper who was piping for their pennies. It was very pretty to see that although no one stared at the two Americans for so much as a moment, everybody was aware of them and kindly inclined to them, alert indeed to make them welcome. And now from among the soldiers, not one of whom had let on to see the strangers, four began to step a Highland dance with the piper in their middle; swinging, leaping, arching arms over their heads, and now and then accenting the piper's measure with a sharp ecstatic shout. They were not in kilts and bonnets but were scarcely less picturesque in olive khaki and laced leggings.

You may imagine we were tired, for though there was still plenty of good daylight it was nearly eleven o'clock and we had been up and doing for nearly sixteen hours. As I was going to bed there came near from a distance a sound of bagpipes which suddenly broke out strong as there came up the steep street from the railway and camp and swept into "the High street" a dismounted but armed and uniformed patrol preceded by four high-stepping pipers kilted and bonneted and droning and squealing, their ribbons fluttering and stray soldier boys dropping in behind every now and then, catching step and lengthening out the column. So they passed away, first the sight and then the sound, and I rolled into bed and fell asleep over Lucy's conundrum of a few hours earlier—she wants to put it off upon me but I insist it is hers: If it takes each of



us sixteen hours to get here with all these interruptions and back-turnings, how long would it have taken both of us not to have come at all? I might have worked out the answer had it not been for a wretched four-piece German band that stood under the window tooting and squeaking, over and over, our own Dick Smith's<sup>1</sup> favorite—

“To the lairds o' Convention 'twas Claverhouse spoke,  
Ere the sun shall go down there are heads to be broke,  
Te tweedle, te tweedle, hoo hoot te twee twee,  
For it's up with the bonnets o' Bonnie Dundee.”

Next morning it was bacon and eggs and would have been, if our Louisiana [upbringing] could have brooked the insult,—tea! We compromised on coffee. Then our trap at the door and away for Meikel Ferry through a land ablaze with the yellow whin. The high land and distant mountains on one side, and the firth on the other deep blue and flashing white under a fresh breeze. From the stone pier of the ferry Skibo Castle stood in plain view across the water and a green bit of rising land that filled the half-mile between it and the firth. The ferry-boat was a large, strong open boat with a lug sail dyed a deep, rich brown by the use of tan-bark. It was manned by just such Scottish watermen as you see in pictures. As we sailed we saw the Carnegies coming in a trap and they and we reached their landing almost at the one moment, Mr. and Mrs. Carnegie, Margaret, her aunt Miss Whitfield and her new governess Miss Coffin. Merry was our welcome and soon we were housed and given into full possession of ourselves.

In the afternoon of Wednesday we had a local minister at lunch; a big, burly, outspoken, well-informed, typical Scot, who knows the history of Skibo and all the neighborhood from the days of Sigurd down. For Sigurd was

<sup>1</sup>Richard Thorndyke Smith, of “The Cavalier.” This is one of the autobiographical touches in that story, for “Bonnie Dundee” was always a favorite with my father.

hereabouts in his time and laid his bones here, as I understand. The room assigned to me is the "Sigurd" room and has the great Norseman's name fastened on it in silver script. "Yes," says the Rev. Mr. Christie to me privately, —and how like an unflattering Scot it was for him not to say it before our host!—"the ages luke down on Skibo Cawstle." There are two mossy gray stone sun-dials on the estate. He was asked about their age. The age of one he pooh-pooched as a matter of a mere century or two, possibly three, but the other—"Oh, that's auld; that's verra auld; no mon knows when that was poot thar!"

Steamer Republic, June 28, 1905.—For days I have been daily writing but neglecting to note the passage of time while I wrote. And so here we are in mid-ocean while my diary still professes to be done in Scotland. The happy, happy time is spent and when the week ends, which now is at its middle I shall be at home once more.

Sunday night we had all the household and servants in together, and to Mrs. Carnegie's organ accompaniment we sang hymns from nine to ten. Monday Lucy and I were driven to the beautiful cottage and grounds of the three Lauder sisters. The garden is very ancient and very finely laid out, one of the loveliest spots I ever strayed in. It is on three natural terraces, "informally" treated, the paths of each terrace wholly masked from those above or below, and the *uppermost* terrace graced with a lily-pond! In the evening we had three clergymen at dinner, all entertaining Scotsmen, and to close the day it was my great pleasure and honor to read to them and all Skibo, host, hostess, house-servants, steward of the estate, his wife, the forester, the head-gardener, etc., my lecture on "The American Garden."<sup>1</sup>

Next morning was for good-bye. Good-bye, rare Skibo, and yet rarer friends. As we passed around the first bend in the road beyond the gardens a cock-pheasant rose from

<sup>1</sup>Published in *Scribner's Magazine* for May, 1904.

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the broom close by our wheels and glided a hundred yards away. Across the firth Ben Struey veiled his head in white mist, it began again, as it had been doing all night, to rain, we had to leave the motor-coach's top and get inside, and Skibo passed from sight.

## CHAPTER XV

### LOVE OF NATURE AND OF GARDENS AND GARDENING

*"You must know, sir, that I look upon the pleasure which we take in a garden, as one of the most innocent delights in human life."*

ADDISON.

The "lecture," or article, on "The American Garden" which was read to the household at Skibo had been published in *Scribner's Magazine* just a year before. This had seemed a sudden departure from the domain of my father's other writings, and many were the expressions of surprise among his readers that the "fictioner" had turned gardener. Yet to those who knew him personally it was no surprise at all. Was he not born in a city of gardens? His own mother, indeed, had bred in him that "passion for flowers" that was so strong in herself. When, after an absence of many years, he wrote of the old home of his birth, on Annunciation Square, his most cherished memory was its garden. It was the "garden district" in that city of gardens that he chose when he was about to build his own house; surrounding it with flowers and shrubs and trees and finding joy in their beauty. And in Northampton he could not rest content until he had made his home on the edge of the woods and brought the woods up to his home, beginning there the construction of a garden that was to be for him, the rest of his days, "the veriest school of peace."

Small wonder, then, that a love of nature in all her aspects was equally an ingrained part of him. In his imaginative writings, from the earliest to the latest, this sensitiveness to the beauties of nature is manifest.

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In the New Orleans *Picayune* for March 13, 1870, he wrote in his "Drop Shot" column:

"March comes to us a blossom-crowned cherub, showing his rosy face full of smiles and gladness, by six o'clock every morning; and while he sends his fierce blasts, like a pack of hounds, over the North, he seems to speak to us in those old words of love: 'Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.'

"Even in the city we see something of Nature's glad awakening. The roses are blowing in the gardens, the locust trees are white with blossoms, and every here and there we see the trim little sparrow go sliding along the top of the garden fence for a few yards and then change his tail to the other side and try it that way. The canaries are in a continual ecstasy, and the noise from the bird-stores is a trifle more outrageous than ever.

"The birds of the woods and fields may be said to have gone to housekeeping, and the water-fowl are talking of winging Northward for the summer."

Again in "Drop Shot" for July 3rd of the same year he pictures his imaginary friend, Felix Lazarus, taking a holiday, and asks, at the head of the column: "What will he do with it?"

"Felix Lazarus is the right sort of a pleasure-seeker. Last summer he was by the seaside. One morning he wandered off alone, and leaving the roadside, walked up the course of a little brook. He went into a thicket alone. When he came out there were two new acquaintances with him. One was a slender bush of hard wood, bearing tiny clusters of white blossoms and the most delicate and delicious perfume, very similar to the flowering olive. The other was a mere leaf or two of dark green growth, from which shot up a single flower-stalk of twelve-inches' length, bearing a blue fringe-like flower of considerable beauty. These two

acquaintances, now become old friends, are in his little garden, the latter bearing upwards of twenty flowers instead of one, the former rapidly recovering from an acclimating fever."

*To his mother*

MY DEAR MOTHER: New Orleans, July 20, 1878.

I had intended writing you at length; but time presses beyond my powers of resistance & I must content myself with a line or two.

Nettie will tell you everything that I could write, except probably concerning the garden. John has arranged everything beautifully & if there are any prettier gardens anywhere in town I should like to see them. The *Caladium Africanus* is 7½ feet high—grand! The garden is perfumed with Grand Duke jessamines. The *Begonias*, *Ferns*, etc., etc., are doing well. The whole ground is mulched & the orange trees scrubbed; the dahlias are coming on; one very pretty white & one lilac-colored, have bloomed. A seed-pod of the big *Caladium* burst last night like this, reminding one somewhat of the balsam-apple; the inside of the pod turning outward as the strips curl downward is the same exquisite buff peculiar to the *caladium* flowers; you know it. A *salvia* or two have died, but everything else is intact. We keep the house adorned with flowers.



I hope to hear of your health improving, so that when you come home it will be with an appetite whetted for all good and pretty things.

Aff'y your son

GEO. W. CABLE

Many of his letters home, written in the hours of travel, were filled with detailed descriptions of the country through which he was passing, simply because he could not keep his thoughts from the panorama beyond the train-window.

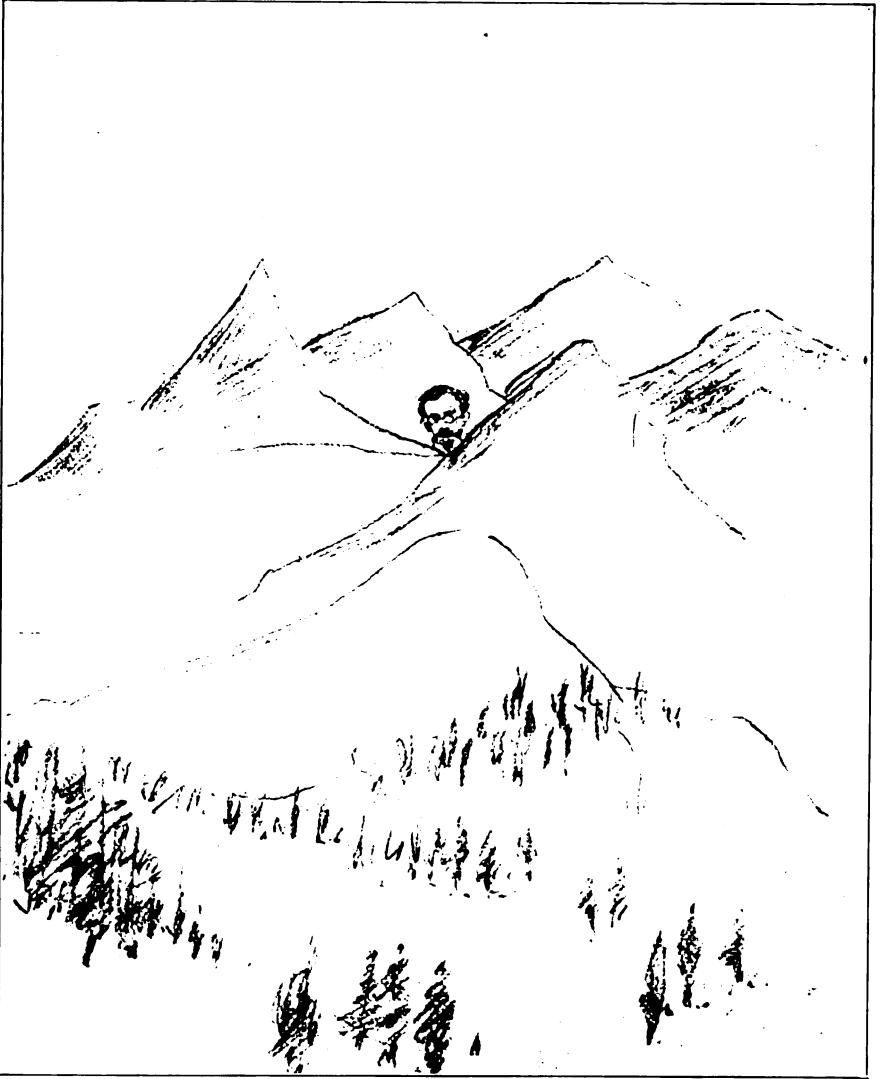
*To L. S. C.*

The Dalles, Oregon, Sept. 11, 1888.

We are off by boat down the Columbia River. The scenery is grand and often lovely. The day is beautiful. It is early morning, the air is clearer than it has been for five days, and Mt. Hood, the wonder and glory of this land, stands out against the sky a solid glittering mass of snow and ice. The river is as broad as the Mississippi, but crystal clear. Its brown sand beaches and bars are often fringed with willows, and its great basaltic cliffs tower above like Titanic forts and castles. Now rugged islands, all of bare dark rock, stretch across our way and we thread through and out into wide waters again. If I make allowance for the difference of atmospheric effect the river must be much wider than the Mississippi.

We are in the Cascade Mountains. Now the character of the scene changes. The precipitous volcanic cliffs cease and vast pine-fringed rocks are piled in ragged confusion far up against the dim sky. Unless wind enough rises to clear away the smoke we shall fail to see Mt. Hood.

The scene is very grand now; the river—whether to call it blue or green I scarcely know—lying broad & smooth, just crinkled by the cool breeze, between vast crags that swell into mountains and disappear in the all-pervading smoke. Presently on the right the mountains withdraw, all but one great cone thinly bristling with pines, a giant victim to the frosts under whose corrosions its shale is ever crumbling and sliding down to the beach. The upper sky clears and one thin, white, lace-like cloud hangs above and behind a dark, piny mountain, under whose smoky shadow a flat shore thinly covered with straight, slender trees lies bathed in half sunshine & half smoke. Farther away mountains cloaked in a smoky gauze rise dimly, like dark phantoms as if to shut us in and turn us back, while all between the green waters flash with white lashings of the rising breeze.



FROM A PENCIL DRAWING BY MR. CABLE, ENCLOSED IN A LETTER TO HIS WIFE AND BEARING THE WORDS: "WE UNDERSTAND THAT MR. CABLE IS DEEP IN THE STUDY OF GLACIERS."

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See what lines!



Now we run through a valley of orchards between hill-sides of wheat and brown mountains streaked and specked with rambling trees—pines and their like; under a sky of deep blue filled with luminous white scud—after last night's rain. Every now & then the mountain-tops catch them and card off great fleeces of silver that hang about their pines in soft tatters. I can tell by the puffing that we are steadily climbing and that we are using two engines to do it. We are climbing out of Oregon into California, from 1800 to 4100 feet above the Pacific. We are leaving the Cascade Range & approaching the Sierra Nevada.

Now all grows wild; no house or field in sight. The valley narrows into defiles dark with towering pines (150 feet & more in height).

The mountains now gather close in upon us right & left and are deep green not only with pines but with grass. The character of the nearer verdure is often strikingly qualified by the red stems & limbs of the small Manzanita tree. Now a vast deep valley lies on one side far below us while we hug the side of a mountain that towers above us on the other. The engines pant now in time & now in alternation, and as a gorge opens in the mountain side a dizzy trestle shows itself far above us and we are told that that is our own road doubling upon itself! We shall cross that trestle by & by. On the other side we look down and lo! there is the town & valley of wheat-fields we passed an hour ago. The great trees grow taller still. The whole

is grand, almost awful. Yonder is a tunnel we must climb around and start through at the other end of it.

Still we climb. There! a snow peak just peeped over the great tumbled wilderness & then withdrew again. This is an aerial, not a terrestrial journey. We are at the summit. Now we start down—through a tunnel—a big black peak looms against a silver cloud—and there, away beyond, white and blue and flooded with sunlight, towers & shines Mt. Shasta. Again we have doubled and Shasta gleams, more beautiful than before, on our opposite side.

. . . Down, down, down. We see irrigated hillsides again; yea, verily, & the sage brush once more, and sun-withered grass, and cattle browsing it and looking comfortable.

Out on a broad plain bounded by pointed mountains, and far across & far above them Mt. Shasta shines whiter than any cloud can shine, jagged and furrowed, and banded with blue shadows on its unbroken snow. O such a sight! Nothing else can ever seem to the mere eye physically and absolutely pure after seeing these great snow-mantled heights shining in the blue noon sky. And now we draw near, a long smooth valley opens its farthest gates and Shasta rises sheer from the plain, first dark and dim in shadows and then robed in snow with never a cloud touching it from earth to heaven, always rugged, always grand.

Suddenly Shasta shows entire through an opening in a pine woods, a wondrous beauty of white & blue snow & purple rocks & soil, an amazing transformation. Add your own moralizing; I am ashamed to moralize in such a scene.

October 4, 1888.—We all go to bed early, to rise at the porter's call at 5:30 to see the famed Black Cañon.

[Next morning.] 7 A. M. We have seen it. That is all I can say. Even when gazing on it, the roaring, foaming crystal stream, the huge red boulders that have tumbled from the vast cliffs, the great perpendicular heights of naked, frost-chiselled rocks soaring 1000, 1500 feet above

our very heads, the light of the rising sun illuminating their tops, chimneys and domes, spires and pyramids,—even when gazing on them one feels the eye—that ungrateful organ—dwarfing the titanic proportions and the tongue silently prophesying its inability ever to tell the wonder, the beauty or the grandeur. One can only stand and say God has made this world too great to be mean in and too fair to be foul in.

. . . I have passed through the Grand Cañon of the Arkansas. I will not write a word; I should be ashamed. Certainly of all things in nature my eyes ever beheld this is the greatest.

*To the same*

Leaving Los Angeles, Cal., Feb. 17, '92.<sup>1</sup>

How it brings back old days to see again the orange, the fig, the rose, on a flat land. (For a fog shuts out the hills.) The turf is Southern turf in its character. The roadside ditch is Louisianian. The houses are latticed and trellised. The birds are everywhere. The sparrowhawk flies across the weedy fields. There are thickets of willow and patches of bulrushes. Ah! me, yonder is an orange grove with oranges hanging on the trees. Men are plowing their fields, in which there are no stones. And to crown all a fog full of sunlight settles down upon the whole landscape.

Now the differences show. The lifting fog reveals distant hills. The fig-trees are in beautiful orchards. The orange trees are comparatively young although bending with fruit. There are virtually no forest trees except those that have been planted, which are willows, pepper-trees, cedars and thousands of eucalypti. The land is very highly cultivated. Many fields have been harrowed and sowed & are sprouting with spring crops. Some are green with wheat or maybe rye. Yonder the sunlight breaks out upon green mountains and purple peaks show far beyond. A

<sup>1</sup>This was his third trip to the Far West within four years.

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green plain never was so beautiful to my eyes before.<sup>1</sup> On the east lie huge, rugged, barren mountains veiled in tatters of cloud & mist, the San Bernardino range, I think. Now we run in among huge round-topped hills as green and smooth as a carpet, with never a boulder nor a ledge and scarcely a pebble. Here are sheep and lambs; a flock of little lambs only a few days old; I should say forty of them in one bunch. The willows are in leaf & blossom; the peach has blossoms only. But the fig-trees are naked. Flocks of blackbirds are frequent, and as I write a covey of quail rises—O my soul! yonder's the Pacific Ocean! It takes me totally by surprise. Well, well, I've crossed the continent; for you know I started from Boston.

The surf tumbles green & white within a few rods of the car-window & all beyond is the water-world unbroken by an island, a bar, a rock or a sail.

*To the same*

Los Angeles, California,  
Feb'y 21, '92.

I cannot tell the beauty and charm of this land. The day before yesterday I left San Diego and came to Pasadena. San Diego rests on a high ground—at least part of it does—that looks down upon its vast bay and the Pacific beyond on the west, and on beautiful hills and mountains and snowy summits on the other three sides. The town is bright and clean, the gardens are full of flowers, the palm and almond are everywhere. The gardening is faulty. The hedges are all too numerous and the trimmed shrubbery is tiresome and painful. Everywhere the beautiful pepper-tree is in fashion and by and by will be neglected. People plant it much in alternation with the palm & the effect is restless, feeble and broken. In Pasadena the long unbroken

<sup>1</sup>He had just made, once more, the long journey over the Rocky Mountains.

avenues of palms are glorious and those entirely of pepper-trees are exquisitely delicate and lovely.

*To the same*

Fresno, California, Feb'y 27, 1892.

Fresno is the Spanish for the ash-tree. I have just come from a nurseryman's establishment, where I have been looking at what he calls hardy evergreens.

I have an idea some of these might be got to grow & thrive with us. What we want to get away from is the inverted icicle, the Christmas-tree shape & the deep cold green of the downward bent hemlock & spruce boughs. I think we can make our place, both in & outside of the woods look cheerful & beautiful in winter.

He was thinking of his own garden in Northampton, then only in its beginning, on the street he had named Dryads' Green. Immediately upon his return from this reading-tour through the Far West, he set himself to the happy task of developing, from the crudeness of a new house on a new street and from the "waste" woodland behind these, what was to be his "Joyous Gard"<sup>1</sup> for many years to follow. This garden he himself has described in "My Own Acre."<sup>2</sup> From the outset it was the fruit of his own thought; part of it, literally of his own toil. He made it his daily recreation, and "with his own hand wrought to make it grow" as year by year his garden dreams were more fully realized. Many a spare half-hour was spent in working with his gardener, making cuttings, pruning shrubs or helping in the planting, until the place had grown beyond his own ability to do this and he was compelled to leave the actual labor to others. The wide "contour" paths in the woods he worked out for himself, mathe-

<sup>1</sup>"No garden," he wrote of it, "is quite a garden until it is 'Joyous Gard.' Let your garden, and let mine, be the garden of joy."

<sup>2</sup>"The Amateur Garden," Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914.

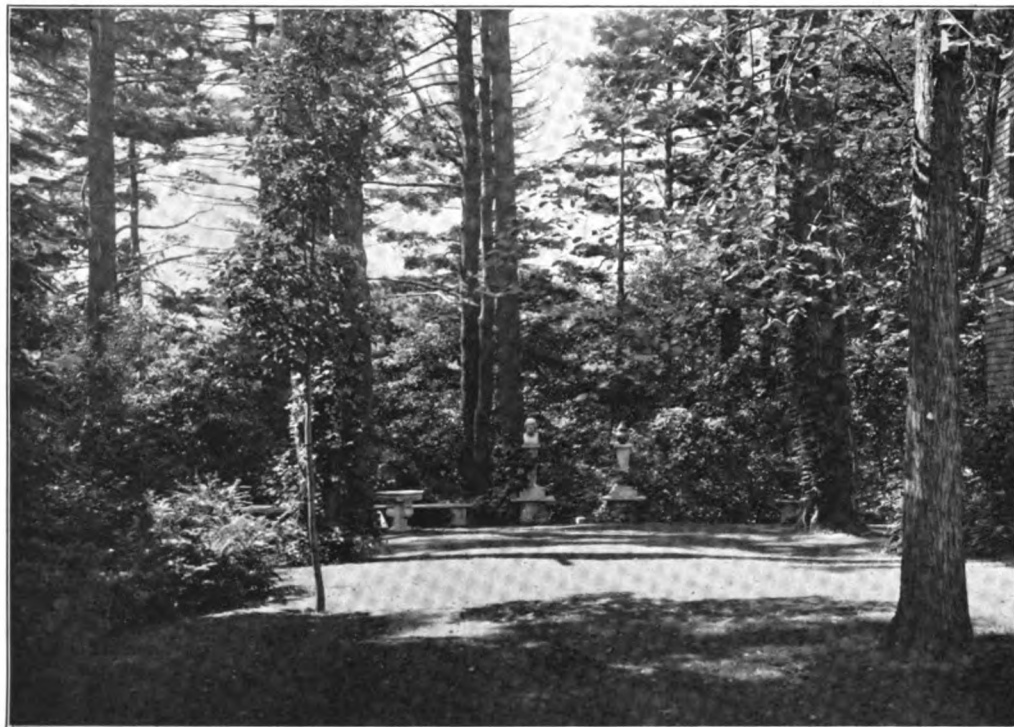
matically, although, as he says, Col. George Waring gave him the idea. One after another of these paths, leading from the lawns and garden into and through the woods, until woods and garden became a blended unit, was built under his direction and supervision. Concrete fountains, garden-seats and tables for tea were of his own designing and to some extent his own handiwork—"making mud-pies," he called it. He was never happier than when walking about his "own acre," viewing it from every angle, opening up new vistas or noting some new growth of shrub or flower or tree.

But his greatest pleasure in it was when his friends enjoyed it with him. To commemorate such times as well as to add to the beauty of his garden, he adopted the idea of souvenir trees, and from 1889, when Henry Ward Beecher planted an elm on the lawn of "Red House,"<sup>1</sup> these plantings always served as happy occasions for gathering his friends into this beloved spot. Of these trees he wrote:

"Trees, souvenir trees, had from time to time been planted on the lawn by visiting friends. Most of them are set close enough to the grove to become a part of it, standing in a careful irregularity which has already obliterated, without molesting, the tree line of the ancient fence.

"Young senators among their seniors, they still have much growth to make before they can enter into their full forest dignity, yet Henry Ward Beecher's elm is nearly two feet through and has a spread of fifty; Edward Atkinson's is something more, and Felix Adler's hemlock-spruce, the maple of Anthony Hope Hawkins, L. Clark Seelye's English ash, Henry van Dyke's white-ash, Sol Smith Russell's linden, and Hamilton Wright Mabie's horse-chestnut are all about thirty-five feet high and cast a goodly shade. Sir James M. Barrie's elm—his and Sir William Robertson Nicoll's, who planted it with him,—later than the plantings aforementioned—has, by some

<sup>1</sup>This tree, known as the Beecher Elm, was later transplanted to the lawn of "Tarryawhile."



A TERRACE FOR TEA, UNDER THE PINES OF "TARRYAWHILE."

virtue in the soil or in its own energies, reached a height of nearly sixty-five feet and a diameter of sixteen inches. Other souvenirs are a horse-chestnut planted by Minnie Maddern Fiske, a ginkgo by Alice Freeman Palmer, a beech by Paul van Dyke, a horse-chestnut by Anna Hempstead Branch, another by Sir Sidney Lee, yet another by Mary E. Burt, a catalpa by Madeleine Wynne, a Colorado blue spruce—fitly placed after much labor of mind—by Sir Moses Ezekiel, and a Kentucky coffee-tree by Gerald Stanley Lee and Jennette Lee, of our own town. Among these should also stand the maple of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, but it was killed in the second winter by an undetected mouse at its roots. Except Sir Moses, all the knights here named received the accolade after their tree plantings, but I draw no moral.”<sup>1</sup>

His pleasure in his own garden soon led him to evolve the idea of a sort of community gardening. “Here,” he said, “would be another great use for the Home-Culture Clubs,” since their activities reached out to just those people in the community who would be most benefited by his scheme. He believed in the “recognition of the fact that our home is not entirely in our own house or grounds, but also in our neighborhood”; and further, that “a man’s home is not entirely in his whole neighborhood, but partly also in his whole town.” And when, in the early summer of 1898, he returned from his first visit to Mr. Andrew Carnegie in Scotland, he set in motion a project to carry out these theories. The result was the Carnegie Prize Garden Competition. This was made a part of the Home-Culture Club movement, and was modelled, as has been said, on the garden competition established by Mr. Carnegie some years before in Dunfermline. My father had brought back with him from Skibo not only a copy of the Dunfermline rules and regulations, but the offer of Mr. Carnegie to provide money for the prizes.

These regulations were changed to meet the differing  
1“My Own Acre.”



requirements and conditions, and the competition was shaped according to the abilities of the workers in the many factories in and about Northampton, one stipulation being that the contestants should not employ outside or professional aid in the making or the keeping of their gardens. This plan was not, as my father pointed out, merely to create beautiful gardens or to teach good gardening, but to give these working-people a pleasurable activity and a delight and pride in their own homes, and—"to bring them out of doors."

In starting the competition my father himself, as president of the Home-Culture Clubs, personally visited hundreds of householders, explaining the project and urging them to join; and by the end of the first season some sixty gardens were well begun. For the next few years he regularly visited each competitor, instructing and advising everywhere he went. "I felt myself," he said, "fairly well equipped to teach these people how to garden, because for years I had studied gardening for my own sake, and had by that time made and profited by most of the mistakes in an amateur gardener's calendar." "Come around and see my garden," he would say to a competitor, "I'll show you some of the mistakes I've made."

After the competition was well established the work of visiting and instructing was given also into the hands of the Women's Council of the Home-Culture Clubs. These "volunteer garden visitors" made the initial round, in the early spring, for enrollment of gardens, later going over the same ground for observation and advice. Then the general secretary visited them, marking each garden for merit, according to four definite points: (1) Its layout, or ground plan; (2) its harmonies; (3) its condition; and, (4) its duration. Then, from the secretary's tabulation was drawn a list of the best one hundred and fifty gardens, and a second circuit of counsel and inspection, limited to this greatly reduced number, was made by the president. The average between these two markings—the sec-

retary's and the president's—would determine the standing of all prize-winning gardens except the leading four. Whereupon the president, taking with him one professional and one amateur expert, would visit the gardens once more, and the three judges would determine the relative merit of these four and award the prizes accordingly.

For many years my father did his visiting of the gardens, sometimes with his two judges, sometimes by himself, going with delight from garden to garden, giving freely of his counsel and as freely of his overflowing good-fellowship; for he soon began to feel a sort of personal ownership in every garden he inspected. In 1905 he wrote to his sisters: "The gardens are gay this year, and it almost spoils your 'litt' brozzah' to see the women's faces, and men's too, light up with pleasure when I say I've come to see the garden. It's lovely. I never expected to have a whole town for my garden, but that's how 'tis."

"Tiring? Yes," he once said. "But it's inspiring, too, when you think what many of these homes were before their owners began to garden. Besides, I have brought them out of doors!"

## CHAPTER XVI

### “KINCAID’S BATTERY”: “GIDEON’S BAND”: LAST YEARS (1905–1925)

*“Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening.”*

THE PSALMS.

The last two decades of my father’s life do not add many pages to his biography. For most of that time, although he was active and vigorous and steadily productive in his literary work, his days were quiet and uneventful so far as concerned any public life. Until as late as 1921 he held the presidency of the People’s Institute of Northampton and that, with its many duties of administration, occupied much of his leisure time. He had given up the readings from his stories and only occasionally—even rarely—appeared on the lecture platform. His chief happiness, aside from his literary work, was in his garden—his “story-teller’s garden,” as he once defined it—where, during the spring and summer months, he worked and supervised or wandered in it, alone or with friends, enjoying “its flowers, its bordering and intersecting waters, its liberty and all its disciplinary order and resultant loveliness.” Reluctantly, in the autumn, he would leave it to pass the colder months of the year somewhere in the South; and each spring he returned to it with increased eagerness.

His visit to England and Scotland, in 1905, had given him precisely what he had gone in search of, renewed physical vigor and freshened powers of work. Immediately upon his return home he went to his study to continue the writing of his new novel begun months before.

But it was not an easy task, and try as he would, the story moved but slowly. In March, 1905, before he had set out for England, he had written to his publishers: "Here we are, with the first third of my new novel. This means it is at least half done. The development of the characters is all settled; there are no new ones to be introduced. I have only now to tell what I have as completely at my command as though it had all happened to me." Toward the close of that year, however, a breakdown in health and a surgical operation kept him from his desk; and more than two years later the novel was still unfinished, when he wrote again, "My pen is once more moving at something like its old speed—which never was speed, you know—and has no other task to interrupt or retard the completion of the novel." Yet in 1907 the novel was still uncompleted. "The rest of the scenario of 'Kincaid's Battery,'" he wrote to Mr. Scribner in May of that year, "goes to you to-morrow. A skeleton of a pretty woman is not very beautiful, and you mustn't expect to fall in love with this outline. Especially do I feel—like a toothache—the absence of all that preparative order and approach, and all that air of plausibility which one works out as one goes along. But there you are, and I am ever so glad to get back to work on the actual narrative of the story that is giving me more pleasure in the writing of it than even 'The Cavalier' did."<sup>1</sup>

In November, 1906, my father had married Miss Eva C. Stevenson, of Lexington, Kentucky. A friend of some years' standing, she was a woman of broad intellectual and literary interests, an accomplished musician, who had travelled widely and had lived much in Europe. She brought into my father's life the companionship he so sorely

<sup>1</sup>In speaking of the conception of this new story, my father said: "I recalled what splendid artillerymen New Orleans had sent to the war—men I knew and had played with in boyhood, had gone to school with and had dealt with in business, and with whom I had lived as lifelong friends. I decided I could write of them with affection and enthusiasm. So I wrote 'Kincaid's Battery.'"

needed, and with her help his lonely house became once more a home of comfort and cheer. To her he wrote, in October, 1907—he was still working hard to bring to completion the long-delayed novel—“To-day I find myself thinking constantly of Anna Callender.<sup>1</sup> For my pen is now on a page—my literary, not epistolary pen—where Anna must speak and do and be while others trim her stage, and the author must study her part as definitely and diligently as if he were going to act it instead of create it. This reminds me of the manuscript we read at the hotel, and were I with its author now I should tell him that one of its radical faults is that he has not seriously studied the part of a single one of his characters. The result is very much like an actor on the stage without a knowledge of either his lines or his ‘business’—which is one of the things I recurrently dream is happening to me. I enjoy Anna’s company, understand, and one of the pleasantest experiences I have as a literary craftsman is this sort of incubation.”

In June, 1908, came another serious grief in the death of his son—the only son who had grown to manhood—but still he struggled on with the writing of the novel. “I thank you warmly,” he wrote to Mr. Charles Scribner, “for your words of sympathy. My boy was my bosom friend and as perfect a gentleman and irreproachable as ever I knew.<sup>2</sup> Daily I toil on the novel. I am in the last climactic scene, and though it makes me flinch to think how short a time I have in which to finish it, I still believe I can meet the requirement. I dare not, however, ask you to begin printing yet.”

A few months later, however, the daily toil came to an end and in November “Kincaid’s Battery” was published.

As with all his other novels, no sooner was this one in the publishers’ hands than another began to take shape in his mind. This was to be a story of the Mississippi river

<sup>1</sup>Anna Callender is the heroine of “Kincaid’s Battery.”

<sup>2</sup>William Noble Allen Cable, 1885–1908.

and its steamboats, in the time of their glory.<sup>1</sup> From his boyhood the great river beside which he was born had had its fascination for him, and many were the hours dreamed away upon its banks. His father's connection with its commercial life had no doubt bred in him a love for that turbulent tide. His father, too, had loved it, as a seaman loves the sea, or a hillman his hills. And now, after long absence from it, his thoughts turned once more to the charm of it and of its history. Since his wife's health and his own demanded a warmer sun than a New England winter could offer, they went in the late fall of 1908 to spend a few months in New Orleans. Here he gathered material for the new story, while he renewed his acquaintance with the river and steeped himself in the old familiar atmosphere of his native city.

Shortly before going to New Orleans, he had gone to New York to attend a meeting of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He was one of the earliest members of this body, had helped to secure its charter and from its inception had been keenly interested in its development. Concerning this meeting he wrote to his wife:

"I went to the meeting of the Academy at 3. They had just begun proceedings when I got in. The great dark high-walled room, and the wide semicircle of gray-bearded men that faced the aged chairman, John Bigelow, and Johnson the preliminary secretary, made a stirring picture. There were fourteen present: Sloane, Gilder, Bigelow, French, Blashfield, Mabie, Lounsbury, Johnson, Gildersleeve, Parker, Brownell, Matthews & Hadley. Rhoads came later, and Wilson<sup>2</sup> only as we were adjourning. We adopted the constitution and after filling by election four of the six vacancies in membership referred the

<sup>1</sup>"I want this novel," he said, "to embrace the history of steamboat traffic on the Mississippi from the days of the first steamboat, through the period of triumph, and wind up with the tragic ending of steamboats in the Civil War, when they were used as transports and gunboats."

<sup>2</sup>Woodrow Wilson, then President of Princeton University.

vote back to the whole membership in accordance to a rule. I never saw what seemed to me quite so august a body in private assemblage.

"After the adjournment we had forty-five minutes to spare and could have rushed to our quarters and dressed, but it was agreed we need not. The dinner was very pleasant indeed. Conversation, of course, never flagged a moment, and was light and merry. Toward the end it became general and it would be hard to tell who gave the best stories.

"It was my good fortune to be paired with Mr. Hadley<sup>1</sup> on the walk up to the Century Club and I asked after Dr. Bacon and told how he had given me my first clue of the story of Salome Müller."<sup>2</sup>

After the winter in New Orleans and with the story of the Mississippi under way, my father wrote to Richard Watson Gilder, Editor of the *Century Magazine*:

DEAR GILDER:

I have just been reading in the October *Century* Mrs. Sutcliffe's story of Fulton's invention of the steamboat, and have greatly enjoyed it, all the more because early this year I became more interested than ever before in the history of the navigation of the Mississippi river, and I am prompted to drop you this line because of the references in Mrs. Sutcliffe's paper to Fulton's design to establish steam navigation on the Mississippi river; also because of the absence from the paper and from all printed matter that has come under my eye connected with the Hudson-Fulton celebration<sup>3</sup> of any mention of the initial establishment of steam navigation on the Mississippi. For

<sup>1</sup>Arthur Twining Hadley, at that time President Emeritus of Yale University.

<sup>2</sup>"Strange True Stories of Louisiana."

<sup>3</sup>In 1908 was celebrated, in New York and on the Hudson River, the centennial of the establishment by Robert Fulton of steam navigation on the Hudson.

in fact the first regular packet steamboat to ply the Mississippi, the first that ever successfully ran up current in that stream, began its career in the winter of 1810-'11, as the enterprise of a man working under the auspices of Fulton and Livingston, though I believe not with their capital. This man was Nicholas Roosevelt, was from New York and went out to Pittsburgh to build the boat and establish the enterprise. The boat was the Natchez, and the name of its first captain was Baker. She ran for at least a year or two (I have the exact dates in my desk) and it is within the period of our own generation that her sunken wreck was brought to light by one of the innumerable shiftings of the Mississippi's channel.

I write this on the impulse of the moment on a Sunday evening when I have just been enjoying also with great pride in you your recollections of Grover Cleveland. Thank you for them. Ever

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

The early spring of 1915 found my father once more in New Orleans, and once more in search of material for a novel. "Gideon's Band: A Tale of the Mississippi," had been published in 1914, and almost simultaneously with it, "The Amateur Garden,"—a collection of essays on gardens and gardening, most of them previously published as magazine articles, into the writing of which he had put the results of his gardening experiences as well as his delight in his own and other people's gardens, both in the North and in the South. It is the one book of this character that my father ever published, but it gave him, in the writing, almost as keen pleasure as did any of his imaginative works.

The years that followed, though devoid of outstanding events, still saw the literary pen moving on from month to month, with a regularity born of "a life-long habit of story-telling." During the summer months he would work



in his study—he called it “the power house”—on the edge of his beloved woods in Northampton; and when the winter weather sent him and his wife southward, he “carried his literary knitting with him.” So that, whether in Bermuda or New Orleans or Atlantic City, the writing was continued until, by 1918, at the age of seventy-four years, he had added two more novels to his account. This, too, in spite of the fact that, in the winter of 1913, after the completion of “Gideon’s Band,” he had undergone an operation upon one of his eyes which, though successful, left him still with seriously defective sight.

The two publications of 1914 left the literary slate clean, but a clean slate was always only an allurements to further work, and immediately a new novel was projected. It, too, was to be a Creole story—of the Creoles of his own time—and so my father’s delight was great when on his arrival in New Orleans, in March, 1915, he found he could obtain a lodging-place upon Esplanade Avenue, a street upon which, “until within a few years of the date here following, [1914] more Creoles lived elegantly than on any other equal length of thoroughfare in New Orleans.”<sup>1</sup>

*To Eva C. Stevenson Cable*

1265 Esplanade Ave.  
N. Orleans, Mar 7, 1915.

I am in a small group of Creoles and in the very heart of the old life. Je demeure chez Madame Tricou in a large rear parlor turned into a bedroom and am writing by a soft-coal fire. It turnd<sup>2</sup> cold in the night. My room has

<sup>1</sup>“Lovers of Louisiana,” Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1918.

<sup>2</sup>This spelling is in accordance with the rules of the Simplified Spelling Board, of which my father had been a member since 1913. The Society, organized in 1906, “to promote, by systematic and continued effort, the gradual simplification of English spelling,” had drawn him into its fold, and although he agreed with it in principle,



THE STUDY ON THE EDGE OF THE WOODS, "TARRYAWHILE," NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

four big windows, two looking on to the lawn and two on to a back veranda.

But my home, after all, my home of the moment, is negs doe ad the 'ouse of Madame J. Numa Augustin. One of her daughters is unmarried, the other is the wife of a son of Colonel Eschelmann, my old and honored acquaintance, and her son is—or was—I think he is a widower—the husband of a cousin of General Beauregard, and they are all cousins of my old friend—to whom I was secretary in the Cotton Exchange work—Adolphe Schreiber.

And they seem ever so pleased to have me among them and are so cordial and communicative and so glad I am writing one more story, that I am very glad of my fortune.

How odd it is, the way I hit upon names. You notice that Tricou is one of the names I gave, in my preparatory summary, to kinspeople of the Durels.<sup>1</sup> Now when I go to Jones the colord editor to see where I may get accounts of the colord Reconstruction governors—lieut-governors—of Louisiana he thinks one of the best authorities would be old Pierre Landry. You remember my old ex-secretary of lieut-governors I have named Landry, Ovide Landry.<sup>2</sup> This is pure chance.

The Louisiana Historical Society have askt me to read a paper at their regular monthly meeting of the seven-teenth. I telegrapht you to-day to send me "The Maple Leaf,"<sup>3</sup> and to-day have accepted the invitation. The meeting will be a public one, tho on invitation, and will be held in the old Cabildo, the old Supreme Court room. "A Strange True Story of Louisiana and the War—1863." So the announcement is to read.

he never thoroughly adopted its regulations. Only here and there in his letters and not at all in his published writings, do the "simplifications" appear. In 1921, however, he was elected a vice-president.

<sup>1</sup>"Lovers of Louisiana."

<sup>1</sup>Both of these names occur in "Lovers of Louisiana."

<sup>2</sup>Ovide Landry appears in both "Lovers of Louisiana" and "The Flower of the Chapdelaines."

<sup>3</sup>This story was never published.

*To the same*

1265 Esplanade, N. Orleans,  
Mar. 16, 1915

Mme. Augustin says with pride, "I am Madame Delphine; that is my firz' name—and also my mawther's!" I gave her "The Amateur Garden." She said, "That is one of yo' books I have not read."

Mar. 18.—The house, yesterday evening, was so crowded that altho they found folding-chairs elsewhere in the building and put them in wherever one would go, not men alone, but women as well, had to stand up. One man fainted away.

I had never had such a procession of handshakers in my life. There must have been fifty. A vote of thanks to me was past and as the gathering began prematurely to rise and a swarm of hands was offerd me the Society voted me an honorary member and bolted for better air, while I stood utterly taken aback and unable to respond because there was no longer anyone seated to respond to.

Among those who came to shake hands were my dear Mme. Augustin—who is cousin to some new person every succeeding day—and M. Henrionet. And there were the Wadhamses, the Clementses, the Toledanos, the Bernards and a lot whose names I did not get or could not keep. What an hour it was to me!

Mar. 19.—Being in and with and of the Creole element is proving a great success. The audience was thickly sprinkled with Creoles night before last.

Mar. 22.—Beer took me to a second-hand book-dealer who was glad to see me and offer me whatever he could of service. "We do not call you Mr. Cable in Paris, but only Cable." Leaving Mr. Beer I went into St. Peter street and had, alone, another delightful quarter-hour with another

second-hand bookseller in the back of the Cabildo. They tell me of a very black man named Marcelle who a while back was not only a dealer in books and pamphlets and maps, but a genuine connoisseur in art and a man of learning. So much for my Ovide Landry, with whom I need only go ahead.

*To the same*

New Orleans, La.  
1265 Esplanade Ave., Mar 31, 1915.

I went into town earlier than usual this forenoon, did two or three minor errands, left my card on Janvier and then went and sat an hour with the Chief (now cald Inspector) of Police, submitting all those points of my coming story upon which he could inform me. Found him a very interesting man, alert, commanding, frank, sympathetic and, tho apparently pure Anglo-American, grotesquely ignorant of English speech. He spoke frequently of "statuory" and "statuary" offenses and of the police's lively intolerance of "claravonts." He gave me much reason to be heartily grateful to him, as did also his secretary whom he several times rang into the room and who is an old acquaintance of mine of thirty-five years ago. I found myself also in debt to the assistant chief who told me a stirring tale of how he nosed out a "claravont" in Gretna (across the river here) and ran her down in Detroit. The hour with those three men and especially with Inspector Sanders—I think that's the name—is worth the whole trip.

April 1: I give this morning to the city archives to learn what occurd in N. Orleans in 1913-'14, and I must start out at once.

April 4: To-day I went for the last time to the cathedral and heard a service led by the archbishop; a very

beautiful Easter service, splendid in red and white, purple and gold, candlelight and incense and stately music and procession and a noble sermon. After service found myself joined by Mr. and Mrs. Johnston, Mrs. Wellborn and her grown-up son. We went around into Royal street and, led by Mrs. Wellborn to the dwellings of her friends, saw two of those closely shut-in courtyards of the old Spanish type which is now almost extinct in New Orleans.

During this visit my father was at work, not only in gathering material, but in the actual writing of two novels: one, "Lovers of Louisiana"; the other "The Flower of the Chapdelaines," "a story which incorporates into itself three stories<sup>1</sup> long ago printed in other form but never before assembled." In 1917 these novels were completed and in 1918 they were published, one in the spring, the other in the autumn.

These two stories, written during the Great War, could hardly fail to reflect, though in the slightest degree, that mighty struggle in Europe, which was so soon to draw into itself his own country. Now, in his early seventies he was living over again, in memory, the experiences of his far-away youth, when he had been acquainted with the horrors and sufferings of war. In "Lovers of Louisiana" the Lusitania disaster is mentioned and in "The Flower of the Chapdelaines" the tale newly written around the earlier ones told of four young Creoles gone "at that France"—"two to be *juz' poi lu*, two *aviateur*." At the same time—as early, that is, as 1916—he had taken upon himself to add, in whatever public address he might be making, his own word toward the spreading of the "gospel of a world league, at the close of the war, for permanent peace." A year later he was enrolled as one of the speakers for this

<sup>1</sup>"The Angel of the Lord," included in "A House Party," a group of anonymous stories published by Small, Maynard & Co., 1901; "A West Indian Slave Insurrection," published in *Scribner's Magazine*, December, 1892; and "The Clock in the Sky," in *Scribner's Magazine*, September, 1901.

League.<sup>1</sup> Upon the formation of *The Vigilantes*—"a non-partisan organization of authors, artists and others for patriotic purposes"—he became one of its members, and contributed in prose and verse to its efforts "to arouse the country to a realization of the importance of the problems confronting the American people."

*To his son-in-law, J. Alfred Chard*

23 Dryads' Green,  
Northampton, Mass.,  
Nov. 4, 1918.

MY DEAR, DEAR ALFRED:

It touches me that in the double preoccupation of your business intricacies and your terrible bereavement you should remember my birthday and celebrate it with an affectionate letter. Thank you fondly.

Dear son, I mourn with you. It is so pathetic that our young soldier should have had to lay down his life at the very threshold of his service to his country and to the grandest cause that ever called patriots to arms.<sup>2</sup> You will never quite get used to his loss and no more shall I; yet sweet will always be the consolation that he rests in a hero's grave on the field of honor and service and glory.

I stop writing to read the stupendous news of the day: the German army at its tether's end and Austria breaking to pieces. Congratulations to you, fellow-citizen!

*To Henry van Dyke*

23 Dryads' Green,  
Northampton, Mass.,  
July 15, 1919.

DEAR HENRY VAN DYKE:

Another letter to hold up my courage and warm my heart. And what great work you have done for the world's

<sup>1</sup>The League to Enforce Peace.

<sup>2</sup>His eldest grandson—his namesake—George Cable Chard, had gone to France with the 107th Infantry, and was killed in Flanders while in active service.

cause in these incomparable years. How many of your pages have made my blood surge, both over in Bermuda under the British flag and here, home again at last, under our own blessed stars and stripes. Lay on! Lay on! Give us the League of Nations, sweet fruit of a bitter, bitter tree, and the only thing that will allow us to look God in the face as we put away the sword.

Ever affectionately,

GEO. W. CABLE

When, upon the death of Mr. Andrew Carnegie in 1919, my father found himself numbered in the long list of beneficiaries under the will of this generous friend of many years, he wrote to his eldest daughter:

DARLING LOUISE:

A letter of congratulation from Mary Bartlett has exposed you! your goodness in keeping in touch with your Hartford cousins. I thank you for it.

And even more I thank you for your congratulations on my beloved Mr. Carnegie's remembrance of me in his will. It is an amazing surprise to me.

I am spending the day answering the felicitations of my dear kindred and friends. Hence this brevity.

Well, I shall be better able to work and better able to play. I couldn't be better able to love you and yours.

Ever your fond

FATHER

In New Orleans, in the spring of 1919, a new story had been begun—one, however, that was destined never to be finished—of an old "haunted house" which, in my father's boyhood, had stood on Washington Street—now Avenue—and had always been a source of interest to him. He and his sisters and brother had often wandered through its untenanted rooms when for a brief period in their early life their home had been on that same street. The story





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**GEORGE W. CABLE IN 1921. ONE OF THE LAST PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN OF HIM.**

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was to have been one of modern New Orleans as affected by the Great War. In May, 1920, he wrote to his sister, "Daily I toil in my literary work, hoping to finish another story before something stops me." But he could not go on with it. Something did stop him. Suddenly one day he said to one of his daughters, "I am an old man! An *old man!*" Almost with a child's amazement he added, "Somehow, I never expected to be that." He who had always been so full of youth, so alert, so intensely alive, found it hard to comprehend the fact of old age—of his own old age. Truly, "all men think all men mortal but themselves." It was shortly after this that he wrote to his sister, "You must not talk so about our never meeting again on earth. People, especially old people, should not talk themselves old. I do not believe in it, and you ought not to believe in it." To Mr. Scribner he wrote, in September of this year:

DEAR FRIEND:

You are wondering what has become of me. Nothing! I am still alive, but not—am not truly—living. Not because my doctor has forbidden me to work, as he truly has, but because I saw that the endeavor to work was useless. I have been for months idle! I am idle yet. I am producing nothing. Is it any wonder that I have not written you? The mere thought of writing a letter—any letter to anyone—has been an unbearable affliction, and so I have had good reason to fear my letter would be no better to whoever received the infliction.

I don't believe I'm done for; I shall write again, I trust; but *when* is more than I can promise myself.

Now, isn't this too doleful? I remember once when Mark Twain was in the bosom of his friends at a little dinner given me, stag-dinner, Joe Twichell rising and saying he did not believe they could serve the country effectively by sitting any longer, Twain said *he* could not think of anything further to say that was both funny—and decent. So with this poor letter of mine.

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Whenever I feel inspired to drop you another line funnier and decenter than any of these I shall give myself that joy.

With every good wish I am

Yours truly,

GEO. W. CABLE

In the two years that followed he was again able to work, though fitfully, upon the projected story, and before he finally laid it aside it had assumed almost a novel's proportions; but early in the summer of 1923 the death of his wife left him completely broken in health, and once more bereft of a blessed companionship. His daughter Dorothea—Mrs. Charles Boardman Hawes—came, with her husband and their two small sons, to his lonely house, to help him pass the summer. But hardly had they been a few weeks there when a further shattering blow fell upon him in the sudden death of this his youngest son-in-law, who had already, at the age of thirty-four, shown exceptional ability as a writer of stories for boys.

It seemed to those near to him that my father could not live through the summer; but the long sunny days in his garden had a tonic effect, and he succeeded in gradually recovering some degree of health. As the chilly autumn days approached, however, he found it necessary to leave that beloved spot, and in October he went to the home of his daughter Mrs. Alfred Chard, in Montclair, New Jersey. Here, in December of that year, he married Mrs. Hannah Cowing, who had been a near neighbor and friend of the family through all the years they had lived in Northampton.

Together they went to spend the rest of that winter in St. Petersburg, Florida, but there was no thought, now, of any writing. One more summer in his well-loved garden in Northampton brought him quiet happiness, and the next winter, in St. Petersburg once more, he passed, in his sleep, from this life—January 31st, 1925.

He had lived his fourscore years full measure, convinced that this is "not a world with which we should have as little to do as we may, but as much as we can." And because he had believed "in beauty and in joy," this world had always been for him a source of inexhaustible beauty and a deep well of joy.

On the 8th of February he was laid to rest, beside the wife of his youth, close to his beloved mother, his eldest sister and the son who had been his "bosom friend," in Northampton, the home of his adoption. Here he

"Gave  
His body to that pleasant country's earth,  
And his pure soul unto his Captain Christ,  
Under whose colors he had fought so long."

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