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SELECTED AND EDITED

BY

C. ALPHONSO SMITH

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE STUDENT

Every student of literature will agree with me, I think, in saying that he gets more pleasure and more profit from reading two masterpieces that are much alike but at the same time stimulatingly different than from reading two masterpieces that have nothing in common. There is pleasure in such reading, because the mind is stirred to self-activity in noting resemblances and differences, and in such self-activity there is the enjoyment that always comes of quickened insight and victorious discrimination. There is intellectual profit in such reading, because you know that you are assimilating at first hand something of the creative process which, in a different way, went to the making of the two masterpieces that you are now scrutinizing and appraising. You are calling on each to aid you in the interpretation of the other.

"He who knows only one language," said Goethe, "knows no language at all." Why? Because having learned his own language in childhood he can never objectify its processes and get a grip on its distinctive excellences or defects until he learns some other language to use as a reflecting mirror. "No man," says Arnold, "who knows nothing else, knows even his own Bible." Why? Because he has nothing else with which to compare it. He can neither eulogize it nor censure it with assurance, because praise and blame are equally dependent on some basis of comparison. When Kipling asked,

> And what should they know of England who only England know?

he was amplifying the same great truth. He meant to say that everything distinctive in English history and tradition will be

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forever barred to him who, by travel or study or intercourse, knows nothing of other lands. Such a man has no measuring rod.

But the principle finds its best application in literature. Sainte-Beuve, speaking of literary criticism, says the whole art consists in nothing but comparison: "L'art du critique consiste encore à comparer." Taine is more definite: "All the treatises on poetry and the drama put together are not so valuable as the reading of a play of Shakespeare and comparing it line by line with the Italian tales and the old chronicles which Shakespeare had before his eyes when writing."

I can never forget what a flood of light was thrown on Lincoln's mastery of expression when I read the written suggestions that Seward had made for the close of the First Inaugural. Seward was a college graduate. Lincoln said, "I never went to school more than six months in my life." Seward, thinking that Lincoln's First Inaugural should end with a flourish, submitted the following:

> I close. We are not, we must not be, aliens or enemies, but fellow-countrymen and brethren. Although passion has strained our bonds of affection too hardly, they must not, I am sure they will not, be broken. The mystic chords which, proceeding from so many battlefields and so many patriot graves, pass through all the hearts and all hearths in this broad continent of ours, will yet again harmonize in their ancient music when breathed upon by the guardian angel of the nation.

There is a touch of autobiography in the way Lincoln transmuted this raw material into the splendor of the great conclusion:

> I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

You cannot compare the two paragraphs without knowing better than before Lincoln's taste in the selection and rejection of words, his feeling for sentence structure, his sense of unforced

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rhythm, and his mastery in rounding a great address to an apt and adequate conclusion. With the two paragraphs before you, you know not only what Lincoln wrote but what he resisted.

Comparison and contrast, then, form the keyword of the selections that follow. If my introductions stand in the way, omit them. Comparison and contrast will, it is hoped, be self-suggested. It is hoped too, and with some confidence, that by thinking through these selections you will find your appreciation of literature enriched, your critical faculties more sharply edged, and your constructive powers released for new and original creations.

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LITERARY CONTRASTS

I. POETRY

ALLEGED PLAGIARISM

[Did Longfellow in "The Beleaguered City" (published in November, 1839) plagiarize from Poe's "Haunted Palace" (published in the preceding April)? Poe thought so. On March 29, 1841, Poe wrote to Griswold as follows:

> The identity in title is striking, for by "The Haunted Palace" I mean to imply a mind haunted by phantoms—a disordered brain—and by "The Beleaguered City" Professor Longfellow means just the same. But the whole *tournure* of the poem is based upon mine, as you will see at once. Its allegorical conduct, the style of its versification and expression—all are mine.

Longfellow replied to Griswold, September 28, 1850:

> I am quite sure I never saw it [Poe's poem] till long after mine was written. It certainly never before occurred to me that there was any resemblance between the two; and upon reading them now I do not see any sufficient ground to justify a charge of plagiarism on either side, though you and Mr. Poe seem to think otherwise.

The two poems make an interesting comparison, but I think that you will side with Longfellow, not with Poe. (1) Do the poems "mean just the same"? Longfellow is not describing "a disordered brain." He is telling how "our ghastly fears," yours and mine, the fears of the normal man and woman, are dispelled by prayer and faith. (2) The structure of the two poems is different. Longfellow's poem is an expanded simile, six stanzas being devoted to the beleaguered city and six to the beleaguered soul. Note how accurately Longfellow carries out the similitude; re-read the stanzas in this order: 1, 7, 2, 8, 3, 9, 4, 10, etc. Longfellow loved this sort of parallelism: read "The Rainy Day," "Seaweed," etc. It is the method also of the Parable of the Sower (Matt. xiii, 3–8, 18–23). But Poe wrote no poem embodying an expanded

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simile. He preferred the metaphor. In the simile A is said to be like B; in the metaphor A is B, but you must make the inference yourself. Poe nowhere says outright that his haunted palace is a handsome and talented man, a poet, who disintegrates and through whose bloodshot eyes we at last see utter ruin. But we infer it. The last two stanzas mark the decline; but they are not terraced in structure, nor do they interpret the preceding stanzas as Longfellow's last six stanzas interpret his first six. The *tournure* of the two poems is not, then, the same. (3) But these structural differences are no more characteristic of the two poems than is the general thought-content characteristic of the two authors. Poe's poem ends in unbroken midnight; Longfellow's, in the rising of the morning star. And yet Poe's seems to me far the greater poem. Why? Read the two poems again. Remember that Poe's poem is a part of "The Fall of the House of Usher." "It loses greatly," said Lowell, "by being taken out of its rich and appropriate setting."]

THE HAUNTED PALACE

EDGAR ALLAN POE

In the greenest of our valleys
  By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
  Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion,
  It stood there;
Never seraph spread a pinion
  Over fabric half so fair.

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
  On its roof did float and flow,
(This—all this—was in the olden
  Time long ago)
And every gentle air that dallied,
  In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
  A wingèd odor went away.

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Wanderers in that happy valley
  Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
  To a lute's well-tunèd law,
Round about a throne where, sitting,
  Porphyrogene,
In state his glory well befitting,
  The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
  Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
  And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes whose sweet duty
  Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
  The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
  Assailed the monarch's high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
  Shall dawn upon him, desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
  That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim-remembered story
  Of the old time entombed.

And travelers now within that valley
  Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms that move fantastically
  To a discordant melody;
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
  Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever,
  And laugh—but smile no more.

1839

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THE BELEAGUERED CITY

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

I have read, in some old, marvelous tale,
  Some legend strange and vague,
That a midnight host of specters pale
  Beleaguered the walls of Prague.

Beside the Moldau's rushing stream,
  With the wan moon overhead,
There stood, as in an awful dream,
  The army of the dead.

White as a sea-fog, landward bound,
  The spectral camp was seen,
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound,
  The river flowed between.

No other voice nor sound was there,
  No drum, nor sentry's pace;
The mist-like banners clasped the air
  As clouds with clouds embrace.

But when the old cathedral bell
  Proclaimed the morning prayer,
The white pavilions rose and fell
  On the alarmèd air.

Down the broad valley fast and far
  The troubled army fled;
Up rose the glorious morning star,
  The ghastly host was dead.

I have read, in the marvelous heart of man,
  That strange and mystic scroll,
That an army of phantoms vast and wan
  Beleaguer the human soul.

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Encamped beside Life's rushing stream,
In Fancy's misty light,
Gigantic shapes and shadows gleam
Portentous through the night.

Upon its midnight battle-ground
The spectral camp is seen,
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound,
Flows the River of Life between.

No other voice nor sound is there,
In the army of the grave;
No other challenge breaks the air,
But the rushing of Life's wave.

And when the solemn and deep church-bell
Entreats the soul to pray,
The midnight phantoms feel the spell,
The shadows sweep away.

Down the broad Vale of Tears afar
The spectral camp is fled;
Faith shineth as a morning star,
Our ghastly fears are dead.

1839

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FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN, FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH

[Though there is no suggestion of plagiarism, Rossetti evidently had "The Raven" in mind when he wrote "The Blessed Damozel." "I saw," he said, "that Poe had done the utmost it was possible to do with the grief of the lover on earth and so I determined to reverse the conditions and to give utterance to the yearning of the loved one in heaven." In "The Raven" the lover on earth yearns upward to Lenore in heaven; in Rossetti's poem the blessed damozel yearns downward to her lover on earth. In Rossetti's painting called by the same name, the lover, a young medieval knight with a sword by his side, reclines under a tree, looking wistfully upward as if hearing echoes of what is said. Notice that in the poem the young knight *does* overhear and even see the blessed damozel, so rapt are they both in thoughts of each other. The five passages in parenthesis, containing the lover's responses, have no analogues in "The Raven." A greater difference is in the despair of Poe's poem and the assured hope of Rossetti's, a difference not unlike that already noticed between "The Haunted Palace" and "The Beleaguered City."

In stanzaic structure also the two poems are wholly unlike. "The Raven," with its eight beats to each of the five full lines and four beats to the terminal half-line, and with its four long *o*-sounds chanting dolorously through each stanza, was a revelation in verse technique. The structure of "The Blessed Damozel" is much simpler, each stanza having only one rime sound, though each a different one. But in tone, color, music, and movement the stanzas of both poems are perfectly adapted to their varying moods. Of course "The Raven" does not symbolize remorse. In the last line of the last stanza, said Poe, "the intention of making him [the bird] emblematical of mournful and never-ending remembrance is permitted distinctly to be seen."

J. H. Ingram, Poe's English biographer, calls "The Raven" "the most popular lyrical poem in the world." Certainly in English literature it has only one rival, Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard." Stopford Brooke writes of "The Blessed Damozel":

It is a lovely thing, as exquisite in tenderness and sublimated in thought as it is in form and finish. [Rossetti] was only twenty when he wrote it, and his art is as true and fine in it as in the best of the later sonnets. So swiftly does

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genius grow to its full height. The subject is noble and appeals to universal feeling. No one who has loved and lost, and waits here below, or there above, but must have cherished its main thought and felt its main emotion. The ornament is beautiful, and is charged with human feeling. It is not the work of fancy but of imagination piercing with vital power into the heart of the subject, and radiating new thought, new feeling, through every verse, even every line.]

THE RAVEN

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door:
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore,
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore:
Nameless here forevermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating,
"'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door,
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door:
This it is and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door:—
Darkness there and nothing more.

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Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering,
fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream
before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word,
"Lenore?"
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word,
"Lenore:"
Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore;
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore:
'Tis the wind and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and
flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore.
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or
stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door,
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door:
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,—
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure
no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly
shore:
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian
shore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

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Much I marveled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door,
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing further then he uttered, not a feather then he fluttered,
Till I scarcely more than muttered,—"Other friends have flown before;
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before."
Then the bird said, "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store,
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore:
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore,
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,

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But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.
"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! prophet still, if bird or devil!
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore:
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil—prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us, by that God we both adore,
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore:
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting:
"Get thee back into the tempest and the night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken! quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

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And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on
the floor:
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore.

1845

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .

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Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
  The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
  That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
  The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
  She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
  Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
  With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
  Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
  'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
  Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
  Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
  Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
  The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
  Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
  Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the world. Her gaze still strove
  Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
  The stars sang in their spheres.

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The sun was gone now; the curled moon
  Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
  She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
  Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
  Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
  Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
  Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
  For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in Heaven?—on earth,
  Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
  And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
  And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
  To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
  And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
  Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
  With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
  Each like a little cloud.

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"We two will lie i' the shadow of
  That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
  Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
  Saith His Name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,
  I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
  Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
  Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
  Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
  To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
  Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the groves
  Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
  Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
  Margaret and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
  And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
  Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
  Who are just born, being dead.

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"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:
  Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
  Not once abashed or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
  My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
  To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
  Bowed with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
  To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
  Thus much for him and me:—
Only to live as once on earth
  With Love, only to be,
As then awhile, forever now
  Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said,
  Less sad of speech than mild,—
"All this is when he comes." She ceased.
  The light thrilled towards her, fill'd
With angels in strong level flight.
  Her eyes prayed, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
  Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
  The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
  And wept. (I heard her tears.)

1847

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A GREEK LEGEND

[It is not likely that Landor ever saw Lowell's "Rhœcus"; but the two poems, treating the same mythological incident, are as interesting in their resemblances as in their differences. Perhaps by comparing them you can suggest—though you cannot write—a still better interpretation of the incident. The dryads or hamadryads belonged among the lesser goddesses of Greek and Roman mythology. They were nymphs. They lived in trees, especially oak trees, and were not immortal, their life or death being coincident with the life or death of the tree that they inhabited. They could reward those who revered trees and punish those who harmed them. Rhœcus (or Rhaicos or Rhœkos) was a man whom a dryad both rewarded and punished. Thomas Keightley in his *Fairy Mythology* and also in his *Mythology of Ancient Greece and Italy* relates the story as follows:

> A man named Rhœkos, happening to see an oak just ready to fall to the ground, ordered his slaves to prop it up. The Nymph, who had been on the point of perishing with the tree, came to him and expressed her gratitude to him for having saved her life, and at the same time desired him to ask what reward he would. Rhœkos then requested her to permit him to be her lover, and the Nymph acceded to his desire. She at the same time charged him strictly to avoid the society of every other woman, and told him that a bee should be her messenger. One time the bee happened to come to Rhœkos as he was playing at draughts and he made a rough reply. This so incensed the Nymph that she deprived him of his sight.

Lowell shapes the story to a definite moral. The plighted troth of the dryad dedicated Rhœcus to sympathy with all nature and thus to kindliness in the treatment not only of trees but of all natural objects. When Rhœcus brushes the bee angrily away he is told that

> he who scorns the least of Nature's works
> Is thenceforth exiled and shut out from all.

Henceforth he was "alone on earth," dead to the charm and comradeship of nature. It is the lesson of Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," injury to a bee taking the place of the wanton shooting of an albatross.

Did not Lowell err, however, in failing to have the dryad tell Rhœcus that a bee was to serve as her "humble messenger"? This was in the

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original story, and Landor has carefully inserted it. The plot demands it. Lowell, I think, forgot it or thought that he had mentioned it. To brush a stinging and insistent bee from your face is too instinctive and unoffending an act to be construed as an assault upon all the sanctities of nature's domain. It is not an act of wanton cruelty as was the killing of the harmless albatross, nor was it in Lowell's poem the violation of love's pledge as it was in "The Hamadryad" (pp. 29–30). Landor's poem is more Greek than Lowell's. The English poet tells the tale as 'twas told to him, with abundant embroidery but with no attempt to modernize or moralize the content. Rhaicos has proved false to his vow; and after moaning at the base of the stricken tree for a year he dies, milk and honey being offered afterward by way of propitiation. Lowell attempted a larger task than Landor, but was not wholly successful.]

RHŒCUS[1]

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

God sends his teachers unto every age,
To every clime, and every race of men,
With revelations fitted to their growth
And shape of mind, nor gives the realm of Truth
Into the selfish rule of one sole race:
Therefore each form of worship that hath swayed
The life of man, and given it to grasp
The master-key of knowledge, reverence,
Infolds some germs of goodness and of right;
Else never had the eager soul, which loathes
The slothful down of pampered ignorance,
Found in it even a moment's fitful rest.

There is an instinct in the human heart
Which makes that all the fables it hath coined,
To justify the reign of its belief
And strengthen it by beauty's right divine,
Veil in their inner cells a mystic gift,

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Which, like the hazel twig, in faithful hands,
Points surely to the hidden springs of truth.
For, as in nature naught is made in vain,
But all things have within their hull of use
A wisdom and a meaning which may speak
Of spiritual secrets to the ear
Of spirit; so, in whatso'er the heart
Hath fashioned for a solace to itself,
To make its inspirations suit its creed,
And from the niggard hands of falsehood wring
Its needful food of truth, there ever is
A sympathy with Nature, which reveals,
Not less than her own works, pure gleams of light
And earnest parables of inward lore.
Hear now this fairy legend of old Greece,
As full of gracious youth, and beauty still
As the immortal freshness of that grace
Carved for all ages on some Attic frieze.

A youth named Rhœcus, wandering in the wood,
Saw an old oak just trembling to its fall,
And, feeling pity of so fair a tree,
He propped its gray trunk with admiring care,
And with a thoughtless footstep loitered on.
But, as he turned, he heard a voice behind
That murmured "Rhœcus!" 'Twas as if the leaves,
Stirred by a passing breath, had murmured it,
And, while he paused bewildered, yet again
It murmured "Rhœcus!" softer than a breeze.
He started and beheld with dizzy eyes
What seemed the substance of a happy dream
Stand there before him, spreading a warm glow
Within the green glooms of the shadowy oak.
It seemed a woman's shape, yet far too fair
To be a woman, and with eyes too meek
For any that were wont to mate with gods.

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All naked like a goddess stood she there,
And like a goddess all too beautiful
To feel the guilt-born earthliness of shame.
"Rhœcus, I am the Dryad of this tree,"
Thus she began, dropping her low-toned words
Serene, and full, and clear, as drops of dew,
"And with it I am doomed to live and die;
The rain and sunshine are my caterers,
Nor have I other bliss than simple life;
Now ask me what thou wilt, that I can give,
And with a thankful joy it shall be thine."

Then Rhœcus, with a flutter at the heart,
Yet by the prompting of such beauty bold,
Answered: "What is there that can satisfy
The endless craving of the soul but love?
Give me thy love, or but the hope of that
Which must be evermore my nature's goal."
After a little pause she said again,
But with a glimpse of sadness in her tone,
"I give it, Rhœcus, though a perilous gift;
An hour before the sunset meet me here."
And straightway there was nothing he could see
But the green glooms beneath the shadowy oak,
And not a sound came to his straining ears
But the low trickling rustle of the leaves,
And far away upon an emerald slope
The falter of an idle shepherd's pipe.

Now, in those days of simpleness and faith,
Men did not think that happy things were dreams
Because they overstepped the narrow bourn
Of likelihood, but reverently deemed
Nothing too wondrous or too beautiful
To be the guerdon of a daring heart.
So Rhœcus made no doubt that he was blest,

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And all along unto the city's gate
Earth seemed to spring beneath him as he walked,
The clear, broad sky looked bluer than its wont,
And he could scarce believe he had not wings,
Such sunshine seemed to glitter through his veins
Instead of blood, so light he felt and strange.

Young Rhœcus had a faithful heart enough,
But one that in the present dwelt too much,
And, taking with blithe welcome whatsoe'er
Chance gave of joy, was wholly bound in that,
Like the contented peasant of a vale,
Deemed it the world, and never looked beyond.
So, haply meeting in the afternoon
Some comrades who were playing at the dice,
He joined them, and forgot all else beside.

The dice were rattling at the merriest,
And Rhœcus, who had met but sorry luck,
Just laughed in triumph at a happy throw,
When through the room there hummed a yellow bee
That buzzed about his ear with down-dropped legs
As if to light. And Rhœcus laughed and said,
Feeling how red and flushed he was with loss,
"By Venus! does he take me for a rose?"
And brushed him off with rough, impatient hand.
But still the bee came back, and thrice again
Rhœcus did beat him off with growing wrath.
Then through the window flew the wounded bee,
And Rhœcus, tracking him with angry eyes,
Saw a sharp mountain-peak of Thessaly
Against the red disk of the setting sun,—
And instantly the blood sank from his heart,
As if its very walls had caved away.
Without a word he turned, and, rushing forth,
Ran madly through the city and the gate,

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And o'er the plain, which now the wood's long shade,
By the low sun thrown forward broad and dim,
Darkened wellnigh unto the city's wall.

Quite spent and out of breath he reached the tree,
And, listening fearfully, he heard once more
The low voice murmur "Rhœcus!" close at hand:
Whereat he looked around him, but could see
Naught but the deepening glooms beneath the oak.
Then sighed the voice, "O Rhœcus! nevermore
Shalt thou behold me or by day or night,
Me, who would fain have blessed thee with a love
More ripe and bounteous than ever yet
Filled up with nectar any mortal heart:
But thou didst scorn my humble messenger,
And sent'st him back to me with bruisèd wings.
We spirits only show to gentle eyes,
We ever ask an undivided love,
And he who scorns the least of Nature's works
Is thenceforth exiled and shut out from all.
Farewell! for thou canst never see me more."

Then Rhœcus beat his breast, and groaned aloud,
And cried, "Be pitiful! forgive me yet
This once, and I shall never need it more!"
"Alas!" the voice returned, "'tis thou art blind,
Not I unmerciful; I can forgive,
But have no skill to heal thy spirit's eyes;
Only the soul hath power o'er itself."
With that again there murmured "Nevermore!"
And Rhœcus after heard no other sound,
Except the rattling of the oak's crisp leaves,
Like the long surf upon a distant shore,
Raking the sea-worn pebbles up and down.
The night had gathered round him: o'er the plain
The city sparkled with its thousand lights,

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And sounds of revel fell upon his ear
Harshly and like a curse; above, the sky,
With all its bright sublimity of stars,
Deepened, and on his forehead smote the breeze:
Beauty was all around him and delight,
But from that eve he was alone on earth.

1843

THE HAMADRYAD[1]

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Rhaicos was born amid the hills wherefrom
Gnidos, the light of Caria, is discerned:
And small are the white-crested that play near,
And smaller onward are the purple waves.
Thence festal choirs were visible, all crowned
With rose and myrtle if they were inborn;
If from Pandion sprang they, on the coast
Where stern Athenè raised her citadel,
Then olive was intwined with violets
Clustered in bosses, regular and large.
For various men wore various coronals;
But one was their devotion. 'Twas to her
Whose laws all follow, her whose smile withdraws
The sword from Ares, thunderbolt from Zeus;
And whom in his chill caves the mutable
Of mind, Poseidon, the sea-king, reveres;
And whom his brother, stubborn Dis, hath prayed
To turn in pity the averted cheek
Of her he bore away, with promises,—
Nay, with loud oath before dread Styx itself,—
To give her daily more and sweeter flowers
Than he made drop from her on Enna's dell.

[1] From *The Hellenics.*

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Rhaicos was looking from his father's door
At the long trains that hastened to the town
From all the valleys, like bright rivulets
Gurgling with gladness, wave outrunning wave;
And thought it hard he might not also go
And offer up one prayer, and press one hand,
He knew not whose. The father called him in,
And said, "Son Rhaicos! those are idle games;
Long enough I have lived to find them so."
And ere he ended sighed; as old men do
Always, to think how idle such games are.
"I have not yet," thought Rhaicos in his heart,
And wanted proof.—"Suppose thou go and help
Echeion at the hill, to bark yon oak
And lop its branches off, before we delve
About the trunk and ply the root with axe:
This we may do in winter."—Rhaicos went;
For thence he could see farther, and see more
Of those who hurried to the city-gate.
Echeion he found there, with naked arm
Swart-haired, strong-sinewed, and his eyes intent
Upon the place where first the axe should fall:
He held it upright. "There are bees about,
Or wasps, or hornets," said the cautious eld;
"Look sharp, O son of Thallinos!" The youth
Inclined his ear, afar, and warily,
And caverned in his hand. He heard a buzz
At first,—and then the sound grew soft and clear,
And then divided into what seemed tune,
And there were words upon it, plaintive words.
He turned, and said, "Echeion! do not strike
That tree: it must be hollow; for some god
Speaks from within. Come thyself near." Again
Both turned toward it: and behold! there sat
Upon the moss below, with her two palms

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Pressing it, on each side, a maid in form.
Downcast were her long eyelashes, and pale
Her cheek; but never mountain-ash displayed
Berries of color like her lip so pure;
Nor were the anemones about her hair
Soft, smooth, and wavering like the face beneath.
"What dost thou here?" Echeion, half-afraid,
Half-angry, cried. She lifted up her eyes,
But nothing spake she. Rhaicos drew one step
Backward, for fear came likewise over him,
But not such fear: he panted, gasped, drew in
His breath, and would have turned it into words,
But could not into one. "O send away
That sad old man!" said she. The old man went
Without a warning from his master's son,
Glad to escape, for sorely he now feared;
And the axe shone behind him in their eyes.

HAMADRYAD. And wouldst thou, too, shed the most innocent
Of blood? No vow demands it; no god wills
The oak to bleed.

RHAICOS. Who art thou? whence? why here?
And whither wouldst thou go? Among the robed
In white or saffron, or the hue that most
Resembles dawn or the clear sky, is none
Arrayed as thou art. What so beautiful
As that gray robe which clings about thee close,
Like moss to stones adhering, leaves to trees,—
Yet lets thy bosom rise and fall in turn,
As, touched by zephyrs, fall and rise the boughs
Of graceful platan by the river-side?

HAMADRYAD. Lovest thou well thy father's house?

RHAICOS. Indeed
I love it, well I love it, yet would leave
For thine, where'er it be, my father's house,
With all the marks upon the door, that show

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My growth at every birthday since the third;
And all the charms, o'erpowering evil eyes,
My mother nailed for me against my bed;
And the Cydonian bow (which thou shalt see)
Won in my race last spring from Eutychos.

HAMADRYAD. Bethink thee what it is to leave a home
Thou never yet hast left, one night, one day.

RHAICOS. No, 'tis not hard to leave it: 'tis not hard
To leave, O maiden, that paternal home,
If there be one on earth whom we may love
First, last, for ever; one who says that she
Will love for ever too. To say which word,
Only to say it, surely is enough—
It shows such kindness—if 'twere possible
We at the moment think she would indeed.

HAMADRYAD. Who taught thee all this folly at thy age?

RHAICOS. I have seen lovers and have learned to love.

HAMADRYAD. But wilt thou spare the tree?

RHAICOS. My father wants
The bark; the tree may hold its place awhile.

HAMADRYAD. Awhile! Thy father numbers then my days?

RHAICOS. Are there no others where the moss beneath
Is quite as tufty? Who would send thee forth
Or ask thee why thou tarriest? Is thy flock
Anywhere near?

HAMADRYAD. I have no flock: I kill
Nothing that breathes, that stirs, that feels the air,
The sun, the dew. Why should the beautiful
(And thou art beautiful) disturb the source
Whence springs all beauty? Hast thou never heard
Of hamadryads?

RHAICOS. Heard of them I have:
Tell me some tale about them. May I sit
Beside thy feet? Art thou not tired? The herbs
Are very soft; I will not come too nigh;
Do but sit there, nor tremble so, nor doubt.—

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Stay, stay an instant: let me first explore
If any acorn of last year be left
Within it; thy thin robe too ill protects
Thy dainty limbs against the harm one small
Acorn may do. Here's none.—Another day
Trust me; till then, let me sit opposite.

HAMADRYAD. I seat me; be thou seated, and content.

RHAICOS. O sight for gods! Ye men below! adore
The Aphroditè. *Is* she there below?
Or sits she here before me? as she sate
Before the shepherd on those heights that shade
The Hellespont, and brought his kindred woe.

HAMADRYAD. Reverence the higher powers; nor deem amiss
Of her who pleads to thee, and would repay—
Ask not how much—but very much. Rise not:
No, Rhaicos, no! Without the nuptial vow
Love is unholy. Swear to me that none
Of mortal maids shall ever taste thy kiss,
Then take thou mine: *then* take it, not before!

RHAICOS. Hearken, all gods above! O Aphroditè!
O Herè! Let my vow be ratified!—
But wilt thou come into my father's house?

HAMADRYAD. Nay; and of mine I cannot give thee part.

RHAICOS. Where is it?

HAMADRYAD. In this oak.

RHAICOS. Ay; now begins
The tale of hamadryad: tell it through.

HAMADRYAD. Pray of thy father never to cut down
My tree; and promise him, as well thou mayst,
That every year he shall receive from me
More honey than will buy him nine fat sheep,
More wax than he will burn to all the gods.—
Why fallest thou upon thy face? Some thorn
May scratch it, rash young man! Rise up;. for shame!

RHAICOS. For shame I can not rise. O pity me!
I dare not sue for love—but do not hate!

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Let me once more behold thee—not once more,
But many days: let me love on—unloved!
I aimed too high: on my head the bolt
Falls back, and pierces to the very brain.

HAMADRYAD. Go—rather go, than make me say I love.

RHAICOS. If happiness is immortality
(And whence enjoy it else the gods above?)
I am immortal too: my vow is heard.
Hark! on the left—Nay, turn not from me now,
I claim my kiss.

HAMADRYAD. Do men take first, then claim?
Do thus the seasons run their course with them?

Her lips were sealed, her head sank on his breast.
'Tis said that laughs were heard within the wood:
But who should hear them?—and whose laughs? and why?

Savory was the smell, and long past noon,
Thallinos! in thy house; for marjoram,
Basil and mint, and thyme and rosemary,
Were sprinkled on the kid's well roasted length,
Awaiting Rhaicos. Home he came at last,
Not hungry, but pretending hunger keen,
With head and eyes just o'er the maple plate.
"Thou seest but badly, coming from the sun,
Boy Rhaicos!" said the father. "That oak's bark
Must have been tough, with little sap between;
It ought to run: but it and I are old."
Rhaicos, although each morsel of the bread
Increased by chewing, and the meat grew cold
And tasteless to his palate, took a draught
Of gold-bright wine, which, thirsty as he was,
He thought not of until his father filled
The cup, averring water was amiss,
But wine had been at all times poured on kid,
It was religion.—He thus fortified
Said, not quite boldly, and not quite abashed:

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"Father, that oak is Zeus's own; that oak
Year after year will bring thee wealth from wax
And honey. There is one who fears the gods
And the gods love . . . that one" (he blushed, nor said
What one) "has promised this, and may do more.
Thou hast not many moons to wait until
The bees have done their best; if then there come
Nor wax nor honey, let the tree be hewn."—
"Zeus hath bestowed on thee a prudent mind,"
Said the glad sire; "but look thou often there,
And gather all the honey thou canst find
In every crevice, over and above
What has been promised: would they reckon that?"

Rhaicos went daily; but the nymph, as oft,
Invisible. To play at love, she knew,—
Stopping its breathings when it breathes most soft,—
Is sweeter than to play on any pipe.
She played on his: she fed upon his sighs;
They pleased her when they gently waved her hair,
Cooling the pulses of her purple veins;
And when her absence brought them out, they pleased.
Even among the fondest of them all,
What mortal or immortal maid is more
Content with giving happiness than pain?
One day he was returning from the wood
Despondently. She pitied him, and said
"Come back!" and twined her fingers in the hem
Above his shoulder. Then she led his steps
To a cool rill that ran o'er level sand
Through lentisk and through oleander: there
Bathed she his feet, lifting them on her lap
When bathed, and drying them in both her hands.
He dared complain; for those who most are loved
Most dare it; but not harsh was his complaint.
"O thou inconstant!" said he; "if stern law

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Bind thee,—or will, stronger than sternest law,—
O, let me know henceforward when to hope
The fruit of love that grows for me but here."
He spake; and plucked it from its pliant stem.
"Impatient Rhaicos! Why thus intercept
The answer I would give? There is a bee
Whom I have fed, a bee who knows my thoughts
And executes my wishes: I will send
That messenger. If ever thou art false,
Drawn by another, own it not, but drive
My bee away; then shall I know my fate,
And—for thou must be wretched—weep at thine.
But often as my heart persuades to lay
Its cares on thine and throb itself to rest,
Expect her with thee, whether it be morn
Or eve, at any time when woods are safe."
Day after day the Hours beheld them blessed,
And season after season: years had past,
Blest were they still. He who asserts that Love
Ever is sated of sweet things,—the same
Sweet things he fretted for in earlier days,—
Never, by Zeus! loved he a hamadryad.

The nights had now grown longer, and perhaps
The hamadryads find them lone and dull
Among their woods: one did, alas! She called
Her faithful bee; 'twas when all bees should sleep,
And all did sleep but hers. She was sent forth
To bring that light which never wintry blast
Blows out, nor rain nor snow extinguishes,—
The light that shines from loving eyes upon
Eyes that love back, till they can see no more.
Rhaicos was sitting at his father's hearth.
Between them stood the table,—not o'erspread
With fruits which autumn now profusely bore,
Nor anise cakes, nor odorous wine; but there

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The draft-board was expanded; at which game
Triumphant sat old Thallinos; the son
Was puzzled, vexed, discomfited, distraught.
A buzz was at his ear: up went his hand,
And it was heard no longer. The poor bee
Returned (but not until the morn shone bright),
And found the Hamadryad with her head
Upon her aching wrist; and showed one wing
Half broken off, the other's meshes marred,—
And there were bruises which no eye could see
Saving a hamadryad's. At this sight
Down fell the languid brow, both hands fell down:
A shriek was carried to the ancient hall
Of Thallinos. He heard it not: his son
Heard it, and ran forthwith into the wood.
No bark was on the tree, no leaf was green,
The trunk was riven through. From that day forth
Nor word nor whisper soothed his ear, nor sound
Even of insect wing. But loud laments
The woodmen and the shepherds one long year
Heard day and night: for Rhaicos would not quit
The solitary place, but moaned and died.

Hence milk and honey wonder not, O guest,
To find set duly on the hollow stone.

1846

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TWO REJECTED LOVERS

[Tennyson's "Locksley Hall" and Browning's "The Last Ride Together" have never, so far as I know, been compared or even classed as comparable. But for years the conviction has grown upon me that no other two poems by these authors bring out so clearly the spiritual contrast between the great contemporaries as do these two. Both Tennyson and Browning were poets of faith and hope. As compared with Arnold or Swinburne they had arrived at certain spiritual convictions to which they clung through life and of which they became the recognized spokesmen. In the presence of sin, evil, suffering, and adversity Tennyson looked to a better, though a far-distant, future. All would right itself at last.

Oh, yet we trust that somehow good
  Will be the final goal of ill,
  To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt and taints of blood.

For Tennyson the world was built on divinely convergent lines, and his poetry points through the darkness to

That God, which ever lives and loves,
  One God, one law, one element,
  And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.

Tennyson believed in a remedial future.

Browning believed in a remedial present. Trial, failure, disappointment, were to him not rendings of the veil through which we could quiescently view the promised land. They were disciplines. They were stumblingblocks which here and now could be turned into stepping-stones. They were opportunities of self-development. Turn to the stanza of "Rabbi Ben Ezra" (p. 64) beginning

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough.

You will find nothing like that in Tennyson, but it is Browning's characteristic challenge. Of course Browning believed in a better world yet to be; he, too, felt the appeal of Shelley's great line

If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

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But he put the emphasis not on looking or longing, but on educing immediate good out of present evil. In one poem he speaks of "the blessed evil." Why blessed? That it may turn your thoughts to a remedial future? No; that it may make you practice a remedial present.

Each poet has exemplified his teaching in a young lover who after being finally discarded is seeking strength and solace in his bereavement. In "Locksley Hall" Tennyson portrays a blustering, explosive, vindictive young soldier who, true to the poet's philosophy, found no comfort in the past or in the present, but who, after a vision of the future "far as human eye could see" (p. 38), announces:

> So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,
> Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye.

In "The Last Ride Together" Browning's lover, a far nobler type, asks himself: "If she had accepted me, should I not have attained the utmost pinnacle of happiness? Would there have been anything left to strive for, any present urge to spur me on? No great idealist, no real poet or sculptor or musician, ever caught up with his ideal. I'm safer so." When he dismounts after the ride, he is already a new man. He has found self-restoration without denouncing his sweetheart or his rival and without any thought of appealing his case through the centuries to "the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world."

When you read Maupassant's "Necklace" (pp. 173–182) ask yourself what Tennyson and Browning would have said by way of comfort to poor Madame Loisel at the close of the story.]

LOCKSLEY HALL

Alfred Tennyson

Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn:
Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,
And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

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Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed;
When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed:

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see;
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be.—

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove;
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

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Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong";
Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weeping, "I have loved thee long."

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fullness of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy, mine no more!
O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy?—having known me—to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine!

Yet it shall be: thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is: thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

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He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy; think not they are glazed with wine.
Go to him, it is thy duty; kiss him, take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought;
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less unworthy proved—
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit?
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come
As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home,

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Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind?

I remember one that perish'd: sweetly did she speak and move:
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?
No—she never loved me truly: love is love for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to
proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and
fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken
sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt
weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whisper'd by the phantom
years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down: my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

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O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself was not exempt—
Truly, she herself had suffer'd"—Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! wherefore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these?
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy: what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapor, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honor feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from thy deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

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And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men:

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye;

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Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint:
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creeping on from point to point:

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion, creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat forever like a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn:

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a molder'd string?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness! woman's pleasure, woman's pain—
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain:

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat;

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Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr'd;—
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing space;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I *know* my words are wild,
But I count the grey barbarian lower than the Christian child.

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I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon!

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day:
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not), help me as when life begun:
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall!
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening over heath and holt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

1842

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THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

ROBERT BROWNING

I said—Then, dearest, since 'tis so,
Since now at length my fate I know,
Since nothing all my love avails,
Since all, my life seemed meant for, fails,
  Since this was written and needs must be—
My whole heart rises up to bless
Your name in pride and thankfulness!
Take back the hope you gave,—I claim
Only a memory of the same,
—And this beside, if you will not blame,
  Your leave for one more last ride with me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;
Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs
When pity would be softening through,
Fixed me a breathing-while or two
  With life or death in the balance: right!
The blood replenished me again;
My last thought was at least not vain:
I am my mistress, side by side
Shall be together, breathe and ride,
So, one day more am I deified.
  Who knows but the world may end to-night?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud
All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed
By many benedictions—sun's
And moon's and evening-star's at once—
  And so, you, looking and loving best,
Conscious grew, your passion drew
Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,

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Down on you, near and yet more near,
Till flesh must fade for heaven was here! —
Thus leant she and lingered—joy and fear!
  Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul
Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped scroll
Freshening and fluttering in the wind.
Past hopes already lay behind.
  What need to strive with a life awry?
Had I said that, had I done this,
So might I gain, so might I miss.
Might she have loved me? just as well
She might have hated, who can tell!
Where had I been now if the worst befell?
  And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds?
Why, all men strive, and who succeeds?
We rode; it seemed my spirit flew,
Saw other regions, cities new,
  As the world rushed by on either side.
I thought,—All labor, yet no less
Bear up beneath their unsuccess.
Look at the end of work, contrast
The petty done, the undone vast,
This present of theirs with the hopeful past!
  I hoped she would love me; here we ride.

What hand and brain went ever paired?
What heart alike conceived and dared?
What act proved all its thought had been?
What will but felt the fleshly screen?
  We ride and I see her bosom heave.
There's many a crown for who can reach.
Ten lines, a statesman's life in each!

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The flag stuck on a heap of bones,
A soldier's doing! what atones?
They scratch his name on the Abbey-stones.
  My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet? Well,
Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell
What we felt only; you expressed
You hold things beautiful the best,
  And place them in rhyme so, side by side.
'Tis something, nay 'tis much: but then,
Have you yourself what's best for men?
Are you—poor, sick, old ere your time—
Nearer one whit your own sublime
Than we who never have turned a rhyme?
  Sing, riding's a joy! For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor—so, you gave
A score of years to Art, her slave,
And that's your Venus, whence we turn
To yonder girl that fords the burn!
  You acquiesce, and shall I repine?
What, man of music, you grown grey
With notes and nothing else to say,
Is this your sole praise from a friend,
"Greatly his opera's strains intend,
But in music we know how fashions end!"
  I gave my youth; but we ride, in fine.

Who knows what's fit for us? Had fate
Proposed bliss here should sublimate
My being—had I signed the bond—
Still one must lead some life beyond,
  Have a bliss to die with, dim-descried.
This foot once planted on the goal,
This glory-garland round my soul,

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Could I descry such? Try and test!
I sink back shuddering from the quest.
Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?
  Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

And yet—she has not spoke so long!
What if heaven be that, fair and strong
At life's best, with our eyes upturned
Whither life's flower is first discerned,
  We, fixed so, ever should so abide?
What if we still ride on, we two,
With life forever old yet new,
Changed not in kind but in degree,
The instant made eternity,—
And heaven just prove that I and she
  Ride, ride together, forever ride?

1855

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AN ENGLISH LEGEND

[Tennyson's "Rizpah" and Miss Lowell's "Dried Marjoram" are so alike in content that the reader at once thinks the latter poem is a reconstruction of the former. But Miss Lowell tells us that she had not read "Rizpah" when she wrote "Dried Marjoram." The two poets, therefore, went independently to the same source for their inspiration. Tennyson says, "'Rizpah' is founded on an incident which I saw thus related in some penny magazine called *Old Brighton*, lent me by my friend and neighbor Mrs. Brotherton," who adds that Tennyson at first called his poem "Bones." The penny-magazine version ended, "What a sad story of a Brighton Rizpah." Miss Lowell writes, "The theme of 'Dried Marjoram' has been a favorite one with poets since time was. I stumbled across it in a history or guidebook of Hampshire County, England, but I need have gone no farther than the Bible and the story of Rizpah."

"If one were asked," says Mr. Royall H. Snow, "to define wherein present-day poetry differs from the poetry of the Victorian period, one could best explain by example, and a trenchant example would be a comparison between 'Dried Marjoram' and Tennyson's 'Rizpah.'" Merely for purposes of comparison it would be better if "Dried Marjoram" exemplified cadenced verse and polyphonic prose (see page 394) as do many of the other poems in Miss Lowell's *Legends*. But "Dried Marjoram" observes the traditions of rime, line length, and stanzaic structure almost as carefully as does "Rizpah." Note, however, in Miss Lowell's poem the exemplification of the last three of the six articles of faith that constitute the creed of the Imagists:

4. To present an image. We are not a school of painters, but we believe that poetry should render particulars exactly and not deal in vague generalities, however magnificent and sonorous.

5. To produce poetry that is hard and clear, never blurred or indefinite.

6. Finally, most of us believe that concentration is the very essence of poetry.

Judged by these standards (as far as you concede them to be standards), which is the greater of the two poems?

Which poem presents the clearer images?

Which poem constructs for you the more definite personality?]

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RIZPAH

17—

ALFRED TENNYSON

Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over land and sea—
And Willy's voice in the wind, "O mother, come out to me!"
Why should he call me tonight, when he knows that I cannot go?
For the downs are as bright as day, and the full moon stares at the snow.

We should be seen, my dear: they would spy us out of the town.
The loud black nights for us, and the storm rushing over the down,—
When I cannot see my own hand, but am led by the creak of the chain,
And grovel and grope for my son till I find myself drenched with the rain.

Anything fallen again? Nay—what was there left to fall?
I have taken them home, I have numbered the bones, I have hidden them all.
What am I saying? and what are *you*? do you come as a spy?
Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tree falls, so must it lie.

Who let her in? how long has she been? You—what have you heard?
Why did you sit so quiet? You never have spoken a word.
O—to pray with me—yes—a lady—none of their spies—
But the night has crept into my heart, and begun to darken my eyes.

Ah—you, that have lived so soft, what should *you* know of the night,
The blast and the burning shame and the bitter frost and the fright?

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I have done it, while you were asleep—you were only made for the day.
I have gathered my baby together—and now you may go your way.

Nay—for it 's kind of you, madam, to sit by an old dying wife.
But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only an hour of life.
I kissed my boy in the prison, before he went out to die.
"They dared me to do it," he said, and he never has told me a lie.
I whipped him for robbing an orchard once, when he was but a child:
"The farmer dared me to do it," he said. He was always so wild,—
And idle—and couldn't be idle,—my Willy—he never could rest.
The King should have made him a soldier: he would have been one of his best.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and they never would let him be good;
They swore that he dare not rob the mail, and he swore that he would.
And he took no life; but he took one purse, and when all was done
He flung it among his fellows—"I'll none of it," said my son.

I came into court to the judge and the lawyers: I told them my tale,
God's own truth—but they killed him, they killed him for robbing the mail.
They hanged him in chains for a show—we had always borne a good name:
To be hanged for a thief—and then put away—isn't that enough shame?
Dust to dust—low down—let us hide! But they set him so high
That all the ships of the world could stare at him, passing by.

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God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven and horrible fowls of the air,
But not the black heart of the lawyer who killed him and hanged him there.

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid him my last good-bye;
They had fastened the door of his cell. "O mother!" I heard him cry.
I couldn't get back though I tried: he had something further to say,
And now I never shall know it. The jailer forced me away.

Then since I couldn't but hear that cry of my boy that was dead,
They seized me and shut me up: they fastened me down on my bed.
"Mother, O mother!"—he called in the dark to me, year after year—
They beat me for that, they beat me—you know that I couldn't but hear.
And then at the last they found I had grown so stupid and still
They let me abroad again—but the creatures had worked their will.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my bone was left—
I stole them all from the lawyers—and you, will you call it a theft?—
My baby, the bones that had sucked me, the bones that had laughed and had cried—
Theirs? O, no! they are mine—not theirs—they had moved in my side.

Do you think I was scared by the bones? I kissed 'em, I buried 'em all—
I can't dig deep, I am old—in the night, by the churchyard wall.
My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the trumpet of judgment 'ill sound:
But I charge you never to say that I laid him in holy ground.

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They would scratch him up: they would hang him again on the cursèd tree.
Sin? O, yes, we are sinners, I know—let all that be,
And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's good-will toward men—
"Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord" let me hear it again:
"Full of compassion and mercy—long-suffering." Yes, O yes!
For the lawyer is born but to murder—the Saviour lives but to bless.
He'll never put on the black cap except for the worst of the worst,
And the first may be last—I have heard it in church—and the last may be first.
Suffering—O, long-suffering—yes, as the Lord must know:
Year after year, in the mist and the wind and the shower and the snow.

Heard, have you? What? they have told you he never repented his sin.
How do they know it? are *they* his mother? are *you* of his kin?
Heard! Have you ever heard, when the storm on the downs began,
The wind that 'ill wail like a child and the sea that 'ill moan like a man?

Election, Election and Reprobation—it's all very well.
But I go tonight to my boy, and I shall not find him in hell.
For I cared so much for my boy that the Lord has looked into my care;
And He means me, I'm sure, to be happy with Willy, I know not where.

And if *he* be lost—but to save *my* soul, that is all your desire:
Do you think that I care for *my* soul if my boy be gone to the fire?
I have been with God in the dark—go, go, you may leave me alone:
You never have borne a child—you are just as hard as a stone.

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Madam, I beg your pardon! I think that you mean to be kind;
But I cannot hear what you say for my Willy's voice in the wind—
The snow and the sky so bright—he used but to call in the dark:
And he calls to me now from the church and not from the gibbet—For hark!
Nay—you can hear it yourself: it is coming—shaking the walls—
Willy—the moon's in a cloud—Good-night. I am going. He calls.

1880

DRIED MARJORAM[1]

AMY LOWELL

Over the moor the wind blew chill,
And cold it blew on the rounded hill
With a gibbet starting up from its crest,
The great arm pointing into the West
Where something hung
And clanked and swung.

Churchyard carrion, caged four-square
To every wind that furrows the air,
A poor unburied, unquiet thing,
The weighted end of a constant swing.
It clanged and jangled
But always dangled.

Lonely travelers riding by
Would check their horses suddenly
As out of the wind arose a cry
Hoarse as a horn in the weather-eye
Of sleet at sea
Blown desperately.

[1] By permission of Miss Lowell and Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers.

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It would rise and fall, and the dissonance
As it struck the shrill of the wind would lance
The cold of ice-drops down the spine
And turn the blood to a clotted brine.
Then only the hum
Of the wind would come.

Never a sound but rasping heather
For minute after minute together.
Till once again a wail, long-drawn,
Would slice the night as though it were sawn,
Cleaving through
The mist and dew.

Such were the tales the riders told,
Sitting snugly out of the cold
In a wayside inn, with just a nip
Of cherry-brandy from which to sip,
While rafters rattled
And gossips prattled.

Rotted and blackened in its cage,
Anchored in permanent harborage,
Breeding its worms, with no decent clod
To weave it an apron of grassy sod.
But this is no grief,
The man was a thief.

He stole a sheep from a farmer's fold.
He was hungry, he said, and very cold.
His mother was ill and needed food.
The judge took snuff, his attitude
Was gently resigned.
He had not yet dined.

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"To be hanged by the neck until you are dead."
That was the verdict, the judge had said.
A sheep had died, so why not a man.
The sheep had an owner, but no one can
Claim to own
A man full-grown.

Nobody's property, no one to care,
But someone is sobbing over there.
"Most distressing, I declare,"
Says the judge, "take the woman out on the stair,
And give her a crown
To buy a new gown."

A gown for a son, such a simple exchange!
But the clerk of the court finds it hard to arrange
This matter of sobbing, the fact is the sheep
Was stolen for her, and the woman will weep.
It is most unreasonable.
Indeed, well-nigh treasonable.

Slowly, slowly, his hands tied with rope,
The cart winds up the market slope.
Slowly, slowly, the knot is adjusted.
The tackle-pulleys whine, they are rusted.
But free at a kick—
Run—and hold with a click.

A mother's son, swung like a ham,
Bobbing over the heads of the jam.
A woman has fainted, give her air,
Drag her away, for the people stare.
The hanging is done.
No more fun.

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Nothing more but a jolting ride.
An ox-cart with a corpse inside,
Creaking through the shiny sheen
Of heather-stalks melted and bathed in green
From a high-set moon.
The heather-bells croon.

Heather below, and moon overhead,
And iron bars clasping a man who is dead.
Shadows of gorse-bushes under him bite
The shimmering moor like a spotted blight.
The low wind chirrs
Over the furze.

Slowly, slowly, panting and weak,
Someone wanders and seems to seek,
Bursting her eyes in the green, vague glare,
For an object she does not know quite where.
Ah, what is that?
A wild moor cat?

It scratches and cries above her head,
But here is no tree, and overspread
With clouds and moon the waste recedes,
And the heather flows like bent sea-weeds
Pushed by an ebb
To an arching web.

Black and uncertain, it rises before
Her dim old eyes, and the glossy floor
At its feet is undulant and specked
With a rhythmic wavering, and flecked
By a reddish smudge
Which does not budge.

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Woman, that bundle is your son,
This is the goal your steps have won.
Over the length of the jeweled moor
You have traveled at last to the high-hung door
Of his airy grave,
Which does nothing but wave.

Dripping and dropping, his caged limbs drain,
And the spangled ground has a sticky stain.
She gave him this blood from her own dull veins,
And hers still runs, but her body's pains
Turn back on her now,
And each is a blow.

Iron-shrouded, flapping the air,
Sepulchred without a prayer,
Denied the comfort of bell and book.
Her tortured eyes do nothing but look.
And from flower to flower
The moon sinks lower.

Silver-grey, lavender, lilac-blue,
East of the moor the sun breaks through;
Cracking a bank of orange mist,
It shoulders up with a ruddy twist,
And spears the spires
Of heath with its fires.

Then a lark shoots up like a popgun ball
And turns to a spark and a song, and all
The thrushes and sparrows twitter and fly,
And the dew on the heather and gorse is dry.
But brutal and clear
The gibbet is here.

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Slowly, slowly, worn and flagging,
With the grasshoppers jumping in front of her dragging
Feet, the old woman returns to the town.
But the seed of a thought has been deeply sown
　　In her aching mind,
　　Where she holds it enshrined.

Nights of moon and nights of dark,
Over the moor-path footsteps. Hark!
It is the old woman whose son is rotting
Above, on the gallows. That shadow blotting
　　The Western sky
　　Will be hers by-and-by.

Morning, and evening, and sun, and snow,
Months of weather come and go.
The flesh falls away from the withering bones,
The bones grow loose and scatter like stones.
　　For the gallows-tree
　　　　Shakes windily.

Every night along the path
Which her steps have beaten to a swath
Where heather and bracken dare not spring,
To the clack and grind of the gallows swing,
　　The woman stumbles.
　　The skeleton crumbles.

Bit by bit, on the ferns and furze,
Drop the bones which now are hers.
Bit by bit, she gathers them up
And carries them home in an old cracked cup.
　　But the head remains
　　Although its brains

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Nourish the harebells and mullein-stalks.
Blow the wind high, the head still balks;
It rolls like an ivory billiard-ball,
But the bars are too close to let it fall.
Still, God is just,
And iron may rust.

November comes, this one after ten,
And the stiff bush-branches grate on the fen,
The gibbet jars to the sharp wind-strokes,
And the frazzled iron snarls and croaks.
It blows a gale
With snow and hail.

Two days, three nights, the storm goes on,
And the cage is tossed like a gonfalon
Above a castle, crumpled and slit,
And the frail joints are shattered apart and split.
The fissure gapes,
And the skull escapes.

An ostrich-egg on a bed of fern,
Restlessly rolled by the streams which churn
The leaves, thrust under and forced into
The roots and the mud which oozes through
The empty pockets
Of wide eye-sockets.

Two days, three nights, and the ferns are torn
And scattered in heaps, and the bushes shorn,
And the heather docked of its seeded bells.
But the glittering skull heaves high and swells
Above the dank square
Where the ferns once were.

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Hers at last, all, all of hers,
And past her tears the red sun blurs,
Bursting out of the sleeve of the storm.
She brushes a busy, wriggling worm
    Away from the head
    Of her dearest dead.

The uprooted gibbet, all awry,
Crooks behind her against the sky.
Startled rabbits flee from her feet;
The stems of the bracken smell ripe and sweet.
    She pays no heed,
    But quickens her speed.

In the quiet evening, the church-bell tolls;
Fishermen wind up their fishing-poles;
Sheep-bells clink in farmstead closes;
A cat in a kitchen window dozes;
    And doors are white
    With candlelight.

In the old woman's house there is much to do.
Her windows are shuttered, no gleam comes through,
But inside, the lamp-shine strikes on a tub;
She washes, it seems, and her old hands rub
    And polish with care
    The thing that is there.

Gently, gently, sorting and sifting,
With a little psalm-tune shakily drifting
Across her lips, she works and watches,
Stealing moments in sundry snatches
    To note the tick-tock
    Of the hanging clock.

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Decently, reverently, all displayed
Upon a cloth, the bones are laid.
Oh, the loving, lingering touch
Tenderly pausing on such and such!
A cuckoo flings
From the clock, and sings.

"Cuckoo! Cuckoo!" Eight times over.
Wrap them up in a linen cover.
Take the spade and snuff the lamp.
Put on a cloak for the night is damp.
The door creaks wide,
She steps outside.

All tottering, solemn, eager, slow,
She crawls along. The moon is low
And creeps beside her through the hedge,
Rising at last to peer over the edge
Of the churchyard wall
And brighten her shawl.

The flagstone path taps back to her tread.
She stops to listen, and whispers spread
All round her, hissing from trees and graves.
Before her is movement; something waves.
But she passes on,
The movement is gone.

Blind in the moon the windows shine,
Colorless, glinting, line and line,
The leaded panes are facets and squares
Of dazzle, arched in carven pairs.
Ivy rustles.
A yew-tree justles.

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The corner last on the farthest side
Where the church, foreshortened, is heavy-eyed,
For only the chancel lancets pierce
The lichened mullions, designed in tierce,
    Whence the sun comes through
    Ruby and blue.

This corner is strangled in overgrowth:
Dock-leaves waver like elephants, loath
To move, but willing to flap their ears,
And huge stone blocks like unshaped biers
    Are sprawled among
    Clumps of adder's-tongue.

A bat swoops down and flitters away;
An owl whimpers like a child astray;
The slanting grave-stones, all askew,
Cock themselves obscenely, two and two.
    She stoops and pushes
    Between the bushes.

She lays her bundle on a stone.
Her bleeding hands are cut to the bone
And torn by the spines of thorn and brier.
Her shoulders ache. Her spade in the mire
    Sucks and slimes
    These many times.

Slowly she clears an open space,
Screened behind hollies, where wild vines lace
Their tendrils in angles and fractured turns.
But water is flooding the stems of the ferns.
    Alas for the dead
    Who lie in this bed!

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But hanged men have no business where
The ground has been hallowed by chant and prayer.
Even to lie in the putrid seeping
Of consecrate mud is to be in God's keeping,
    And He will forget
    His judgment debt.

Poor lone soul, all palsied and dim,
As she lifts the bones, she quavers a hymn.
Then, as for years she laid him to sleep
In his crib, she sets the bundle deep
    In the watery hole,
    And prays for his soul.

"Rest, lad, now, surely God hears,
He has granted me this for my many tears.
Sleep, my Darling, for you are come
Home at last to stay at home."
    But the old voice stops,
    And something drops.

They found her dead on a sunny noon,
Clasping the ground, and overstrewn
With decent leaves which had dropped a shroud
All about her. The parson allowed
    Custom to waive
    In making her grave.

Even the sexton said no word
When something under his shovel stirred,
And the parson read the burial prayer.
He seemed rather husky, but then the air
    Was bitter cold.
    There was frost on the mold.

1919

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THE APPROACH OF AGE

[Charles Eliot Norton once remarked that he had an infallible test for determining American authorship. "If the article in question," he said, "contains the sentence 'After all, we need not despair,' an American wrote it." The test holds for poems on old age, the American philosophy being characteristically cheerful and reassuring. In Kipling's "The Old Men" the attitude is that of frank abhorrence:

The Lamp of our Youth will be utterly out, but we shall subsist on the smell of it;
And whatever we do, we shall fold our hands and suck our gums and think well of it.
Yes, we shall be perfectly pleased with our work, and that is the Perfectest Hell of it!

In Arnold's "Growing Old" the attitude is that of increasing bitterness. But Emerson in "Terminus" greets old age with serene acquiescence, and Longfellow in "Morituri Salutamus" strikes a still higher note:

For age is opportunity no less
Than youth itself, though in another dress,
And as the evening twilight fades away
The sky is filled with stars invisible by day.

Yet, after all, the most solacing and inspiring contribution to the subject is Browning's "Rabbi Ben Ezra." It is a rapturous, though none the less reasoned, statement of a new philosophy of age; it is a rediscovery of the place of age in the economy of life. If Browning had written nothing but this poem and lived it as consistently as he did, "Rabbi Ben Ezra" would make every man and woman who reads it conscious of an increasing indebtedness to the vision and insight and abiding truth that shine through it.

These words of Dr. G. Stanley Hall in *Senescence, the Last Half of Life* form an excellent introduction:

The function of age is to finish a structure that still lacks an upper story and give it an outlook or conning tower from which man can see more clearly the far horizons and take his bearings now and then by the eternal stars. Some have told us that if the long-awaited superman ever arrives, he will come by the way of the prolongation of Adolescence, and others have said it would be by the fuller maturity of man in his prime. No doubt both these stages

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of life would be enriched and potentialized, but his first advent and his greatest improvement over man of today will be in the form of glorified old age.

To make the appeal of the poem more direct I have taken the liberty of dividing it into four sections. 1. The Theme is clearly stated in the first stanza. You must see life as a whole or you will never understand the relation of part to part. 2. Youth, as it ought to be, is a period of uncertainty, of alternate selection and rejection. There is comfort in past failure, however, because failure means that at least you tried. 3. Age is the opportunity to review and appraise youth and thus to get ready for the last and culminating change. But do not judge your past merely by statistics of work done: noble thoughts and impulses that could not blossom into deeds are part of your assets. 4. The Potter's wheel runs back or stops, but the Potter (God) and the clay (man's soul) endure. The finished cup (the matured character) is the final product. The base or beginning of the cup (youth) is of course more ornamented than the rim (age). But the rim has the higher honor: it touches the Master's lips. So age is the time of ultimate contact with our Maker.]

RABBI BEN EZRA

ROBERT BROWNING

I. THE THEME

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in his hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!"

II. YOUTH

Not that, amassing flowers,
Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,
Which lily leave and then as best recall?"
Not that, admiring stars,
It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars;
Mine be some figured flame which blends, transcends them all!"

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Not for such hopes and fears
Annulling youth's brief years,
Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark!
Rather I prize the doubt
Low kinds exist without,
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,
Were man but formed to feed
On joy, to solely seek and find and feast:
Such feasting ended, then
As sure an end to men;
Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets doubt the maw-crammed
beast?

Rejoice we are allied
To that which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive!
A spark disturbs our clod;
Nearer we hold of God
Who gives, than of his tribes that take, I must believe.

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

For thence,—a paradox
Which comforts while it mocks,—
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me:
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale.

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What is he but a brute
Whose flesh has soul to suit,
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want play?
To man, propose this test—
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

Yet gifts should prove their use:
I own the Past profuse
Of power each side, perfection every turn:
Eyes, ears took in their dole,
Brain treasured up the whole;
Should not the heart beat once "How good to live and learn"?

Not once beat "Praise be thine!
I see the whole design,
I, who saw power, see now love perfect too:
Perfect I call thy plan:
Thanks that I was a man!
Maker, remake, complete,—I trust what thou shalt do"?

For pleasant is this flesh;
Our soul, in its rose-mesh
Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest:
Would we some prize might hold
To match those manifold
Possessions of the brute,—gain most, as we did best!

Let us not always say,
"Spite of this flesh today
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!"
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry, "All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul!"

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III. AGE

Therefore I summon age
To grant youth's heritage,
Life's struggle having so far reached its term:
Thence shall I pass, approved
A man, for aye removed
From the developed brute; a god, though in the germ.

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and new:
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armor to indue.

Youth ended, I shall try
My gain or loss thereby;
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold:
And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame:
Young, all lay in dispute; I shall know, being old.

For note, when evening shuts,
A certain moment cuts
The deed off, calls the glory from the grey:
A whisper from the west
Shoots—"Add this to the rest,
Take it and try its worth: here dies another day."

So, still within this life,
Though lifted o'er its strife,
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,
"This rage was right i' the main,
That acquiescence vain:
The Future I may face now I have proved the Past."

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For more is not reserved
To man, with soul just nerved
To act tomorrow what he learns today:
Here, work enough to watch
The Master work, and catch
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's true play.

As it was better, youth
Should strive, through acts uncouth,
Toward making, than repose on aught found made:
So, better, age, exempt
From strife, should know, than tempt
Further. Thou waitedst age: wait death nor be afraid!

Enough now, if the Right
And Good and Infinite
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand thine own,
With knowledge absolute,
Subject to no dispute
From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee feel alone.

Be there, for once and all,
Severed great minds from small,
Announced to each his station in the Past!
Was I, the world arraigned,
Were they, my soul disdained,
Right? Let age speak the truth and give us peace at last!

Now, who shall arbitrate?
Ten men love what I hate,
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive;
Ten, who in ears and eyes
Match me: we all surmise,
They this thing, and I that: whom shall my soul believe?

Not on the vulgar mass
Called "work," must sentence pass,

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Things done, that took the eye and had the price;
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice:

But all, the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account;
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped;
All I could never be,
All, men ignored in me,
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

IV. THE POTTER'S WHEEL

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
That metaphor! and feel
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our clay,—
Thou, to whom fools propound,
When the wine makes its round,
"Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone, seize today!"

Fool! All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,

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This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest:
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

What though the earlier grooves,
Which ran the laughing loves
Around thy base, no longer pause and press?
What though, about thy rim,
Skull-things in order grim
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner stress?

Look not thou down but up!
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,
The new wine's foaming flow,
The Master's lips aglow!
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what needst thou with earth's
wheel?

But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who moldest men;
And since, not even while the whirl was worst,
Did I—to the wheel of life
With shapes and colors rife,
Bound dizzily—mistake my end, to slake thy thirst:

So, take and use thy work:
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!
My times be in thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same!

1864

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TERMINUS[1]

Ralph Waldo Emerson

It is time to be old,
To take in sail:—
The god of bounds,
Who sets to seas a shore,
Came to me in his fatal rounds,
And said: "No more!
No farther shoot
Thy broad ambitious branches, and thy root.
Fancy departs: no more invent;
Contract thy firmament
To compass of a tent.
There's not enough for this and that,
Make thy option which of two;
Economize the failing river,
Not the less revere the Giver,
Leave the many and hold the few.
Timely wise accept the terms,
Soften the fall with wary foot;
A little while
Still plan and smile,
And,—fault of novel germs,—
Mature the unfallen fruit.
Curse, if thou wilt, thy sires,
Bad husbands of their fires,
Who, when they gave thee breath,
Failed to bequeath
The needful sinew stark as once,
The Baresark marrow to thy bones,
But left a legacy of ebbing veins,
Inconstant heat and nerveless reins,—

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Amid the Muses, left thee deaf and dumb,
Amid the gladiators, halt and numb."

As the bird trims her to the gale,
I trim myself to the storm of time,
I man the rudder, reef the sail,
Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime:
"Lowly faithful, banish fear,
Right onward drive unharmed;
The port, well worth the cruise, is near,
And every wave is charmed."

1867

GROWING OLD

MATTHEW ARNOLD

What is it to grow old?
Is it to lose the glory of the form,
The luster of the eye?
Is it for beauty to forego her wreath?
—Yes, but not this alone.

Is it to feel our strength—
Not our bloom only, but our strength—decay?
Is it to feel each limb
Grow stiffer, every function less exact,
Each nerve more loosely strung?

Yes, this, and more; but not
Ah, 'tis not what in youth we dream'd 'twould be!
'Tis not to have our life
Mellow'd and soften'd as with sunset-glow,
A golden day's decline.

'Tis not to see the world
As from a height, with rapt prophetic eyes,

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And heart profoundly stirr'd;
And weep, and feel the fullness of the past,
The years that are no more.

It is to spend long days
And not once feel that we were ever young;
It is to add, immured
In the hot prison of the present, month
To month with weary pain.

It is to suffer this,
And feel but half, and feebly, what we feel.
Deep in our hidden heart
Festers the dull remembrance of a change,
But no emotion—none.

It is—last stage of all—
When we are frozen up within, and quite
The phantom of ourselves,
To hear the world applaud the hollow ghost
Which blamed the living man.

1867

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THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE MOCKINGBIRD

[In the spring of 1901 I had the opportunity for the first time of contrasting the song of the nightingale, which I had never heard before, with that of the mockingbird, to which I had been accustomed from childhood. It was about midnight and in the Berlin Thiergarten. The impression left was that a Louisiana mockingbird, if put to the test, could reproduce every note made by a nightingale so that the most skilled musical jury, if they could not see the bird, would think that they had never heard the nightingale sing so well. The mockingbird would then pass carelessly on to his own daylight or moonlight raptures with no consciousness of having put forth unusual effort or of having engaged in a memorable contest.

Perhaps a more reasoned appraisal of the two birds is that of Mr. T. Gilbert Pearson, President of the National Association of Audubon Societies. He writes:

Both birds please me immensely, but they are so extremely different that they arouse in my mind wholly different moods. The mockingbird's continuous, joyous outburst rouses a spirit of carefree happiness. It inspires a desire to forget troubles, it vanishes apprehension; in short it affects me as might a mild intoxicant, and when under its spell I live only for the moment. The nightingale's song is a series of exquisite notes constantly broken by intervals. The notes are varied. Some of them are explosive, dimly suggesting the bursting of ethereal, golden bubbles or the striking of a bell producing more wonderful tones than ever heard on earth. There is a suggestion of sadness. They make one reflective, and the mind wanders off into sad, sweet contemplation on the meaning of the universe, and the unknown secrets of life and death.

But there is no doubt that English poets have sung the nightingale far more effectively than American poets have sung the mockingbird. In song and story the nightingale as far outranks the mockingbird as in melody the mockingbird outranks the catbird. If it were not for Keats's poem, especially the next to the last stanza, the disproportion would not be so great. I hope at least that this inequality of representation may not continue for all time.]

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TO THE NIGHTINGALE

JOHN MILTON

O Nightingale, that on yon bloomy spray
  Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still,
  Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
  While the jolly hours lead on propitious May.
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,
  First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
  Portend success in love. O, if Jove's will
  Have linked that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
  Foretell my hopeless doom, in some grove nigh;
  As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why.
  Whether the Muse or Love call thee his mate,
  Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

1630

THE NIGHTINGALE: A CONVERSATION POEM

[Written in April, 1798]

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

No cloud, no relique of the sunken day
Distinguishes the West, no long thin slip
Of sullen light, no obscure trembling hues.
Come, we will rest on this old mossy bridge!
You see the glimmer of the stream beneath,
But hear no murmuring: it flows silently,
O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is still,
A balmy night! and though the stars be dim,
Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
That gladden the green earth, and we shall find
A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.

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And hark! the Nightingale begins its song,
"Most musical, most melancholy" bird!
A melancholy bird! Oh! idle thought!
In nature there is nothing melancholy.
But some night-wandering man whose heart was pierced
With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,
Or slow distemper, or neglected love,
(And so, poor wretch! filled all things with himself,
And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale
Of his own sorrow), he, and such as he,
First named these notes a melancholy strain.
And many a poet echoes the conceit;
Poet who hath been building up the rhyme
When he had better far have stretched his limbs
Beside a brook in mossy forest-dell,
By sun or moonlight, to the influxes
Of shapes and sounds and shifting elements
Surrendering his whole spirit, of his song
And of his fame forgetful! so his fame
Should share in Nature's immortality,
A venerable thing! and so his song
Should make all Nature lovelier, and itself
Be loved like Nature! But 'twill not be so;
And youths and maidens most poetical,
Who lose the deepening twilights of the spring
In ballrooms and hot theaters, they still
Full of meek sympathy must heave their sighs
O'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains.

My Friend, and thou, our Sister! we have learnt
A different lore: we may not thus profane
Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
And joyance! 'Tis the merry Nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night

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Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
Of all its music!

And I know a grove
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,
Which the great lord inhabits not; and so
This grove is wild with tangling underwood,
And the trim walks are broken up; and grass,
Thin grass and kingcups grow within the paths.
But never elsewhere in one place I knew
So many nightingales; and far and near,
In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,
They answer and provoke each other's song,
With skirmish and capricious passagings,
And murmurs musical and swift jug jug,
And one low piping sound more sweet than all—
Stirring the air with such a harmony,
That should you close your eyes, you might almost
Forget it was not day! On moon-lit bushes,
Whose dewy leaflets are but half disclosed,
You may perchance behold them on the twigs,
Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright and full
Glistening, while many a glowworm in the shade
Lights up her love-torch.

A most gentle Maid,
Who dwelleth in her hospitable home
Hard by the castle, and at latest eve
(Even like a Lady vowed and dedicate
To something more than Nature in the grove),
Glides through the pathways; she knows all their notes,
That gentle Maid! and oft a moment's space,
What time the moon was lost behind a cloud,
Hath heard a pause of silence; till the moon
Emerging, hath awakened earth and sky

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With one sensation, and these wakeful birds
Have all burst forth in choral minstrelsy,
As if some sudden gale had swept at once
A hundred airy harps! And she hath watched
Many a nightingale perched giddily
On blossomy twig still swinging from the breeze,
And to that motion tune his wanton song
Like tipsy joy that reels with tossing head.

Farewell, O Warbler! till tomorrow eve,
And you, my friends! farewell, a short farewell!
We have been loitering long and pleasantly,
And now for our dear homes.—That strain again!
Full fain it would delay me! My dear babe,
Who, capable of no articulate sound,
Mars all things with his imitative lisp,
How he would place his hand beside his ear,
His little hand, the small forefinger up,
And bid us listen! And I deem it wise
To make him Nature's playmate. He knows well
The evening-star; and once when he awoke
In most distressful mood (some inward pain
Had made up that strange thing, an infant's dream),
I hurried with him to our orchard-plot,
And he beheld the moon, and, hushed at once,
Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,
While his fair eyes, that swam with undropped tears,
Did glitter in the yellow moonbeam! Well!—
It is a father's tale: But if that Heaven
Should give me life, his childhood shall grow up
Familiar with these songs, that with the night
He may associate joy.—Once more, farewell,
Sweet Nightingale! Once more, my friends! farewell.

1798

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ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

JOHN KEATS

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainèd mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget,
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and specter-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond tomorrow.

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Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
  Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
  Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
  And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
    Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
      But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
    Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
  Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
  Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
  White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
    Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
      And mid-May's eldest child,
  The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
    The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
  I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
  To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
  To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
    While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
      In such an ecstasy!
  Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
    To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
  No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
  In ancient days by emperor and clown:

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Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep? 1819

PHILOMELA

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Hark! ah, the Nightingale!
The tawny-throated!
Hark! from that moonlit cedar what a burst!
What triumph! hark—what pain!
O Wanderer from a Grecian shore,
Still, after many years, in distant lands,
Still nourishing in thy bewilder'd brain
That wild, unquench'd, deep-sunken, old-world pain—

Say, will it never heal?
And can this fragrant lawn
With its cool trees, and night,
And the sweet, tranquil Thames,
And moonshine, and the dew,
To thy rack'd heart and brain
Afford no balm?

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Dost thou tonight behold
Here, through the moonlight on this English grass,
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild?
Dost thou again peruse
With hot cheeks and sear'd eyes
The too clear web, and thy dumb Sister's shame?
Dost thou once more assay
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,
Poor Fugitive, the feathery change
Once more, and once more seem to make resound
With love and hate, triumph and agony,
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian vale?
Listen, Eugenia—
How thick the bursts come crowding through the leaves!
Again—thou hearest!
Eternal Passion!
Eternal Pain! 1853

TO THE MOCKINGBIRD

RICHARD HENRY WILDE

Winged mimic of the woods! thou motley fool!
Who shall thy gay buffoonery describe?
Thine ever-ready notes of ridicule
Pursue thy fellows still with jest and gibe.
Wit, sophist, songster, Yorick of thy tribe,
Thou sportive satirist of Nature's school,
To thee the palm of scoffing we ascribe,
Arch-mocker and mad Abbot of Misrule!
For such thou art by day—but all night long
Thou pourest a soft, sweet, pensive, solemn strain,
As if thou didst in this thy moonlight song
Like to the melancholy Jacques complain,
Musing on falsehood, folly, vice, and wrong,
And sighing for thy motley coat again. 1820

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ODE TO THE MOCKINGBIRD

ALBERT PIKE

Thou glorious mocker of the world! I hear
  Thy many voices ringing through the glooms
Of these green solitudes; and all the clear,
Bright joyance of their song enthralls the ear,
  And floods the heart. Over the spherèd tombs
Of vanished nations rolls thy music-tide:
  No light from History's starlit page illumes
The memory of these nations; they have died:
  None care for them but thou; and thou mayst sing
  O'er me, perhaps, as now thy clear notes ring
Over their bones by whom thou once wast deified.

Glad scorner of all cities! Thou dost leave
  The world's mad turmoil and incessant din,
Where none in others' honesty believe,
Where the old sigh, the young turn gray and grieve,
  Where misery gnaws the maiden's heart within.
Thou fleest far into the dark green woods,
  Where, with thy flood of music, thou canst win
Their heart to harmony, and where intrudes
  No discord on thy melodies. Oh, where,
  Among the sweet musicians of the air,
Is one so dear as thou to these old solitudes?

Ha! what a burst was that! The Æolian strain
  Goes floating through the tangled passages
Of the still woods; and now it comes again,
A multitudinous melody, like a rain
  Of glassy music under echoing trees,
Close by a ringing lake. It wraps the soul
  With a bright harmony of happiness,

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Even as a gem is wrapped when round it roll
  Thin waves of crimson flame, till we become,
  With the excess of perfect pleasure, dumb,
And pant like a swift runner clinging to the goal.

I cannot love the man who doth not love,
  As men love light, the song of happy birds;
For the first visions that my boy-heart wove,
To fill its sleep with, were that I did rove
  Through the fresh woods, what time the snowy herds
Of morning clouds shrunk from the advancing sun,
  Into the depths of Heaven's blue heart, as words
From the poet's lips float gently, one by one,
  And vanish in the human heart; and then
  I reveled in such songs, and sorrowed, when,
With noon-heat overwrought, the music-gush was done.

I would, sweet bird, that I might live with thee,
  Amid the eloquent grandeur of these shades,
Alone with Nature!—but it may not be:
I have to struggle with the stormy sea
  Of human life until existence fades
Into death's darkness. Thou wilt sing and soar
  Through the thick woods and shadow-checkered glades,
While pain and sorrow cast no dimness o'er
  The brilliance of thy heart; but I must wear,
  As now, my garments of regret and care,
As penitents of old their galling sackcloth wore.

Yet, why complain? What though fond hopes deferred
  Have overshadowed Life's green paths with gloom?
Content's soft music is not all unheard:
There is a voice sweeter than thine, sweet bird,
  To welcome me, within my humble home;
There is an eye, with love's devotion bright,
  The darkness of existence to illume.

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Then why complain? When Death shall cast his blight
  Over the spirit, my cold bones shall rest
  Beneath these trees; and from thy swelling breast,
Over them pour thy song, like a rich flood of light.

1834

LAMENT OF A MOCKINGBIRD

FANNY KEMBLE

Silence instead of thy sweet song, my bird,
  Which through the darkness of my winter days
Warbling of summer sunshine still was heard;
  Mute is thy song, and vacant is thy place.

The spring comes back again, the fields rejoice,
  Carols of gladness ring from every tree;
But I shall hear thy wild triumphant voice
  No more: my summer song has died with thee.

What didst thou sing of, O my summer bird?
  The broad, bright, brimming river, whose swift sweep
And whirling eddies by the home are heard,
  Rushing, resistless, to the calling deep.

What didst thou sing of, thou melodious sprite?
  Pine forests, with smooth russet carpets spread,
Where e'en at noonday dimly falls the light,
  Through gloomy blue-green branches overhead.

What didst thou sing of, O thou jubilant soul?
  Ever-fresh flowers and never-leafless trees,
Bending great ivory cups to the control
  Of the soft swaying, orange-scented breeze.

What didst thou sing of, thou embodied glee?
  The wide wild marshes with their clashing reeds

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And topaz-tinted channels, where the sea
  Daily its tides of briny freshness leads.

What didst thou sing of, O thou wingèd voice?
  Dark, bronze-leaved oaks, with silver mosses crowned,
Where thy free kindred live, love, and rejoice,
  With wreaths of golden jasmine curtained round.

These didst thou sing of, spirit of delight!
  From thy own radiant sky, thou quivering spark!
These thy sweet southern dreams of warmth and light,
  Through the grim northern winter drear and dark.

1839

THE MOCKINGBIRDS

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE

Oh, all day long they flood with song
  The forest shades, the fields of light;
Heaven's heart is stilled and strangely thrilled
  By ecstasies of lyric might;
From flower-crowned nooks of splendid dyes,
  Lone dells a shadowy quiet girds;
Far echoes, wakening, gently rise,
And o'er the woodland track send back
  Soft answers to the mockingbirds.

The winds, in awe, no gusty flaw
  Dare breathe in rhythmic Beauty's face;
Nearer the pale-gold cloudlets draw
  Above a charmed, melodious place:
Entrancèd Nature listening knows
  No music set to mortal words,
Nor nightingales that woo the rose,
Can vie with these deep harmonies
  Poured from the minstrel mockingbirds.

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But, vaguely seen through gulfs of green,
We glimpse the plumed and choral throng—
Sole poets born whose instincts scorn
To do Song's lowliest utterance wrong:
Whate'er they sing, a sylvan art,
On each wild, wood-born note conferred,
Guides the hot brain and hurtling heart.
Oh magical flame, whence pulsing came
This passion of the mockingbird?

Aye—pause and hark—be still, and mark
What countless grades of voice and tone
From bosk and tree, from strand and sea,
These small, winged genii make their own:
Fine lyric memories live again,
From tuneful burial disinterred,
To magnify the fiery strain
Which quivering trills and smites the hills
With rapture of the mockingbird.

Aye—pause and hark—be still, and mark
How downward borne from Song's high clime
(No loftier haunts the English lark)
They revel, each a jocund mime:
Their glad sides shake in bush and brake;
And farm-girls, bowed o'er cream and curd,
Glance up to smile, and think the while
Of all blithe things that flit on wings
None match the jovial mockingbird.

When fun protrudes gay interludes
Of blissful, glorious unrestraint,
They run, all wild with motley moods,
Thro' Mirth's rare gamut, sly and quaint:
Humors grotesque and arabesque

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Flash up from spirits brightly stirred;
And even the pedant at his desk,
Feeling in turn his spirit burn,
Laughs with the loudest mockingbird.

Oh, all day long the world with song
Is flooded, till the twilight dim;
What time its whole mysterious soul
Seems rippling to the conscious brim:
Arcadian Eve through tranquil skies
Pastures her stars in radiant herds;
And still the unwearied echoes rise,
And down a silvery track send back
Fond greeting to the mockingbirds.

At last, fair boon, the summer moon,
Beyond the hazed horizon shines;
Ah, soon through night they wing their flight
To coverts of Æolian pines:
A tremulous hush—then sweet and grand,
From depths the dense, fair foliage girds,
Their love notes fill the enchanted land;
Through leaf-wrought bars they storm the stars,
These love songs of the mockingbirds.

1872

THE MOCKINGBIRD

SIDNEY LANIER

Superb and sole, upon a plumèd spray
That o'er the general leafage boldly grew,
He summ'd the woods in song; or typic drew
The watch of hungry hawks, the lone dismay
Of languid doves when long their lovers stray,
And all birds' passion-plays that sprinkle dew

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At morn in brake or bosky avenue.
Whate'er birds did or dreamed, this bird could say.
Then down he shot, bounced airily along
The sward, twitched in a grasshopper, made song
Midflight, perched, prinked, and to his art again.
Sweet Science, this large riddle read me plain:
How may the death of that dull insect be
The life of yon trim Shakspere on the tree?

1877

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II. PROSE

THE MASKERS UNMASKED

[As soon as Poe read Hawthorne's "Howe's Masquerade" in the second volume of *Twice-Told Tales* (1842), he wrote (in *Graham's Magazine*, May, 1842): "We observe something which resembles a plagiarism, —but which *may be* a very flattering coincidence of thought." Quoting from Hawthorne the passage (p. 105) beginning "With a dark flush of wrath upon his brow," and ending "let fall his sword upon the floor," and from his own story the passage (p. 129) beginning "The brief moment in which I averted my eyes," and ending "His mask and cloak lay, where he had thrown them, upon the floor," Poe sums up as follows:

> Here, it will be observed that, not only are the two general conceptions identical, but there are various *points* of similarity. In each case the figure seen is the wraith or duplication of the beholder. In each case the scene is a masquerade. In each case the figure is cloaked. In each there is a quarrel, —that is to say, angry words pass between the parties. In each the beholder is enraged. In each the cloak and sword fall upon the floor. The "Villain, unmuffle yourself" of Mr. Hawthorne is precisely paralleled by a passage at page 128 of "William Wilson."

The comparison is interesting; but the charge of plagiarism falls to the ground when we find that "Howe's Masquerade" was first published in the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* for May, 1838, —one year and five months before "William Wilson." Hawthorne did not borrow from Poe, nor is it likely that Poe borrowed from Hawthorne. The two stories have each an entirely different *motif.* But Poe did borrow both the suggestion and the conduct of "William Wilson" from the selection here printed from Irving. "No man," says Thomas Olive Mabbott in his edition of Poe's "Politian" (1923), p. 73, "reading Washington Irving's 'An Unwritten Drama of Lord Byron' in *The Gift* for 1836 (to which Poe was a contributor) will seek further for the origin of 'William Wilson.'" Irving's article seems to have escaped the investigators of Poe's sources (see Woodberry's *Life of Edgar Allan Poe* (1909), Vol. I, p. 232) and is here reproduced for the first time.

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That Poe owned and had read a copy of *The Gift* for 1836 is evident, for in that issue he republished for the third time his "MS. Found in a Bottle." He also sent a copy of "William Wilson" to Irving, who wrote, November 6, 1839: "I have read your little tale of 'William Wilson' with much pleasure. It is managed in a highly picturesque style, and the singular and mysterious interest is well sustained throughout." Irving preferred the story to "The Fall of the House of Usher," but I wonder why he did not mention the Byron story in his letter and congratulate Poe on how gloriously he had developed a bare outline into one of the greatest short stories in American literature.]

AN UNWRITTEN DRAMA OF LORD BYRON[1]

WASHINGTON IRVING

The reading world has, I apprehend, by this time become possessed of nearly every scrap of poetry and romance ever written by Lord Byron. It may be pleased, however, to know something of a dramatic poem which he did not write, but which he projected—and this is the story:—

The hero, whom we will call Alfonso, is a Spanish nobleman, just entering upon the career of life. His passions, from early and unrestrained indulgence, have become impetuous and ungovernable, and he follows their impulses with a wild and heedless disregard of consequences.

Soon after his entrance into the world, he finds himself followed, occasionally, in public places, by a person masked and muffled up so as to conceal both countenance and figure. He at first pays but little attention to the circumstance, considering the stranger some idle or impertinent lounger about society. By degrees, however, the frequent intrusion of this silent and observant follower becomes extremely irksome. The mystery, too, which envelops him, heightens the annoyance. Alfonso is unable to identify him with any of his acquaintance,—his name, his country, his place of abode; all are unknown,—and it is im-

[1] From *The Gift: A Christmas and New Year's Present for 1836*, edited by Miss [Eliza] Leslie. E. L. Carey and A. Hart, Philadelphia, 1836. 292 pages.

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possible even to conjecture his motives for this singular espionage. It is carried, by degrees, to such lengths, that he becomes, as it were, Alfonso's shadow—his second self. Not only the most private actions of the latter pass under the scrutiny of this officious monitor, but his most secret thoughts seem known to him. Speak of him, he stands by his side; think of him, he feels his presence, though invisible, oppress and weigh upon his spirits, like a troubled atmosphere. Waking or sleeping, Alfonso has him in thought or in view. He crosses his path at every turn; like the demon in Faust, he intrudes in his solitude. He follows him in the crowded street, or in the brilliant saloon; thwarting his schemes, and marring all his intrigues of love or of ambition. In the giddy mazes of the dance, in which Alfonso is addressing his fair partner with the honeyed words of seduction, he sees the stranger pass like a shadow before him; a voice, like the voice of his soul, whispers in his ear; the words of seduction die from his lips; he no longer hears the music of the dance.

The hero of the drama becomes abstracted and gloomy. Youth, health, wealth, power—all that promised to give a zest to life, have lost their charm. The sweetest cup of pleasure becomes poison to him. Existence is a burthen. To add to his despair, he doubts the fidelity of the fair but frail object of his affection; and suspects the unknown to have supplanted him in her thoughts.

Alfonso now thirsts only for vengeance, but the mysterious stranger eludes his pursuit, and his emissaries in vain endeavor to discover his retreat. At length he succeeds in tracing him to the house of his mistress, and attacks him with the fury of frantic jealousy, taxes him with his wrongs, and demands *satisfaction*. They fight; his rival scarcely defends himself; at the first thrust he receives the sword of Alfonso in his bosom; and in falling, exclaims, "Are you satisfied!"

The mask and mantle of the unknown drop off, and Alfonso discovers his own image—the specter of himself—he dies with horror!

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The specter is an allegorical being, the personification of conscience, or of the passions.

Such was the general plan of a poem which Lord Byron had in mind, several years since; and which he communicated, in conversation, to Captain Medwin, from whom I received it nearly in the foregoing words. The idea was taken from a Spanish play, called the *Embozado*, or the *Encapotado*,[1] and was furnished to Byron by Shelley, as his Lordship did not understand Spanish. The foregoing plan is evidently somewhat vague and immature, and would doubtless have undergone many modifications in the progress of being brought out. Lord Byron intended to treat it in the genuine spirit of Goethe, as displayed in his wild and extraordinary drama of Faust, and expected to make it very effective. It certainly afforded ample scope for the mystic, the misanthropic, the metaphysical, and the romantic, in which he so much delighted; and would have given him an opportunity of interweaving much of his own peculiar feelings and experience.

How far the plan he had in view agreed with the Spanish original, I have not been able to ascertain. The latter was said to be by Calderón; but it is not to be found in any edition of his works that I have seen. My curiosity being awakened on the subject, I made diligent inquiry, while in Spain, for the play in question, but it was not to be met with in any of the public libraries, or private collections; nor could the booksellers give me any information about it. Some of the most learned and indefatigable collectors of Spanish literature informed me that a play of the kind, called the *Embozado of Cordova*, was somewhere in existence, but they had never seen it. The foregoing sketch of the plot may hereafter suggest a rich theme to a poet or dramatist of the Byron school.

[1] That is, a person muffled and disguised.

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HOWE'S MASQUERADE[1]

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

One afternoon, last summer, while walking along Washington Street, my eye was attracted by a signboard protruding over a narrow archway, nearly opposite the Old South Church. The sign represented the front of a stately edifice, which was designated as the "Old Province House, kept by Thomas Waite." I was glad to be thus reminded of a purpose, long entertained, of visiting and rambling over the mansion of the old royal governors of Massachusetts; and entering the arched passage, which penetrated through the middle of a brick row of shops, a few steps transported me from the busy heart of modern Boston into a small and secluded courtyard. One side of this space was occupied by the square front of the Province House, three stories high, and surmounted by a cupola, on the top of which a gilded Indian was discernible, with his bow bent and his arrow on the string, as if aiming at the weathercock on the spire of the Old South. The figure has kept this attitude for seventy years or more, ever since good Deacon Drowne, a cunning carver of wood, first stationed him on his long sentinel's watch over the city.

The Province House is constructed of brick, which seems recently to have been overlaid with a coat of light-colored paint. A flight of red freestone steps, fenced in by a balustrade of curiously wrought iron, ascends from the courtyard to the spacious porch, over which is a balcony, with an iron balustrade of similar pattern and workmanship to that beneath. These letters and figures—16 P.S. 79—are wrought into the iron work of the balcony, and probably express the date of the edifice, with the initials of its founder's name. A wide door with double leaves admitted me into the hall or entry, on the right of which is the entrance to the barroom.

It was in this apartment, I presume, that the ancient governors held their levees, with vice-regal pomp, surrounded by

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the military men, the councilors, the judges, and other officers of the crown, while all the loyalty of the province thronged to do them honor. But the room, in its present condition, cannot boast even of faded magnificence. The paneled wainscot is covered with dingy paint, and acquires a duskier hue from the deep shadow into which the Province House is thrown by the brick block that shuts it in from Washington Street. A ray of sunshine never visits this apartment any more than the glare of the festal torches, which have been extinguished from the era of the Revolution. The most venerable and ornamental object is a chimney piece set round with Dutch tiles of blue-figured China, representing scenes from Scripture; and, for aught I know, the lady of Pownall or Bernard may have sat beside this fireplace, and told her children the story of each blue tile. A bar in modern style, well replenished with decanters, bottles, cigar boxes, and net-work bags of lemons, and provided with a beer pump and a soda fount, extends along one side of the room. At my entrance, an elderly person was smacking his lips with a zest which satisfied me that the cellars of the Province House still hold good liquor, though doubtless of other vintages than were quaffed by the old governors. After sipping a glass of port sangaree, prepared by the skillful hands of Mr. Thomas Waite, I besought that worthy successor and representative of so many historic personages to conduct me over their time-honored mansion.

He readily complied; but, to confess the truth, I was forced to draw strenuously upon my imagination, in order to find aught that was interesting in a house which, without its historic associations, would have seemed merely such a tavern as is usually favored by the custom of decent city boarders and old-fashioned country gentlemen. The chambers, which were probably spacious in former times, are now cut up by partitions, and subdivided into little nooks, each affording scanty room for the narrow bed and chair and dressing-table of a single lodger. The great staircase, however, may be termed, without much hyperbole, a feature of grandeur and magnificence. It winds

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through the midst of the house by flights of broad steps, each flight terminating in a square landing-place, whence the ascent is continued towards the cupola. A carved balustrade, freshly painted in the lower stories, but growing dingier as we ascend, borders the staircase with its quaintly twisted and intertwined pillars, from top to bottom. Up these stairs the military boots, or perchance the gouty shoes, of many a governor have trodden, as the wearers mounted to the cupola, which afforded them so wide a view over their metropolis and the surrounding country. The cupola is an octagon, with several windows, and a door opening upon the roof. From this station, as I pleased myself with imagining, Gage may have beheld his disastrous victory on Bunker Hill (unless one of the trimountains intervened), and Howe have marked the approaches of Washington's besieging army; although the buildings since erected in the vicinity have shut out almost every object, save the steeple of the Old South, which seems almost within arm's length. Descending from the cupola, I paused in the garret to observe the ponderous white-oak framework, so much more massive than the frames of modern houses, and thereby resembling an antique skeleton. The brick walls, the materials of which were imported from Holland, and the timbers of the mansion, are still as sound as ever; but the floors and other interior parts being greatly decayed, it is contemplated to gut the whole, and build a new house within the ancient frame and brick work. Among other inconveniences of the present edifice, mine host mentioned that any jar or motion was apt to shake down the dust of ages out of the ceiling of one chamber upon the floor of that beneath it.

We stepped forth from the great front window into the balcony, where, in old times, it was doubtless the custom of the king's representative to show himself to a loyal populace, requiting their huzzas and tossed-up hats with stately bendings of his dignified person. In those days the front of the Province House looked upon the street; and the whole site now occupied by the brick range of stores, as well as the present courtyard, was laid out in grass plats, overshadowed by trees and bordered

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by a wrought-iron fence. Now, the old aristocratic edifice hides its time-worn visage behind an upstart modern building; at one of the back windows I observed some pretty tailoresses, sewing and chatting and laughing, with now and then a careless glance towards the balcony. Descending thence, we again entered the barroom, where the elderly gentleman above mentioned, the smack of whose lips had spoken so favorably for Mr. Waite's good liquor, was still lounging in his chair. He seemed to be, if not a lodger, at least a familiar visitor of the house, who might be supposed to have his regular score at the bar, his summer seat at the open window, and his presciptive corner at the winter's fireside. Being of a sociable aspect, I ventured to address him with a remark calculated to draw forth his historical reminiscences, if any such were in his mind; and it gratified me to discover, that, between memory and tradition, the old gentleman was really possessed of some very pleasant gossip about the Province House. The portion of his talk which chiefly interested me was the outline of the following legend. He professed to have received it at one or two removes from an eye-witness; but this derivation, together with the lapse of time, must have afforded opportunities for many variations of the narrative; so that despairing of literal and absolute truth, I have not scrupled to make such further changes as seemed conducive to the reader's profit and delight.

At one of the entertainments given at the Province House, during the latter part of the siege of Boston, there passed a scene which has never yet been satisfactorily explained. The officers of the British army and the loyal gentry of the province, most of whom were collected within the beleaguered town, had been invited to a masked ball; for it was the policy of Sir William Howe to hide the distress and danger of the period, and the desperate aspect of the siege, under an ostentation of festivity. The spectacle of this evening, if the oldest members of the provincial court circle might be believed, was the most gay and gorgeous affair that had occurred in the annals of the govern-

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ment. The brilliantly-lighted apartments were thronged with figures that seemed to have stepped from the dark canvas of historic portraits, or to have flitted forth from the magic pages of romance, or at least to have flown hither from one of the London theaters, without a change of garments. Steeled knights of the Conquest, bearded statesmen of Queen Elizabeth, and high-ruffled ladies of her court, were mingled with characters of comedy, such as a party-colored Merry Andrew, jingling his cap and bells; a Falstaff, almost as provocative of laughter as his prototype; and a Don Quixote, with a bean pole for a lance, and a pot lid for a shield.

But the broadest merriment was excited by a group of figures ridiculously dressed in old regimentals, which seemed to have been purchased at a military rag fair, or pilfered from some receptacle of the cast-off clothes of both the French and British armies. Portions of their attire had probably been worn at the siege of Louisburg, and the coats of most recent cut might have been rent and tattered by sword, ball, or bayonet, as long ago as Wolfe's victory. One of these worthies—a tall, lank figure, brandishing a rusty sword of immense longitude—purported to be no less a personage than General George Washington; and the other principal officers of the American army, such as Gates, Lee, Putnam, Schuyler, Ward, and Heath, were represented by similar scarecrows. An interview in the mock-heroic style, between the rebel warriors and the British commander-in-chief, was received with immense applause, which came loudest of all from the loyalists of the colony. There was one of the guests, however, who stood apart, eying these antics sternly and scornfully, at once with a frown and a bitter smile.

It was an old man, formerly of high station and great repute in the province, and who had been a very famous soldier in his day. Some surprise had been expressed that a person of Colonel Joliffe's known whig principles, though now too old to take an active part in the contest, should have remained in Boston during the siege, and especially that he should consent to show himself in the mansion of Sir William Howe. But thither he

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had come, with a fair granddaughter under his arm; and there, amid all the mirth and buffoonery, stood this stern old figure, the best-sustained character in the masquerade, because so well representing the antique spirit of his native land. The other guests affirmed that Colonel Joliffe's black puritanical scowl threw a shadow round about him; although in spite of his somber influence their gayety continued to blaze higher, like—(an ominous comparison)—the flickering brilliancy of a lamp which has but a little while to burn. Eleven strokes, full half an hour ago, had pealed from the clock of the Old South, when a rumor was circulated among the company that some new spectacle or pageant was about to be exhibited, which should put a fitting close to the splendid festivities of the night.

"What new jest has your Excellency in hand?" asked the Rev. Mather Byles, whose Presbyterian scruples had not kept him from the entertainment. "Trust me, sir, I have already laughed more than beseems my cloth at your Homeric confabulation with yonder ragamuffin General of the rebels. One other such fit of merriment, and I must throw off my clerical wig and band."

"Not so, good Doctor Byles," answered Sir William Howe; "if mirth were a crime, you had never gained your doctorate in divinity. As to this new foolery, I know no more about it than yourself; perhaps not so much. Honestly now, Doctor, have you not stirred up the sober brains of some of your countrymen to enact a scene in our masquerade?"

"Perhaps," slyly remarked the granddaughter of Colonel Joliffe, whose high spirit had been stung by many taunts against New England,—"perhaps we are to have a mask of allegorical figures. Victory, with trophies from Lexington and Bunker Hill—Plenty, with her overflowing horn, to typify the present abundance in this good town—and Glory, with a wreath for his Excellency's brow."

Sir William Howe smiled at words which he would have answered with one of his darkest frowns had they been uttered by lips that wore a beard. He was spared the necessity of a

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retort, by a singular interruption. A sound of music was heard without the house, as if proceeding from a full band of military instruments stationed in the street, playing not such a festal strain as was suited to the occasion, but a slow funeral march. The drums appeared to be muffled, and the trumpets poured forth a wailing breath, which at once hushed the merriment of the auditors, filling all with wonder, and some with apprehension. The idea occurred to many that either the funeral procession of some great personage had halted in front of the Province House, or that a corpse, in a velvet-covered and gorgeously-decorated coffin, was about to be borne from the portal. After listening a moment, Sir William Howe called, in a stern voice, to the leader of the musicians, who had hitherto enlivened the entertainment with gay and lightsome melodies. The man was drum-major to one of the British regiments.

"Dighton," demanded the general, "what means this foolery? Bid your band silence that dead march—or, by my word, they shall have sufficient cause for their lugubrious strains! Silence it, sirrah!"

"Please your honor," answered the drum-major, whose rubicund visage had lost all its color, "the fault is none of mine. I and my band are all here together, and I question whether there be a man of us that could play that march without book. I never heard it but once before, and that was at the funeral of his late Majesty, King George the Second."

"Well, well!" said Sir William Howe, recovering his composure—"it is the prelude to some masquerading antic. Let it pass."

A figure now presented itself, but among the many fantastic masks that were dispersed through the apartments none could tell precisely from whence it came. It was a man in an old-fashioned dress of black serge, and having the aspect of a steward or principal domestic in the household of a nobleman or great English landholder. This figure advanced to the outer door of the mansion, and throwing both its leaves wide open, withdrew a little to one side and looked back towards the grand

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staircase as if expecting some person to descend. At the same time the music in the street sounded a loud and doleful summons. The eyes of Sir William Howe and his guests being directed to the staircase, there appeared, on the uppermost landing-place that was discernible from the bottom, several personages descending towards the door. The foremost was a man of stern visage, wearing a steeple-crowned hat and a skull-cap beneath it; a dark cloak, and huge wrinkled boots that came half-way up his legs. Under his arm was a rolled-up banner, which seemed to be the banner of England, but strangely rent and torn; he had a sword in his right hand, and grasped a Bible in his left. The next figure was of milder aspect, yet full of dignity, wearing a broad ruff, over which descended a beard, a gown of wrought velvet, and a doublet and hose of black satin. He carried a roll of manuscript in his hand. Close behind these two came a young man of very striking countenance and demeanor, with deep thought and contemplation on his brow, and perhaps a flash of enthusiasm in his eye. His garb, like that of his predecessors, was of an antique fashion, and there was a stain of blood upon his ruff. In the same group with these were three or four others, all men of dignity and evident command, and bearing themselves like personages who were accustomed to the gaze of the multitude. It was the idea of the beholders that these figures went to join the mysterious funeral that had halted in front of the Province House; yet that supposition seemed to be contradicted by the air of triumph with which they waved their hands, as they crossed the threshold and vanished through the portal.

"In the devil's name what is this?" muttered Sir William Howe to a gentleman beside him; "a procession of the regicide judges of King Charles the martyr?"

"These," said Colonel Joliffe, breaking silence almost for the first time that evening,—"these, if I interpret them aright, are the Puritan governors—the rulers of the old original Democracy of Massachusetts. Endicott, with the banner from which he

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had torn the symbol of subjection, and Winthrop, and Sir Henry Vane, and Dudley, Haynes, Bellingham, and Leverett."

"Why had that young man a stain of blood upon his ruff?" asked Miss Joliffe.

"Because, in after years," answered her grandfather, "he laid down the wisest head in England upon the block for the principles of liberty."

"Will not your Excellency order out the guard?" whispered Lord Percy, who, with other British officers, had now assembled round the General. "There may be a plot under this mummery."

"Tush! we have nothing to fear," carelessly replied Sir William Howe. "There can be no worse treason in the matter than a jest, and that somewhat of the dullest. Even were it a sharp and bitter one, our best policy would be to laugh it off. See—here come more of these gentry."

Another group of characters had now partly descended the staircase. The first was a venerable and white-bearded patriarch, who cautiously felt his way downward with a staff. Treading hastily behind him, and stretching forth his gauntleted hand as if to grasp the old man's shoulder, came a tall, soldier-like figure, equipped with a plumed cap of steel, a bright breastplate, and a long sword, which rattled against the stairs. Next was seen a stout man, dressed in rich and courtly attire, but not of courtly demeanor; his gait had the swinging motion of a seaman's walk; and chancing to stumble on the staircase, he suddenly grew wrathful, and was heard to mutter an oath. He was followed by a noble-looking personage in a curled wig, such as are represented in the portraits of Queen Anne's time and earlier; and the breast of his coat was decorated with an embroidered star. While advancing to the door, he bowed to the right hand and to the left, in a very gracious and insinuating style; but as he crossed the threshold, unlike the early Puritan governors, he seemed to wring his hands with sorrow.

"Prithee, play the part of a chorus, good Doctor Byles," said Sir William Howe. "What worthies are these?"

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"If it please your Excellency they lived somewhat before my day," answered the doctor; "but doubtless our friend, the Colonel, has been hand and glove with them."

"Their living faces I never looked upon," said Colonel Joliffe, gravely; "although I have spoken face to face with many rulers of this land, and shall greet yet another with an old man's blessing ere I die. But we talk of these figures. I take the venerable patriarch to be Bradstreet, the last of the Puritans, who was governor at ninety, or thereabouts. The next is Sir Edmund Andros, a tyrant, as any New England school-boy will tell you; and therefore the people cast him down from his high seat into a dungeon. Then comes Sir William Phipps, shepherd, cooper, sea-captain, and governor—may many of his countrymen rise as high from as low an origin! Lastly, you saw the gracious Earl of Bellamont, who ruled us under King William."

"But what is the meaning of it all?" asked Lord Percy.

"Now, were I a rebel," said Miss Joliffe, half aloud, "I might fancy that the ghosts of these ancient governors had been summoned to form the funeral procession of royal authority in New England."

Several other figures were now seen at the turn of the staircase. The one in advance had a thoughtful, anxious, and somewhat crafty expression of face, and in spite of his loftiness of manner, which was evidently the result both of an ambitious spirit and of long continuance in high stations, he seemed not incapable of cringing to a greater than himself. A few steps behind came an officer in a scarlet and embroidered uniform, cut in a fashion old enough to have been worn by the Duke of Marlborough. His nose had a rubicund tinge, which, together with the twinkle of his eye, might have marked him as a lover of the wine cup and good fellowship; notwithstanding which tokens he appeared ill at ease, and often glanced around him as if apprehensive of some secret mischief. Next came a portly gentleman, wearing a coat of shaggy cloth, lined with silken velvet; he had sense, shrewdness, and humor in his face, and a folio volume under his arm; but his aspect was that of a man vexed

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and tormented beyond all patience, and harassed almost to death. He went hastily down, and was followed by a dignified person, dressed in a purple velvet suit, with very rich embroidery; his demeanor would have possessed much stateliness, only that a grievous fit of the gout compelled him to hobble from stair to stair, with contortions of face and body. When Doctor Byles beheld this figure on the staircase, he shivered as with an ague, but continued to watch him steadfastly, until the gouty gentleman had reached the threshold, made a gesture of anguish and despair, and vanished into the outer gloom, whither the funeral music summoned him.

"Governor Belcher!—my old patron!—in his very shape and dress!" gasped Doctor Byles. "This is an awful mockery!"

"A tedious foolery, rather," said Sir William Howe, with an air of indifference. "But who were the three that preceded him?"

"Governor Dudley, a cunning politician—yet his craft once brought him to a prison," replied Colonel Joliffe. "Governor Shute, formerly a Colonel under Marlborough, and whom the people frightened out of the province; and learned Governor Burnet, whom the legislature tormented into a mortal fever."

"Methinks they were miserable men, these royal governors of Massachusetts," observed Miss Joliffe. "Heavens, how dim the light grows!"

It was certainly a fact that the large lamp which illuminated the staircase now burned dim and duskily: so that several figures, which passed hastily down the stairs and went forth from the porch, appeared rather like shadows than persons of fleshly substance. Sir William Howe and his guests stood at the doors of the contiguous apartments, watching the progress of this singular pageant, with various emotions of anger, contempt, or half-acknowledged fear, but still with an anxious curiosity. The shapes which now seemed hastening to join the mysterious procession were recognized rather by striking peculiarities of dress, or broad characteristics of manner, than by any perceptible resemblance of features to their prototypes. Their

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faces, indeed, were invariably kept in deep shadow. But Doctor Byles, and other gentlemen who had long been familiar with the successive rulers of the province, were heard to whisper the names of Shirley, of Pownall, of Sir Francis Bernard, and of the well-remembered Hutchinson; thereby confessing that the actors, whoever they might be, in this spectral march of governors, had succeeded in putting on some distant portraiture of the real personages. As they vanished from the door, still did these shadows toss their arms into the gloom of night, with a dread expression of woe. Following the mimic representative of Hutchinson came a military figure, holding before his face the cocked hat which he had taken from his powdered head; but his epaulettes and other insignia of rank were those of a general officer, and something in his mien reminded the beholders of one who had recently been master of the Province House, and chief of all the land.

"The shape of Gage, as true as in a looking-glass," exclaimed Lord Percy, turning pale.

"No, surely," cried Miss Joliffe, laughing hysterically; "it could not be Gage, or Sir William would have greeted his old comrade in arms! Perhaps he will not suffer the next to pass unchallenged."

"Of that be assured, young lady," answered Sir William Howe, fixing his eyes, with a very marked expression, upon the immovable visage of her grandfather. "I have long enough delayed to pay the ceremonies of a host to these departing guests. The next that takes his leave shall receive due courtesy."

A wild and dreary burst of music came through the open door. It seemed as if the procession, which had been gradually filling up its ranks, were now about to move, and that this loud peal of the wailing trumpets, and roll of the muffled drums, were a call to some loiterer to make haste. Many eyes, by an irresistible impulse, were turned upon Sir William Howe, as if it were he whom the dreary music summoned to the funeral of departed power.

"See!—here comes the last!" whispered Miss Joliffe, pointing her tremulous finger to the staircase.

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A figure had come into view as if descending the stairs; although so dusky was the region whence it emerged, some of the spectators fancied that they had seen this human shape suddenly molding itself amid the gloom. Downward the figure came, with a stately and martial tread, and reaching the lowest stair was observed to be a tall man, booted and wrapped in a military cloak, which was drawn up around the face so as to meet the flapped brim of a laced hat. The features, therefore, were completely hidden. But the British officers deemed that they had seen that military cloak before, and even recognized the frayed embroidery on the collar, as well as the gilded scabbard of a sword which protruded from the folds of the cloak, and glittered in a vivid gleam of light. Apart from these trifling particulars, there were characteristics of gait and bearing which impelled the wondering guests to glance from the shrouded figure to Sir William Howe, as if to satisfy themselves that their host had not suddenly vanished from the midst of them.

With a dark flush of wrath upon his brow they saw the General draw his sword and advance to meet the figure in the cloak before the latter had stepped one pace upon the floor.

"Villain, unmuffle yourself!" cried he. "You pass no farther!"

The figure, without blenching a hair's breadth from the sword which was pointed at his breast, made a solemn pause and lowered the cape of the cloak from about his face, yet not sufficiently for the spectators to catch a glimpse of it. But Sir William Howe had evidently seen enough. The sternness of his countenance gave place to a look of wild amazement, if not horror, while he recoiled several steps from the figure, and let fall his sword upon the floor. The martial shape again drew the cloak about his features and passed on; but reaching the threshold, with his back towards the spectators, he was seen to stamp his foot and shake his clinched hands in the air. It was afterwards affirmed that Sir William Howe had repeated that selfsame gesture of rage and sorrow, when, for the last time, and as the last royal governor, he passed through the portal of the Province House.

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"Hark!—the procession moves," said Miss Joliffe.

The music was dying away along the street, and its dismal strains were mingled with the knell of midnight from the steeple of the Old South, and with the roar of artillery, which announced that the beleaguering army of Washington had intrenched itself upon a nearer height than before. As the deep boom of the cannon smote upon his ear, Colonel Joliffe raised himself to the full height of his aged form, and smiled sternly on the British General.

"Would your Excellency inquire further into the mystery of the pageant?" said he.

"Take care of your gray head!" cried Sir William Howe, fiercely, though with a quivering lip. "It has stood too long on a traitor's shoulders!"

"You must make haste to chop it off, then," calmly replied the Colonel; "for a few hours longer, and not all the power of Sir William Howe, nor of his master, shall cause one of these gray hairs to fall. The empire of Britain in this ancient province is at its last gasp tonight;—almost while I speak it is a dead corpse;—and methinks the shadows of the old governors are fit mourners at its funeral!"

With these words Colonel Joliffe threw on his cloak, and drawing his granddaughter's arm within his own, retired from the last festival that a British ruler ever held in the old province of Massachusetts Bay. It was supposed that the Colonel and the young lady possessed some secret intelligence in regard to the mysterious pageant of that night. However this might be, such knowledge has never become general. The actors in the scene have vanished into deeper obscurity than even that wild Indian band who scattered the cargoes of the tea ships on the waves, and gained a place in history, yet left no names. But superstition, among other legends of this mansion, repeats the wondrous tale, that on the anniversary night of Britain's discomfiture the ghosts of the ancient governors of Massachusetts still glide through the portal of the Province House. And, last

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of all, comes a figure shrouded in a military cloak, tossing his clinched hands into the air, and stamping his iron-shod boots upon the broad freestone steps, with a semblance of feverish despair, but without the sound of a foot-tramp.

When the truth-telling accents of the elderly gentleman were hushed, I drew a long breath and looked round the room, striving, with the best energy of my imagination, to throw a tinge of romance and historic grandeur over the realities of the scene. But my nostrils snuffed up a scent of cigar smoke, clouds of which the narrator had emitted by way of visible emblem, I suppose, of the nebulous obscurity of his tale. Moreover, my gorgeous fantasies were wofully disturbed by the rattling of the spoon in a tumbler of whiskey punch, which Mr. Thomas Waite was mingling for a customer. Nor did it add to the picturesque appearance of the paneled walls that the slate of the Brookline stage was suspended against them, instead of the armorial escutcheon of some far-descended governor. A stage-driver sat at one of the windows, reading a penny paper of the day—the *Boston Times*—and presenting a figure which could nowise be brought into any picture of "Times in Boston" seventy or a hundred years ago. On the window seat lay a bundle, neatly done up in brown paper, the direction of which I had the idle curiosity to read. "Miss SUSAN HUGGINS, at the PROVINCE HOUSE." A pretty chambermaid, no doubt. In truth, it is desperately hard work, when we attempt to throw the spell of hoar antiquity over localities with which the living world, and the day that is passing over us, have aught to do. Yet, as I glanced at the stately staircase down which the procession of the old governors had descended, and as I emerged through the venerable portal whence their figures had preceded me, it gladdened me to be conscious of a thrill of awe. Then, diving through the narrow archway, a few strides transported me into the densest throng of Washington Street.

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WILLIAM WILSON

Edgar Allan Poe

What say of it? what say of conscience grim,
That specter in my path?

Chamberlayne, *Pharronida*

Let me call myself, for the present, William Wilson. The fair page now lying before me need not be sullied with my real appellation. This has been already too much an object for the scorn—for the horror—for the detestation of my race. To the uttermost regions of the globe have not the indignant winds bruited its unparalleled infamy? Oh, outcast of all outcasts most abandoned!—to the earth art thou not forever dead? to its honors, to its flowers, to its golden aspirations?—and a cloud, dense, dismal, and limitless, does it not hang eternally between thy hopes and heaven?

I would not, if I could, here or today, embody a record of my later years of unspeakable misery and unpardonable crime. This epoch, these later years, took unto themselves a sudden elevation in turpitude, whose origin alone it is my present purpose to assign. Men usually grow base by degrees. From me, in an instant, all virtue dropped bodily as a mantle. From comparatively trivial wickedness I passed, with the stride of a giant, into more than the enormities of an Elah-Gabalus. What chance —what one event brought this evil thing to pass, bear with me while I relate. Death approaches; and the shadow which foreruns him has thrown a softening influence over my spirit. I long, in passing through the dim valley, for the sympathy—I had nearly said for the pity—of my fellow-men. I would fain have them believe that I have been, in some measure, the slave of circumstances beyond human control. I would wish them to seek out for me, in the details I am about to give, some little oasis of *fatality* amid a wilderness of error. I would have them allow—what they cannot refrain from allowing—that, although temptation may have erewhile existed as great, man was never

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thus, at least, tempted before—certainly, never *thus* fell. And is it therefore that he has never thus suffered? Have I not indeed been living in a dream? And am I not now dying a victim to the horror and the mystery of the wildest of all sublunary visions?

I am the descendant of a race whose imaginative and easily excitable temperament has at all times rendered them remarkable; and, in my earliest infancy, I gave evidence of having fully inherited the family character. As I advanced in years it was more strongly developed; becoming, for many reasons, a cause of serious disquietude to my friends, and of positive injury to myself. I grew self-willed, addicted to the wildest caprices, and a prey to the most ungovernable passions. Weak-minded, and beset with constitutional infirmities akin to my own, my parents could do but little to check the evil propensities which distinguished me. Some feeble and ill-directed efforts resulted in complete failure on their part, and, of course, in total triumph on mine. Thenceforward my voice was a household law; and at an age when few children have abandoned their leading-strings I was left to the guidance of my own will, and became, in all but name, the master of my own actions.

My earliest recollections of a school-life are connected with a large, rambling, Elizabethan house, in a misty-looking village of England, where were a vast number of gigantic and gnarled trees, and where all the houses were excessively ancient. In truth, it was a dream-like and spirit-soothing place, that venerable old town. At this moment, in fancy, I feel the refreshing chilliness of its deeply-shadowed avenues, inhale the fragrance of its thousand shrubberies, and thrill anew with undefinable delight at the deep hollow note of the church-bell, breaking, each hour, with sullen and sudden roar, upon the stillness of the dusky atmosphere in which the fretted Gothic steeple lay imbedded and asleep.

It gives me, perhaps, as much of pleasure as I can now in any manner experience to dwell upon minute recollections of the school and its concerns. Steeped in misery as I am—misery,

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alas! only too real—I shall be pardoned for seeking relief, however slight and temporary, in the weakness of a few rambling details. These, moreover, utterly trivial, and even ridiculous in themselves, assume to my fancy adventitious importance, as connected with a period and a locality when and where I recognize the first ambiguous monitions of the destiny which afterwards so fully overshadowed me. Let me then remember.

The house, I have said, was old and irregular. The grounds were extensive, and a high and solid brick wall, topped with a bed of mortar and broken glass, encompassed the whole. This prison-like rampart formed the limit of our domain; beyond it we saw but thrice a week—once every Saturday afternoon, when, attended by two ushers, we were permitted to take brief walks in a body through some of the neighboring fields—and twice during Sunday, when we were paraded in the same formal manner to the morning and evening service in the one church of the village. Of this church the principal of our school was pastor. With how deep a spirit of wonder and perplexity was I wont to regard him from our remote pew in the gallery, as, with steps solemn and slow, he ascended the pulpit! This reverend man, with countenance so demurely benign, with robes so glossy and so clerically flowing, with wig so minutely powdered, so rigid and so vast,—could this be he who, of late, with sour visage, and in snuffy habiliments, administered, ferule in hand, the Draconian Laws of the academy? Oh, gigantic paradox, too utterly monstrous for solution!

At an angle of the ponderous wall frowned a more ponderous gate. It was riveted and studded with iron bolts, and surmounted with jagged iron spikes. What impressions of deep awe did it inspire! It was never opened save for the three periodical egressions and ingressions already mentioned; then, in every creak of its mighty hinges, we found a plenitude of mystery—a world of matter for solemn remark, or for more solemn meditation.

The extensive enclosure was irregular in form, having many capacious recesses. Of these, three or four of the largest con-

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stituted the play-ground. It was level, and covered with fine hard gravel. I well remember it had no trees, nor benches, nor anything similar within it. Of course it was in the rear of the house. In front lay a small parterre, planted with box and other shrubs; but through this sacred division we passed only upon rare occasions indeed—such as a first advent to school or final departure thence, or perhaps when, a parent or friend having called for us, we joyfully took our way home for the Christmas or Midsummer holidays.

But the house!—how quaint an old building was this!—to me how veritably a palace of enchantment! There was really no end to its windings—to its incomprehensible subdivisions. It was difficult, at any given time, to say with certainty upon which of its two stories one happened to be. From each room to every other there were sure to be found three or four steps either in ascent or descent. Then the lateral branches were innumerable, inconceivable, and so returning in upon themselves that our most exact ideas in regard to the whole mansion were not very far different from those with which we pondered upon infinity. During the five years of my residence here I was never able to ascertain, with precision, in what remote locality lay the little sleeping apartment assigned to myself and some eighteen or twenty other scholars.

The school-room was the largest in the house—I could not help thinking, in the world. It was very long, narrow, and dismally low, with pointed Gothic windows and a ceiling of oak. In a remote and terror-inspiring angle was a square enclosure of eight or ten feet, comprising the *sanctum*, "during hours," of our principal, the Reverend Dr. Bransby. It was a solid structure, with massy door, sooner than open which in the absence of the "Dominie" we would all have willingly perished by the *peine forte et dure*. In other angles were two other similar boxes, far less reverenced, indeed, but still greatly matters of awe. One of these was the pulpit of the "classical" usher; one, of the "English and mathematical." Interspersed about the room, crossing and recrossing in endless irregularity, were in-

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numerable benches and desks, black, ancient, and time-worn, piled desperately with much-bethumbed books, and so beseamed with initial letters, names at full length, grotesque figures, and other multiplied efforts of the knife, as to have entirely lost what little of original form might have been their portion in days long departed. A huge bucket with water stood at one extremity of the room, and a clock of stupendous dimensions at the other.

Encompassed by the massy walls of this venerable academy, I passed, yet not in tedium or disgust, the years of the third lustrum of my life. The teeming brain of childhood requires no external world of incident to occupy or amuse it; and the apparently dismal monotony of a school was replete with more intense excitement than my riper youth has derived from luxury, or my full manhood from crime. Yet I must believe that my first mental development had in it much of the uncommon—even much of the *outré*. Upon mankind at large the events of very early existence rarely leave in mature age any definite impression. All is gray shadow—a weak and irregular remembrance—an indistinct regathering of feeble pleasures and phantasmagoric pains. With me this is not so. In childhood I must have felt, with the energy of a man, what I now find stamped upon memory in lines as vivid, as deep, and as durable as the *exergues* of the Carthaginian medals.

Yet in fact—in the fact of the world's view—how little was there to remember! The morning's awakening, the nightly summons to bed; the connings, the recitations; the periodical half-holidays, and perambulations; the play-ground, with its broils, its pastimes, its intrigues;—these, by a mental sorcery long forgotten, were made to involve a wilderness of sensation, a world of rich incident, an universe of varied emotion, of excitement the most passionate and spirit-stirring. "*Oh, le bon temps, que ce siècle de fer!*"

In truth, the ardor, the enthusiasm, and the imperiousness of my disposition, soon rendered me a marked character among my schoolmates, and by slow but natural gradations gave me an

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ascendancy over all not greatly older than myself: over all with a single exception. This exception was found in the person of a scholar who, although no relation, bore the same Christian and surname as myself,—a circumstance, in fact, little remarkable; for, notwithstanding a noble descent, mine was one of those every-day appellations which seem by prescriptive right to have been, time out of mind, the common property of the mob. In this narrative I have therefore designated myself as William Wilson,—a fictitious title not very dissimilar to the real. My namesake alone, of those who in school-phraseology constituted "our set," presumed to compete with me in the studies of the class—in the sports and broils of the play-ground—to refuse implicit belief in my assertions, and submission to my will—indeed, to interfere with my arbitrary dictation in any respect whatsoever. If there is on earth a supreme and unqualified despotism, it is the despotism of a master-mind in boyhood over the less energetic spirits of its companions.

Wilson's rebellion was to me a source of the greatest embarrassment; the more so as, in spite of the bravado with which in public I made a point of treating him and his pretensions, I secretly felt that I feared him, and could not help thinking the equality, which he maintained so easily with myself, a proof of his true superiority; since not to be overcome cost me a perpetual struggle. Yet this superiority, even this equality, was in truth acknowledged by no one but myself; our associates, by some unaccountable blindness, seemed not even to suspect it. Indeed, his competition, his resistance, and especially his impertinent and dogged interference with my purposes, were not more pointed than private. He appeared to be destitute alike of the ambition which urged, and of the passionate energy of mind which enabled, me to excel. In his rivalry he might have been supposed actuated solely by a whimsical desire to thwart, astonish, or mortify myself; although there were times when I could not help observing, with a feeling made up of wonder, abasement, and pique, that he mingled with his injuries, his insults, or his contradictions, a certain most inappropriate, and

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assuredly most unwelcome, *affectionateness* of manner. I could only conceive this singular behavior to arise from a consummate self-conceit assuming the vulgar airs of patronage and protection.

Perhaps it was this latter trait in Wilson's conduct, conjoined with our identity of name, and the mere accident of our having entered the school upon the same day, which set afloat the notion that we were brothers, among the senior classes in the academy. These do not usually inquire with much strictness into the affairs of their juniors. I have before said, or should have said, that Wilson was not in the most remote degree connected with my family. But assuredly if we *had* been brothers we must have been twins; for, after leaving Dr. Bransby's, I casually learned that my namesake was born on the nineteenth of January, 1813; and this is a somewhat remarkable coincidence; for the day is precisely that of my own nativity.

It may seem strange that in spite of the continual anxiety occasioned me by the rivalry of Wilson, and his intolerable spirit of contradiction, I could not bring myself to hate him altogether. We had, to be sure, nearly every day a quarrel in which, yielding me publicly the palm of victory, he, in some manner, contrived to make me feel that it was he who had deserved it; yet a sense of pride on my part, and a veritable dignity on his own, kept us always upon what are called "speaking terms," while there were many points of strong congeniality in our tempers, operating to awake in me a sentiment which our position alone, perhaps, prevented from ripening into friendship. It is difficult, indeed, to define, or even to describe, my real feelings towards him. They formed a motley and heterogeneous admixture: some petulant animosity, which was not yet hatred, some esteem, more respect, much fear, with a world of uneasy curiosity. To the moralist it will be unnecessary to say, in addition, that Wilson and myself were the most inseparable of companions.

It was no doubt the anomalous state of affairs existing between us which turned all my attacks upon him (and they were

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many, either open or covert) into the channel of banter or practical joke (giving pain while assuming the aspect of mere fun) rather than into a more serious and determined hostility. But my endeavors on this head were by no means uniformly successful, even when my plans were the most wittily concocted; for my namesake had much about him, in character, of that unassuming and quiet austerity which, while enjoying the poignancy of its own jokes, has no heel of Achilles in itself, and absolutely refuses to be laughed at. I could find, indeed, but one vulnerable point, and that lying in a personal peculiarity arising, perhaps, from constitutional disease, would have been spared by any antagonist less at his wit's end than myself:—my rival had a weakness in the faucial or guttural organs, which precluded him from raising his voice at any time *above a very low whisper*. Of this defect I did not fail to take what poor advantage lay in my power.

Wilson's retaliations in kind were many; and there was one form of his practical wit that disturbed me beyond measure. How his sagacity first discovered at all that so petty a thing would vex me, is a question I never could solve; but having discovered, he habitually practiced the annoyance. I had always felt aversion to my uncourtly patronymic, and its very common, if not plebeian prænomen. The words were venom in my ears; and when, upon the day of my arrival, a second William Wilson came also to the academy, I felt angry with him for bearing the name, and doubly disgusted with the name because a stranger bore it, who would be the cause of its twofold repetition, who would be constantly in my presence, and whose concerns, in the ordinary routine of the school business, must inevitably, on account of the detestable coincidence, be often confounded with my own.

The feeling of vexation thus engendered grew stronger with every circumstance tending to show resemblance, moral or physical, between my rival and myself. I had not then discovered the remarkable fact that we were of the same age; but I saw that we were of the same height, and I perceived that we

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were even singularly alike in general contour of person and outline of feature. I was galled, too, by the rumor touching a relationship which had grown current in the upper forms. In a word, nothing could more seriously disturb me (although I scrupulously concealed such disturbance) than any allusion to a similarity of mind, person, or condition existing between us. But, in truth, I had no reason to believe that (with the exception of the matter of relationship, and in the case of Wilson himself) this similarity had ever been made a subject of comment, or even observed at all by our schoolfellows. That *he* observed it in all its bearings, and as fixedly as I, was apparent; but that he could discover in such circumstances so fruitful a field of annoyance can only be attributed, as I said before, to his more than ordinary penetration.

His cue, which was to perfect an imitation of myself, lay both in words and in actions; and most admirably did he play his part. My dress it was an easy matter to copy; my gait and general manner were, without difficulty, appropriated; in spite of his constitutional defect, even my voice did not escape him. My louder tones were, of course, unattempted, but then the key,—it was identical; *and his singular whisper,—it grew the very echo of my own.*

How greatly this most exquisite portraiture harassed me (for it could not justly be termed a caricature) I will not now venture to describe. I had but one consolation—in the fact that the imitation, apparently, was noticed by myself alone, and that I had to endure only the knowing and strangely sarcastic smiles of my namesake himself. Satisfied with having produced in my bosom the intended effect, he seemed to chuckle in secret over the sting he had inflicted, and was characteristically disregardful of the public applause which the success of his witty endeavors might have so easily elicited. That the school, indeed, did not feel his design, perceive its accomplishment, and participate in his sneer, was, for many anxious months, a riddle I could not resolve. Perhaps the *gradation* of his copy rendered it not so readily perceptible; or, more possibly, I owed my

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security to the masterly air of the copyist, who, disdaining the letter (which in a painting is all the obtuse can see) gave but the full spirit of his original for my individual contemplation and chagrin.

I have already more than once spoken of the disgusting air of patronage which he assumed toward me, and of his frequent officious interference with my will. This interference often took the ungracious character of advice; advice not openly given, but hinted or insinuated. I received it with a repugnance which gained strength as I grew in years. Yet, at this distant day, let me do him the simple justice to acknowledge that I can recall no occasion when the suggestions of my rival were on the side of those errors or follies so usual to his immature age and seeming inexperience; that his moral sense, at least, if not his general talents and worldly wisdom, was far keener than my own; and that I might, today, have been a better, and thus a happier man, had I less frequently rejected the counsels embodied in those meaning whispers which I then but too cordially hated and too bitterly despised.

As it was, I at length grew restive in the extreme under his distasteful supervision, and daily resented more and more openly what I considered his intolerable arrogance. I have said that, in the first years of our connection as schoolmates, my feelings in regard to him might have been easily ripened into friendship; but, in the latter months of my residence at the academy, although the intrusion of his ordinary manner had, beyond doubt, in some measure abated, my sentiments, in nearly similar proportion, partook very much of positive hatred. Upon one occasion he saw this, I think, and afterwards avoided or made a show of avoiding me.

It was about the same period, if I remember aright, that, in an altercation of violence with him, in which he was more than usually thrown off his guard, and spoke and acted with an openness of demeanor rather foreign to his nature, I discovered, or fancied I discovered, in his accent, his air and general appearance, a something which first startled, and then deeply

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interested me, by bringing to mind dim visions of my earliest infancy—wild, confused and thronging memories of a time when memory herself was yet unborn. I cannot better describe the sensation which oppressed me than by saying that I could with difficulty shake off the belief of my having been acquainted with the being who stood before me, at some epoch very long ago—some point of the past even infinitely remote. The delusion, however, faded rapidly as it came; and I mention it at all but to define the day of the last conversation I there held with my singular namesake.

The huge old house, with its countless subdivisions, had several large chambers communicating with each other, where slept the greater number of the students. There were, however (as must necessarily happen in a building so awkwardly planned) many little nooks or recesses, the odds and ends of the structure; and these the economic ingenuity of Dr. Bransby had also fitted up as dormitories; although, being the merest closets, they were capable of accommodating but a single individual. One of these small apartments was occupied by Wilson.

One night, about the close of my fifth year at the school, and immediately after the altercation just mentioned, finding every one wrapped in sleep, I arose from bed, and, lamp in hand, stole through a wilderness of narrow passages from my own bedroom to that of my rival. I had long been plotting one of those ill-natured pieces of practical wit at his expense in which I had hitherto been so uniformly unsuccessful. It was my intention, now, to put my scheme in operation, and I resolved to make him feel the whole extent of the malice with which I was imbued. Having reached his closet, I noiselessly entered, leaving the lamp, with a shade over it, on the outside. I advanced a step, and listened to the sound of his tranquil breathing. Assured of his being asleep, I returned, took the light, and with it again approached the bed. Close curtains were around it, which, in the prosecution of my plan, I slowly and quietly withdrew, when the bright rays fell vividly upon the sleeper, and my eyes at the same moment upon his countenance. I looked,—and a numb-

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ness, an iciness of feeling, instantly pervaded my frame. My breast heaved, my knees tottered, my whole spirit became possessed with an objectless yet intolerable horror. Gasping for breath, I lowered the lamp in still nearer proximity to the face. Were these,—*these* the lineaments of William Wilson? I saw, indeed, that they were his, but I shook as if with a fit of the ague, in fancying they were not. What *was* there about them to confound me in this manner? I gazed,—while my brain reeled with a multitude of incoherent thoughts. Not thus he appeared—assuredly not *thus*—in the vivacity of his waking hours. The same name! the same contour of person! the same day of arrival at the academy! And then his dogged and meaningless imitation of my gait, my voice, my habits, and my manner! Was it, in truth, within the bounds of human possibility, that *what I now saw* was the result, merely, of the habitual practice of this sarcastic imitation? Awe-stricken, and with a creeping shudder, I extinguished the lamp, passed silently from the chamber, and left, at once, the halls of that old academy, never to enter them again.

After a lapse of some months, spent at home in mere idleness, I found myself a student at Eton. The brief interval had been sufficient to enfeeble my remembrance of the events at Dr. Bransby's, or at least to effect a material change in the nature of the feelings with which I remembered them. The truth—the tragedy—of the drama was no more. I could now find room to doubt the evidence of my senses; and seldom called up the subject at all but with wonder at the extent of human credulity, and a smile at the vivid force of the imagination which I hereditarily possessed. Neither was this species of scepticism likely to be diminished by the character of the life I led at Eton. The vortex of thoughtless folly, into which I there so immediately and so recklessly plunged, washed away all but the froth of my past hours, engulfed at once every solid or serious impression, and left to memory only the veriest levities of a former existence.

I do not wish, however, to trace the course of my miserable

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profligacy here—a profligacy which set at defiance the laws, while it eluded the vigilance, of the institution. Three years of folly, passed without profit, had but given me rooted habits of vice, and added, in a somewhat unusual degree, to my bodily stature, when, after a week of soulless dissipation, I invited a small party of the most dissolute students to a secret carousal in my chambers. We met at a late hour of the night; for our debaucheries were to be faithfully protracted until morning. The wine flowed freely, and there were not wanting other and perhaps more dangerous seductions; so that the gray dawn had already faintly appeared in the east while our delirious extravagance was at its height. Madly flushed with cards and intoxication, I was in the act of insisting upon a toast of more than wonted profanity, when my attention was suddenly diverted by the violent, although partial, unclosing of the door of the apartment, and by the eager voice of a servant from without. He said that some person, apparently in great haste, demanded to speak with me in the hall.

Wildly excited with wine, the unexpected interruption rather delighted than surprised me. I staggered forward at once, and a few steps brought me to the vestibule of the building. In this low and small room there hung no lamp; and now no light at all was admitted, save that of the exceedingly feeble dawn which made its way through the semicircular window. As I put my foot over the threshold, I became aware of the figure of a youth about my own height, and habited in a white kerseymere morning frock, cut in the novel fashion of the one I myself wore at the moment. This the faint light enabled me to perceive; but the features of his face I could not distinguish. Upon my entering, he strode hurriedly up to me, and, seizing me by the arm with a gesture of petulant impatience, whispered the words "William Wilson!" in my ear.

I grew perfectly sober in an instant.

There was that in the manner of the stranger, and in the tremulous shake of his uplifted finger, as he held it between my eyes and the light, which filled me with unqualified amazement;

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but it was not this which had so violently moved me. It was the pregnancy of solemn admonition in the singular, low, hissing utterance; and, above all, it was the character, the tone, *the key*, of those few, simple, and familiar, yet *whispered* syllables, which came with a thousand thronging memories of by-gone days, and struck upon my soul with the shock of a galvanic battery. Ere I could recover the use of my senses he was gone.

Although this event failed not of a vivid effect upon my disordered imagination, yet was it evanescent as vivid. For some weeks, indeed, I busied myself in earnest inquiry, or was wrapped in a cloud of morbid speculation. I did not pretend to disguise from my perception the identity of the singular individual who thus perseveringly interfered with my affairs, and harassed me with his insinuated counsel. But who and what was this Wilson?—and whence came he?—and what were his purposes? Upon neither of these points could I be satisfied—merely ascertaining, in regard to him, that a sudden accident in his family had caused his removal from Dr. Bransby's academy on the afternoon of the day in which I myself had eloped. But in a brief period I ceased to think upon the subject, my attention being all absorbed in a contemplated departure for Oxford. Thither I soon went, the uncalculating vanity of my parents furnishing me with an outfit and annual establishment which would enable me to indulge at will in the luxury already so dear to my heart—to vie in profuseness of expenditure with the haughtiest heirs of the wealthiest earldoms in Great Britain.

Excited by such appliances to vice, my constitutional temperament broke forth with redoubled ardor, and I spurned even the common restraints of decency in the mad infatuation of my revels. But it were absurd to pause in the detail of my extravagance. Let it suffice, that among spendthrifts I out-Heroded Herod, and that, giving name to a multitude of novel follies, I added no brief appendix to the long catalogue of vices then usual in the most dissolute university of Europe.

It could hardly be credited, however, that I had, even here, so utterly fallen from the gentlemanly estate as to seek ac-

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quaintance with the vilest arts of the gambler by profession, and, having become an adept in his despicable science, to practice it habitually as a means of increasing my already enormous income at the expense of the weak-minded among my fellow-collegians. Such, nevertheless, was the fact. And the very enormity of this offence against all manly and honorable sentiment proved, beyond doubt, the main if not the sole reason of the impunity with which it was committed. Who, indeed, among my most abandoned associates, would not rather have disputed the clearest evidence of his senses, than have suspected of such courses the gay, the frank, the generous William Wilson —the noblest and most liberal commoner at Oxford: him whose follies (said his parasites) were but the follies of youth and unbridled fancy—whose errors but inimitable whim—whose darkest vice but a careless and dashing extravagance?

I had been now two years successfully busied in this way, when there came to the university a young *parvenu* nobleman, Glendinning—rich, said report, as Herodes Atticus—his riches, too, as easily acquired. I soon found him of weak intellect, and of course marked him as a fitting subject for my skill. I frequently engaged him in play, and contrived, with the gambler's usual art, to let him win considerable sums, the more effectually to entangle him in my snares. At length, my schemes being ripe, I met him (with the full intention that this meeting should be final and decisive) at the chambers of a fellow-commoner (Mr. Preston) equally intimate with both, but who, to do him justice, entertained not even a remote suspicion of my design. To give to this a better coloring, I had contrived to have assembled a party of some eight or ten, and was solicitously careful that the introduction of cards should appear accidental, and originate in the proposal of my contemplated dupe himself. To be brief upon a vile topic, none of the low finesse was omitted, so customary upon similar occasions that it is a just matter for wonder how any are still found so besotted as to fall its victim.

We had protracted our sitting far into the night, and I had at length effected the manœuvre of getting Glendinning as my

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sole antagonist. The game, too, was my favorite *écarté*. The rest of the company, interested in the extent of our play, had abandoned their own cards, and were standing around us as spectators. The *parvenu*, who had been induced, by my artifices in the early part of the evening, to drink deeply, now shuffled, dealt, or played, with a wild nervousness of manner for which his intoxication, I thought, might partially but could not altogether account. In a very short period he had become my debtor to a large amount, when, having taken a long draught of port, he did precisely what I had been coolly anticipating—he proposed to double our already extravagant stakes. With a well-feigned show of reluctance, and not until after my repeated refusal had seduced him into some angry words which gave a color of pique to my compliance, did I finally comply. The result, of course, did but prove how entirely the prey was in my toils; in less than an hour he had quadrupled his debt. For some time his countenance had been losing the florid tinge lent it by the wine; but now, to my astonishment, I perceived that it had grown to a pallor truly fearful. I say, to my astonishment. Glendinning had been represented to my eager inquiries as immeasurably wealthy; and the sums which he had as yet lost, although in themselves vast, could not, I supposed, very seriously annoy, much less so violently affect him. That he was overcome by the wine just swallowed, was the idea which most readily presented itself; and, rather with a view to the preservation of my own character in the eyes of my associates, than from any less interested motive, I was about to insist, peremptorily, upon a discontinuance of the play, when some expressions at my elbow from among the company, and an ejaculation evincing utter despair on the part of Glendinning, gave me to understand that I had effected his total ruin under circumstances which, rendering him an object for the pity of all, should have protected him from the ill offices even of a fiend.

What now might have been my conduct it is difficult to say. The pitiable condition of my dupe had thrown an air of embarrassed gloom over all; and for some moments a profound

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silence was maintained, during which I could not help feeling my cheeks tingle with the many burning glances of scorn or reproach cast upon me by the less abandoned of the party. I will even own that an intolerable weight of anxiety was for a brief instant lifted from my bosom by the sudden and extraordinary interruption which ensued. The wide, heavy folding-doors of the apartment were all at once thrown open, to their full extent, with a vigorous and rushing impetuosity that extinguished, as if by magic, every candle in the room. Their light, in dying, enabled us just to perceive that a stranger had entered, about my own height, and closely muffled in a cloak. The darkness, however, was now total; and we could only *feel* that he was standing in our midst. Before any one of us could recover from the extreme astonishment into which this rudeness had thrown all, we heard the voice of the intruder.

"Gentlemen," he said, in a low, distinct, and never-to-be-forgotten *whisper* which thrilled to the very marrow of my bones, "gentlemen, I make no apology for this behavior, because, in thus behaving, I am but fulfilling a duty. You are, beyond doubt, uninformed of the true character of the person who has tonight won at *écarté* a large sum of money from Lord Glendinning. I will therefore put you upon an expeditious and decisive plan of obtaining this very necessary information. Please to examine, at your leisure, the inner linings of the cuff of his left sleeve, and the several little packages which may be found in the somewhat capacious pockets of his embroidered morning wrapper."

While he spoke, so profound was the stillness that one might have heard a pin drop upon the floor. In ceasing, he departed at once, and as abruptly as he had entered. Can I—shall I describe my sensations? Must I say that I felt all the horrors of the damned? Most assuredly I had little time for reflection. Many hands roughly seized me upon the spot, and lights were immediately re-procured. A search ensued. In the lining of my sleeve were found all the court cards essential in *écarté*, and, in the pockets of my wrapper, a number of packs, fac-

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similes of those used at our sittings, with the single exception that mine were of the species called, technically, *arrondis*; the honors being slightly convex at the ends, the lower cards slightly convex at the sides. In this disposition, the dupe who cuts, as customary, at the length of the pack, will invariably find that he cuts his antagonist an honor; while the gambler, cutting at the breadth, will, as certainly, cut nothing for his victim which may count in the records of the game.

Any burst of indignation upon this discovery would have affected me less than the silent contempt, or the sarcastic composure, with which it was received.

"Mr. Wilson," said our host, stooping to remove from beneath his feet an exceedingly luxurious cloak of rare furs, "Mr. Wilson, this is your property." (The weather was cold; and, upon quitting my own room, I had thrown a cloak over my dressing wrapper, putting it off upon reaching the scene of play.) "I presume it is supererogatory to seek here" (eying the folds of the garment with a bitter smile) "for any farther evidence of your skill. Indeed, we have had enough. You will see the necessity, I hope, of quitting Oxford—at all events, of quitting instantly my chambers."

Abashed, humbled to the dust as I then was, it is probable that I should have resented this galling language by immediate personal violence, had not my whole attention been at the moment arrested by a fact of the most startling character. The cloak which I had worn was of a rare description of fur; how rare, how extravagantly costly, I shall not venture to say. Its fashion, too, was of my own fantastic invention; for I was fastidious to an absurd degree of coxcombry, in matters of this frivolous nature. When, therefore, Mr. Preston reached me that which he had picked up upon the floor, and near the folding-doors of the apartment, it was with an astonishment nearly bordering upon terror, that I perceived my own already hanging on my arm (where I had no doubt unwittingly placed it), and that the one presented me was but its exact counterpart in every, in even the minutest possible particular. The singular

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being who had so disastrously exposed me, had been muffled, I remembered, in a cloak; and none had been worn at all by any of the members of our party, with the exception of myself. Retaining some presence of mind, I took the one offered me by Preston; placed it, unnoticed, over my own; left the apartment with a resolute scowl of defiance; and, next morning ere dawn of day, commenced a hurried journey from Oxford to the continent, in a perfect agony of horror and of shame.

I fled in vain. My evil destiny pursued me as if in exultation, and proved, indeed, that the exercise of its mysterious dominion had as yet only begun. Scarcely had I set foot in Paris, ere I had fresh evidence of the detestable interest taken by this Wilson in my concerns. Years flew, while I experienced no relief. Villain!—at Rome, with how untimely, yet with how spectral an officiousness, stepped he in between me and my ambition! At Vienna, too—at Berlin—and at Moscow! Where, in truth, had I *not* bitter cause to curse him within my heart? From his inscrutable tyranny did I at length flee, panic-stricken, as from a pestilence; and to the very ends of the earth *I fled in vain.*

And again, and again, in secret communion with my own spirit, would I demand the questions, "Who is he?—whence came he?—and what are his objects?" But no answer was there found. And now I scrutinized, with a minute scrutiny, the forms, and the methods, and the leading traits of his impertinent supervision. But even here there was very little upon which to base a conjecture. It was noticeable, indeed, that, in no one of the multiplied instances in which he had of late crossed my path, had he so crossed it except to frustrate those schemes, or to disturb those actions, which, if fully carried out, might have resulted in bitter mischief. Poor justification this, in truth, for an authority so imperiously assumed! Poor indemnity for natural rights of self-agency so pertinaciously, so insultingly denied!

I had also been forced to notice that my tormentor, for a very long period of time (while scrupulously and with miraculous

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dexterity maintaining his whim of an identity of apparel with myself) had so contrived it, in the execution of his varied interference with my will, that I saw not, at any moment, the features of his face. Be Wilson what he might, *this*, at least, was but the veriest of affectation, or of folly. Could he, for an instant, have supposed that, in my admonisher at Eton,—in the destroyer of my honor at Oxford,—in him who thwarted my ambition at Rome, my revenge at Paris, my passionate love at Naples, or what he falsely termed my avarice in Egypt,—that in this, my arch-enemy and evil genius, I could fail to recognize the William Wilson of my school-boy days: the namesake, the companion, the rival, the hated and dreaded rival at Dr. Bransby's? Impossible!—but let me hasten to the last eventful scene of the drama.

Thus far I had succumbed supinely to this imperious domination. The sentiment of deep awe with which I habitually regarded the elevated character, the majestic wisdom, the apparent omnipresence and omnipotence of Wilson, added to a feeling of even terror, with which certain other traits in his nature and assumptions inspired me, had operated, hitherto, to impress me with an idea of my own utter weakness and helplessness, and to suggest an implicit, although bitterly reluctant submission to his arbitrary will. But, of late days, I had given myself up entirely to wine; and its maddening influence upon my hereditary temper rendered me more and more impatient of control. I began to murmur, to hesitate, to resist. And was it only fancy which induced me to believe that, with the increase of my own firmness, that of my tormentor underwent a proportional diminution? Be this as it may, I now began to feel the inspiration of a burning hope, and at length nurtured in my secret thoughts a stern and desperate resolution that I would submit no longer to be enslaved.

It was at Rome, during the Carnival of 18—, that I attended a masquerade in the palazzo of the Neapolitan Duke Di Broglio. I had indulged more freely than usual in the excesses of the wine-table; and now the suffocating atmosphere of the crowded

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rooms irritated me beyond endurance. The difficulty, too, of forcing my way through the mazes of the company contributed not a little to the ruffling of my temper; for I was anxiously seeking (let me not say with what unworthy motive) the young, the gay, the beautiful wife of the aged and doting Di Broglio. With a too unscrupulous confidence she had previously communicated to me the secret of the costume in which she would be habited, and now, having caught a glimpse of her person, I was hurrying to make my way into her presence. At this moment I felt a light hand placed upon my shoulder, and that ever-remembered, low, damnable *whisper* within my ear.

In an absolute frenzy of wrath, I turned at once upon him who had thus interrupted me, and seized him violently by the collar. He was attired, as I had expected, in a costume altogether similar to my own; wearing a Spanish cloak of blue velvet, begirt about the waist with a crimson belt sustaining a rapier. A mask of black silk entirely covered his face.

"Scoundrel!" I said, in a voice husky with rage, while every syllable I uttered seemed as new fuel to my fury; "scoundrel! impostor! accursed villain! you shall not—you *shall not* dog me unto death! Follow me, or I stab you where you stand!"—and I broke my way from the ball-room into a small antechamber adjoining, dragging him unresistingly with me as I went.

Upon entering, I thrust him furiously from me. He staggered against the wall, while I closed the door with an oath, and commanded him to draw. He hesitated but for an instant; then, with a slight sigh, drew in silence, and put himself upon his defence.

The contest was brief indeed. I was frantic with every species of wild excitement, and felt within my single arm the energy and power of a multitude. In a few seconds I forced him by sheer strength against the wainscoting, and thus, getting him at mercy, plunged my sword, with brute ferocity, repeatedly through and through his bosom.

At that instant some person tried the latch of the door. I

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hastened to prevent an intrusion, and then immediately returned to my dying antagonist. But what human language can adequately portray *that* astonishment, *that* horror which possessed me at the spectacle then presented to view? The brief moment in which I averted my eyes had been sufficient to produce, apparently, a material change in the arrangements at the upper or farther end of the room. A large mirror—so at first it seemed to me in my confusion—now stood where none had been perceptible before; and, as I stepped up to it in extremity of terror, mine own image, but with features all pale and dabbled in blood, advanced to meet me with a feeble and tottering gait.

Thus it appeared, I say, but was not. It was my antagonist—it was Wilson, who then stood before me in the agonies of his dissolution. His mask and cloak lay, where he had thrown them, upon the floor. Not a thread in all his raïment—not a line in all the marked and singular lineaments of his face which was not, even in the most absolute identity, *mine own*!

It was Wilson; but he spoke no longer in a whisper, and I could have fancied that I myself was speaking while he said:—

"*You have conquered, and I yield. Yet, henceforward art thou also dead—dead to the World, to Heaven and to Hope! In me didst thou exist—and, in my death, see by this image, which is thine own, how utterly thou hast murdered thyself.*"

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WHAT WERE THEY?

[These two mystery stories have much in common, but I doubt whether Maupassant had read O'Brien's story. Both were indebted to Poe,—O'Brien more than Maupassant,—but Maupassant's story has a philosophical unity not found in "What Was It?"

In "What Was It?" Escott (the pen name assumed by O'Brien in the story) remarks: "That there must be one Something more terrible than any other thing, I feel. I cannot attempt, however, even the most vague definition." The reader knows now that the author is going to present his conception of the "one great and ruling embodiment of fear." So he does; and it is a gruesome, hair-raising monster that falls upon him. But no scientific explanation is even hinted. The Thing meets all the requirements of sheer horror, but Poe would have related the mystery in some way to a dream or an achievement of modern science. He would thus have projected the mind of the reader along some speculative range of thought and left a residuum of philosophy as well as of horror. The analogy of glass helps us to understand the invisibility of the Thing, but why did it have the semblance of a hideous, misshapen man? If "the well-known New York merchant" who lived in the house before it was haunted had been portrayed as a ghoulish and distorted dwarf, there would have been some sort of clue to work upon. But O'Brien merely flings the question and answer of the title at us, gives us a few impossible explanations, and proceeds to pile up the horror and mystery.

In "The Horla" the question is soon raised whether there are not invisible beings around us. "One might say that man, ever since he has thought, has had a foreboding of, and feared, a new being, stronger than himself, his successor in this world." The Horla is surmised to be this new being. He is invisible, and his shape is left wholly to the imagination—certainly a finer touch than O'Brien's plaster-of-Paris encasement. The Horla is immune to fire, sword, poison, starvation, or any other means of premature destruction. He cannot be frightened, therefore, as man is frightened, because, says Maupassant, it is from the fear of premature destruction that all human terror springs. But is he a monster? May he not be a higher and nobler type than man? He drinks water and milk, loves flowers, and is fond of reading—no very compromising

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indictment. "After man the Horla. After him who can die every day, at any hour, at any moment, by any accident, he came who was to die only at his own proper hour and minute, because he had touched the limits of his existence." This story is better evolved than O'Brien's and opens more vistas to philosophic thought.]

WHAT WAS IT? A MYSTERY[1]

FITZ-JAMES O'BRIEN

It is, I confess, with considerable diffidence that I approach the strange narrative which I am about to relate. The events which I purpose detailing are of so extraordinary and unheard-of a character that I am quite prepared to meet with an unusual amount of incredulity and scorn. I accept all such beforehand. I have, I trust, the literary courage to face unbelief. I have, after mature consideration, resolved to narrate, in as simple and straightforward a manner as I can compass, some facts that passed under my observation in the month of July last, and which, in the annals of the mysteries of physical science, are wholly unparalleled.

I live at No. —— Twenty-sixth Street, in this city. The house is in some respects a curious one. It has enjoyed for the last two years the reputation of being haunted. It is a large and stately residence, surrounded by what was once a garden, but which is now only a green enclosure used for bleaching clothes. The dry basin of what has been a fountain, and a few fruit-trees, ragged and unpruned, indicate that this spot, in past days, was a pleasant, shady retreat, filled with fruits and flowers and the sweet murmur of waters.

The house is very spacious. A hall of noble size leads to a vast spiral staircase winding through its center, while the various apartments are of imposing dimensions. It was built some fifteen or twenty years since by Mr. A——, the well-known New York merchant, who five years ago threw the commercial world into convulsions by a stupendous bank fraud. Mr. A——, as

[1] From *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, March, 1859.

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everyone knows, escaped to Europe, and died not long after of a broken heart. Almost immediately after the news of his decease reached this country, and was verified, the report spread in Twenty-sixth Street that No. —— was haunted. Legal measures had dispossessed the widow of its former owner, and it was inhabited merely by a care-taker and his wife, placed there by the house-agent into whose hands it had passed for purposes of renting or sale. These people declared that they were troubled with unnatural noises. Doors were opened without any visible agency. The remnants of furniture scattered through the various rooms were, during the night, piled one upon the other by unknown hands. Invisible feet passed up and down the stairs in broad daylight, accompanied by the rustle of unseen silk dresses, and the gliding of viewless hands along the massive balusters. The care-taker and his wife declared they would live there no longer. The house-agent laughed, dismissed them, and put others in their place. The noises and supernatural manifestations continued. The neighborhood caught up the story, and the house remained untenanted for three years. Several persons negotiated for it; but somehow, always before the bargain was closed, they heard the unpleasant rumors, and declined to treat any further.

It was in this state of things that my landlady—who at that time kept a boarding-house in Bleecker Street, and who wished to move farther up town—conceived the bold idea of renting No. —— Twenty-sixth Street. Happening to have in her house rather a plucky and philosophical set of boarders, she laid her scheme before us, stating candidly everything she had heard respecting the ghostly qualities of the establishment to which she wished to remove us. With the exception of two timid persons,—a sea-captain and a returned Californian, who immediately gave notice that they would leave,—all of Mrs. Moffat's guests declared that they would accompany her in her chivalric incursion into the abode of spirits.

Our removal was effected in the month of May, and we were all charmed with our new residence. The portion of Twenty-

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sixth Street where our house is situated—between Seventh and Eighth Avenues—is one of the pleasantest localities in New York. The gardens back of the houses, running down nearly to the Hudson, form, in the summer time, a perfect avenue of verdure. The air is pure and invigorating, sweeping, as it does, straight across the river from the Weehawken heights, and even the ragged garden which surrounded the house on two sides, although displaying on washing days rather too much clothes-line, still gave us a piece of green sward to look at, and a cool retreat in the summer evenings, where we smoked our cigars in the dusk, and watched the fire-flies flashing their dark-lanterns in the long grass.

Of course we had no sooner established ourselves at No. —— than we began to expect the ghosts. We absolutely awaited their advent with eagerness. Our dinner conversation was supernatural. One of the boarders, who had purchased Mrs. Crowe's *Night Side of Nature* for his own private delectation, was regarded as a public enemy by the entire household for not having bought twenty copies. The man led a life of supreme wretchedness while he was reading this volume. A system of espionage was established, of which he was the victim. If he incautiously laid the book down for an instant and left the room, it was immediately seized and read aloud in secret places to a select few. I found myself a person of immense importance, it having leaked out that I was tolerably well versed in the history of supernaturalism, and had once written a story, entitled "The Pot of Tulips," for *Harper's Monthly*, the foundation of which was a ghost. If a table or a wainscot panel happened to warp when we were assembled in the large drawing-room, there was an instant silence, and everyone was prepared for an immediate clanking of chains and a spectral form.

After a month of psychological excitement, it was with the utmost dissatisfaction that we were forced to acknowledge that nothing in the remotest degree approaching the supernatural had manifested itself. Once the black butler asseverated that his candle had been blown out by some invisible agency while

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he was undressing himself for the night; but as I had more than once discovered this colored gentleman in a condition when one candle must have appeared to him like two, I thought it possible that, by going a step farther in his potations, he might have reversed this phenomenon, and seen no candle at all where he ought to have beheld one.

Things were in this state when an incident took place so awful and inexplicable in its character that my reason fairly reels at the bare memory of the occurrence. It was the tenth of July. After dinner was over I repaired, with my friend Dr. Hammond, to the garden to smoke my evening pipe. Independent of certain mental sympathies which existed between the Doctor and myself, we were linked together by a secret vice. We both smoked opium. We knew each other's secret, and respected it. We enjoyed together that wonderful expansion of thought, that marvelous intensifying of the perceptive faculties, that boundless feeling of existence when we seem to have points of contact with the whole universe,—in short, that unimaginable spiritual bliss, which I would not surrender for a throne, and which I hope you, reader, will never—never taste.

Those hours of opium happiness which the Doctor and I spent together in secret were regulated with a scientific accuracy. We did not blindly smoke the drug of Paradise, and leave our dreams to chance. While smoking, we carefully steered our conversation through the brightest and calmest channels of thought. We talked of the East, and endeavored to recall the magical panorama of its glowing scenery. We criticized the most sensuous poets, those who painted life ruddy with health, brimming with passion, happy in the possession of youth and strength and beauty. If we talked of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, we lingered over Ariel, and avoided Caliban. Like the Gebers, we turned our faces to the east, and saw only the sunny side of the world.

This skillful coloring of our train of thought produced in our subsequent visions a corresponding tone. The splendors of Arabian fairy-land dyed our dreams. We paced that narrow

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strip of grass with the tread and port of kings. The song of the *rana arborea*, while he clung to the bark of the ragged plum-tree, sounded like the strains of divine orchestras. Houses, walls, and streets melted like rain-clouds, and vistas of unimaginable glory stretched away before us. It was a rapturous companionship. We enjoyed the vast delight more perfectly because, even in our most ecstatic moments, we were conscious of each other's presence. Our pleasures, while individual, were still twin, vibrating and moving in musical accord.

On the evening in question, the tenth of July, the Doctor and myself found ourselves in an unusually metaphysical mood. We lit our large meerschaums, filled with fine Turkish tobacco, in the core of which burned a little black nut of opium, that, like the nut in the fairy tale, held within its narrow limits wonders beyond the reach of kings; we paced to and fro, conversing. A strange perversity dominated the currents of our thought. They would *not* flow through the sun-lit channels into which we strove to divert them. For some unaccountable reason they constantly diverged into dark and lonesome beds, where a continual gloom brooded. It was in vain that, after our old fashion, we flung ourselves on the shores of the East, and talked of its gay bazaars, of the splendors of the time of Haroun, of harems and golden palaces. Black afreets continually arose from the depths of our talk, and expanded, like the one the fisherman released from the copper vessel, until they blotted everything bright from our vision. Insensibly, we yielded to the occult force that swayed us, and indulged in gloomy speculation. We had talked some time upon the proneness of the human mind to mysticism, and the almost universal love of the Terrible, when Hammond suddenly said to me, "What do you consider to be the greatest element of Terror?"

The question, I own, puzzled me. That many things were terrible, I knew. Stumbling over a corpse in the dark; beholding, as I once did, a woman floating down a deep and rapid river, with wildly-lifted arms, and awful, upturned face, uttering, as she sank, shrieks that rent one's heart, while we, the

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spectators, stood frozen at a window which overhung the river at a height of sixty feet, unable to make the slightest effort to save her, but dumbly watching her last supreme agony and her disappearance. A shattered wreck, with no life visible, encountered floating listlessly on the ocean, is a terrible object, for it suggests a huge terror, the proportions of which are veiled. But it now struck me for the first time that there must be one great and ruling embodiment of fear, a King of Terrors to which all others must succumb. What might it be? To what train of circumstances would it owe its existence?

"I confess, Hammond," I replied to my friend, "I never considered the subject before. That there must be one Something more terrible than any other thing, I feel. I cannot attempt, however, even the most vague definition."

"I am somewhat like you, Harry," he answered. "I feel my capacity to experience a terror greater than anything yet conceived by the human mind;—something combining in fearful and unnatural amalgamation hitherto supposed incompatible elements. The calling of the voices in Brockden Brown's novel of *Wieland* is awful; so is the picture of the Dweller of the Threshold, in Bulwer's *Zanoni*; but," he added, shaking his head gloomily, "there is something more horrible still than these."

"Look here, Hammond," I rejoined, "let us drop this kind of talk, for Heaven's sake! We shall suffer for it, depend on it."

"I don't know what's the matter with me tonight," he replied, "but my brain is running upon all sorts of weird and awful thoughts. I feel as if I could write a story like Hoffmann, tonight, if I were only master of a literary style."

"Well, if we are going to be Hoffmannesque in our talk, I'm off to bed. Opium and nightmares should never be brought together. How sultry it is! Good-night, Hammond."

"Good-night, Harry. Pleasant dreams to you."

"To you, gloomy wretch, afreets, ghouls, and enchanters."

We parted, and each sought his respective chamber. I undressed quickly and got into bed, taking with me, according to

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my usual custom, a book, over which I generally read myself to sleep. I opened the volume as soon as I had laid my head upon the pillow, and instantly flung it to the other side of the room. It was Goudon's *History of Monsters*—a curious French work, which I had lately imported from Paris, but which, in the state of mind I had then reached, was anything but an agreeable companion. I resolved to go to sleep at once; so, turning down my gas until nothing but a little blue point of light glimmered on the top of the tube, I composed myself to rest.

The room was in total darkness. The atom of gas that still remained lighted did not illuminate a distance of three inches round the burner. I desperately drew my arm across my eyes, as if to shut out even the darkness, and tried to think of nothing. It was in vain. The confounded themes touched on by Hammond in the garden kept obtruding themselves on my brain. I battled against them. I erected ramparts of would-be blankness of intellect to keep them out. They still crowded upon me. While I was lying still as a corpse, hoping that by a perfect physical inaction I should hasten mental repose, an awful incident occurred. A Something dropped, as it seemed, from the ceiling, plumb upon my chest, and the next instant I felt two bony hands encircling my throat, endeavoring to choke me.

I am no coward, and am possessed of considerable physical strength. The suddenness of the attack, instead of stunning me, strung every nerve to its highest tension. My body acted from instinct, before my brain had time to realize the terrors of my position. In an instant I wound two muscular arms around the creature, and squeezed it, with all the strength of despair, against my chest. In a few seconds the bony hands that had fastened on my throat loosened their hold, and I was free to breathe once more. Then commenced a struggle of awful intensity. Immersed in the most profound darkness, totally ignorant of the nature of the Thing by which I was so suddenly attacked, finding my grasp slipping every moment, by reason, it seemed to me, of the entire nakedness of my assailant, bitten with sharp teeth in the shoulder, neck, and chest, having every

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moment to protect my throat against a pair of sinewy, agile hands, which my utmost efforts could not confine—these were a combination of circumstances to combat which required all the strength and skill and courage that I possessed.

At last, after a silent, deadly, exhausting struggle, I got my assailant under by a series of incredible efforts of strength. Once pinned, with my knee on what I made out to be its chest, I knew that I was victor. I rested for a moment to breathe. I heard the creature beneath me panting in the darkness, and felt the violent throbbing of a heart. It was apparently as exhausted as I was; that was one comfort. At this moment I remembered that I usually placed under my pillow, before going to bed, a large yellow silk pocket-handkerchief, for use during the night. I felt for it instantly; it was there. In a few seconds more I had, after a fashion, pinioned the creature's arms.

I now felt tolerably secure. There was nothing more to be done but to turn on the gas, and, having first seen what my midnight assailant was like, arouse the household. I will confess to being actuated by a certain pride in not giving the alarm before; I wished to make the capture alone and unaided.

Never losing my hold for an instant, I slipped from the bed to the floor, dragging my captive with me. I had but a few steps to make to reach the gas-burner; these I made with the greatest caution, holding the creature in a grip like a vise. At last I got within arm's-length of the tiny speck of blue light which told me where the gas-burner lay. Quick as lightning I released my grasp with one hand and let on the full flood of light. Then I turned to look at my captive.

I cannot even attempt to give any definition of my sensations the instant after I turned on the gas. I suppose I must have shrieked with terror, for in less than a minute afterward my room was crowded with the inmates of the house. I shudder now as I think of that awful moment. *I saw nothing!* Yes; I had one arm firmly clasped round a breathing, panting, corporeal shape, my other hand gripped with all its strength a throat

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as warm, and apparently fleshly, as my own; and yet, with this living substance in my grasp, with its body pressed against my own, and all in the bright glare of a large jet of gas, I absolutely beheld nothing! Not even an outline,—a vapor!

I do not, even at this hour, realize the situation in which I found myself. I cannot recall the astounding incident thoroughly. Imagination in vain tries to compass the awful paradox.

It breathed. I felt its warm breath upon my cheek. It struggled fiercely. It had hands. They clutched me. Its skin was smooth, like my own. There it lay, pressed close up against me, solid as stone,—and yet utterly invisible!

I wonder that I did not faint or go mad on the instant. Some wonderful instinct must have sustained me; for, absolutely, in place of loosening my hold on the terrible Enigma, I seemed to gain an additional strength in my moment of horror, and tightened my grasp with such wonderful force that I felt the creature shivering with agony.

Just then Hammond entered my room at the head of the household. As soon as he beheld my face—which, I suppose, must have been an awful sight to look at—he hastened forward, crying, "Great heaven, Harry! what has happened?"

"Hammond! Hammond!" I cried, "come here. Oh! this is awful! I have been attacked in bed by something or other, which I have hold of; but I can't see it—I can't see it!"

Hammond, doubtless struck by the unfeigned horror expressed in my countenance, made one or two steps forward with an anxious yet puzzled expression. A very audible titter burst from the remainder of my visitors. This suppressed laughter made me furious. To laugh at a human being in my position! It was the worst species of cruelty. *Now*, I can understand why the appearance of a man struggling violently, as it would seem, with an airy nothing, and calling for assistance against a vision, should have appeared ludicrous. *Then*, so great was my rage against the mocking crowd that had I the power I would have stricken them dead where they stood.

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"Hammond! Hammond!" I cried again, despairingly, "for God's sake come to me. I can hold the—the Thing but a short while longer. It is overpowering me. Help me! Help me!"

"Harry," whispered Hammond, approaching me, "you have been smoking too much opium."

"I swear to you, Hammond, that this is no vision," I answered, in the same low tone. "Don't you see how it shakes my whole frame with its struggles? If you don't believe me, convince yourself. Feel it,—touch it."

Hammond advanced and laid his hand in the spot I indicated. A wild cry of horror burst from him. He had felt it!

In a moment he had discovered somewhere in my room a long piece of cord, and was the next instant winding it and knotting it about the body of the unseen being that I clasped in my arms.

"Harry," he said, in a hoarse, agitated voice, for, though he preserved his presence of mind, he was deeply moved, "Harry, it's all safe now. You may let go, old fellow, if you're tired. The Thing can't move."

I was utterly exhausted, and I gladly loosed my hold.

Hammond stood holding the ends of the cord that bound the Invisible, twisted round his hand, while before him, self-supporting as it were, he beheld a rope laced and interlaced, and stretching tightly round a vacant space. I never saw a man look so thoroughly stricken with awe. Nevertheless his face expressed all the courage and determination which I knew him to possess. His lips, although white, were set firmly, and one could perceive at a glance that, although stricken with fear, he was not daunted.

The confusion that ensued among the guests of the house who were witnesses of this extraordinary scene between Hammond and myself—who beheld the pantomime of binding this struggling Something—who beheld me almost sinking from physical exhaustion when my task of jailer was over—the confusion and terror that took possession of the by-standers, when they saw all this, was beyond description. The weaker ones fled from the apartment. The few who remained clustered near the

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door, and could not be induced to approach Hammond and his Charge. Still incredulity broke out through their terror. They had not the courage to satisfy themselves, and yet they doubted. It was in vain that I begged of some of the men to come near and convince themselves by touch of the existence in that room of a living being which was invisible. They were incredulous, but did not dare to undeceive themselves. How could a solid, living, breathing body be invisible, they asked. My reply was this. I gave a sign to Hammond, and both of us—conquering our fearful repugnance to touch the invisible creature—lifted it from the ground, manacled as it was, and took it to my bed. Its weight was about that of a boy of fourteen.

"Now, my friends," I said, as Hammond and myself held the creature suspended over the bed, "I can give you self-evident proof that here is a solid, ponderable body which, nevertheless, you cannot see. Be good enough to watch the surface of the bed attentively."

I was astonished at my own courage in treating this strange event so calmly; but I had recovered from my first terror, and felt a sort of scientific pride in the affair which dominated every other feeling.

The eyes of the bystanders were immediately fixed on my bed. At a given signal Hammond and I let the creature fall. There was the dull sound of a heavy body alighting on a soft mass. The timbers of the bed creaked. A deep impression marked itself distinctly on the pillow, and on the bed itself. The crowd who witnessed this gave a sort of low, universal cry, and rushed from the room. Hammond and I were left alone with our Mystery.

We remained silent for some time, listening to the low, irregular breathing of the creature on the bed, and watching the rustle of the bed-clothes as it impotently struggled to free itself from confinement. Then Hammond spoke.

"Harry, this is awful."

"Ay, awful."

"But not unaccountable."

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"Not unaccountable! What do you mean? Such a thing has never occurred since the birth of the world. I know not what to think, Hammond. God grant that I am not mad, and that this is not an insane fantasy!"

"Let us reason a little, Harry. Here is a solid body which we touch, but which we cannot see. The fact is so unusual that it strikes us with terror. Is there no parallel, though, for such a phenomenon? Take a piece of pure glass. It is tangible and transparent. A certain chemical coarseness is all that prevents its being so entirely transparent as to be totally invisible. It is not *theoretically impossible*, mind you, to make a glass which shall not reflect a single ray of light—a glass so pure and homogeneous in its atoms that the rays from the sun shall pass through it as they do through the air, refracted but not reflected. We do not see the air, and yet we feel it."

"That's all very well, Hammond, but these are inanimate substances. Glass does not breathe, air does not breathe. *This* thing has a heart that palpitates,—a will that moves it,—lungs that play, and inspire and respire."

"You forget the strange phenomena of which we have so often heard of late," answered the Doctor, gravely. "At the meetings called 'spirit circles,' invisible hands have been thrust into the hands of those persons round the table—warm, fleshly hands that seemed to pulsate with mortal life."

"What? Do you think, then, that this thing is—"

"I don't know what it is," was the solemn reply; "but please the gods I will, with your assistance, thoroughly investigate it."

We watched together, smoking many pipes, all night long, by the bedside of the unearthly being that tossed and panted until it was apparently wearied out. Then we learned by the low, regular breathing that it slept.

The next morning the house was all astir. The boarders congregated on the landing outside my room, and Hammond and myself were lions. We had to answer a thousand questions as to the state of our extraordinary prisoner, for as yet not one

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person in the house except ourselves could be induced to set foot in the apartment.

The creature was awake. This was evidenced by the convulsive manner in which the bed-clothes were moved in its efforts to escape. There was something truly terrible in beholding, as it were, those second-hand indications of the terrible writhings and agonized struggles for liberty which themselves were invisible.

Hammond and myself had racked our brains during the long night to discover some means by which we might realize the shape and general appearance of the Enigma. As well as we could make out by passing our hands over the creature's form, its outlines and lineaments were human. There was a mouth; a round, smooth head without hair; a nose, which, however, was little elevated above the cheeks; and its hands and feet felt like those of a boy. At first we thought of placing the being on a smooth surface and tracing its outline with chalk, as shoemakers trace the outline of the foot. This plan was given up as being of no value. Such an outline would give not the slightest idea of its conformation.

A happy thought struck me. We would take a cast of it in plaster of Paris. This would give us the solid figure, and satisfy all our wishes. But how to do it? The movements of the creature would disturb the setting of the plastic covering, and distort the mold. Another thought. Why not give it chloroform? It had respiratory organs—that was evident by its breathing. Once reduced to a state of insensibility, we could do with it what we would. Doctor X—— was sent for; and after the worthy physician had recovered from the first shock of amazement, he proceeded to administer the chloroform. In three minutes afterward we were enabled to remove the fetters from the creature's body, and a well-known modeler of this city was busily engaged in covering the invisible form with the moist clay. In five minutes more we had a mold, and before evening a rough *fac-simile* of the Mystery. It was shaped like a man,—distorted, uncouth, and horrible, but still a man. It was small, not

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over four feet and some inches in height, and its limbs revealed a muscular development that was unparalleled. Its face surpassed in hideousness anything I had ever seen. Gustave Doré, or Callot, or Tony Johannot, never conceived anything so horrible. There is a face in one of the latter's illustrations to *Un Voyage où il vous plaira*, which somewhat approaches the countenance of this creature, but does not equal it. It was the physiognomy of what I should have fancied a ghoul to be. It looked as if it was capable of feeding on human flesh.

Having satisfied our curiosity, and bound everyone in the house to secrecy, it became a question, what was to be done with our Enigma? It was impossible that we should keep such a horror in our house; it was equally impossible that such an awful being should be let loose upon the world. I confess that I would have gladly voted for the creature's destruction. But who would shoulder the responsibility? Who would undertake the execution of this horrible semblance of a human being? Day after day this question was deliberated gravely. The boarders all left the house. Mrs. Moffat was in despair, and threatened Hammond and myself with all sorts of legal penalties if we did not remove the Horror. Our answer was, "We will go if you like, but we decline taking this creature with us. Remove it yourself if you please. It appeared in your house. On you the responsibility rests." To this there was, of course, no answer. Mrs. Moffat could not obtain for love or money a person who would even approach the Mystery.

The most singular part of the transaction was that we were entirely ignorant of what the creature habitually fed on. Everything in the way of nutriment that we could think of was placed before it, but was never touched. It was awful to stand by, day after day, and see the clothes toss, and hear the hard breathing, and know that it was starving.

Ten, twelve days, a fortnight passed, and it still lived. The pulsations of the heart, however, were daily growing fainter, and had now nearly ceased altogether. It was evident that the creature was dying for want of sustenance. While this terrible life-

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struggle was going on, I felt miserable. I could not sleep of nights. Horrible as the creature was, it was pitiful to think of the pangs it was suffering.

At last it died. Hammond and I found it cold and stiff one morning in the bed. The heart had ceased to beat, the lungs to inspire. We hastened to bury it in the garden. It was a strange funeral, the dropping of that viewless corpse into the damp hole. The cast of its form I gave to Doctor X——, who keeps it in his museum in Tenth Street.

As I am on the eve of a long journey from which I may not return, I have drawn up this narrative of an event the most singular that has ever come to my knowledge.

NOTE. It is rumored that the proprietors of a well-known museum in this city have made arrangements with Dr. X—— to exhibit to the public the singular cast which Mr. Escott deposited with him. So extraordinary a history cannot fail to attract universal attention.

THE HORLA[1]

GUY DE MAUPASSANT

May 8. What a beautiful day! I have spent all the morning lying in the grass in front of my house, under the enormous plantain tree which covers it and shades and shelters the whole of it. I like this part of the country, and I am fond of living here because I am attached to it by deep roots, profound and delicate roots which attach a man to the soil on which his ancestors were born and died, which attach him to what people think and what they eat, to the usages as well as to the food, local expressions, the peculiar language of the peasants, to the smell of the soil, of the villages, and of the atmosphere itself.

I love my house, in which I grew up. From my windows I can see the Seine, which flows by the side of my garden, on the other side of the road, almost through my grounds, the great wide

[1] First published in *Gil Blas*, October 26, 1886.

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Seine, which goes to Rouen and Havre, and which is covered with boats passing to and fro.

On the left, down yonder, lies Rouen, that large town with its blue roofs, under its pointed Gothic towers. They are innumerable, delicate or broad, dominated by the spire of the cathedral, and full of bells which sound through the blue air on fine mornings, sending their sweet and distant iron clang to me; their metallic sound which the breeze wafts in my direction, now stronger and now weaker, according as the wind is stronger or lighter.

What a delicious morning it was!

About eleven o'clock a long line of boats drawn by a steam-tug as big as a fly, which scarcely puffed while emitting its thick smoke, passed my gate.

After two English schooners, whose red flag fluttered towards the sky there came a magnificent Brazilian three-master; it was perfectly white and wonderfully clean and shining. I saluted it, I hardly know why, except that the sight of the vessel gave me great pleasure.

May 12. I have had a slight feverish attack for the last few days, and I feel ill, or rather I feel low-spirited.

Whence do these mysterious influences come which change our happiness into discouragement and our self-confidence into diffidence? One might almost say that the air, the invisible air, is full of unknowable Forces, whose mysterious presence we have to endure. I wake up in the best spirits, with an inclination to sing in my throat. Why? I go down by the side of the water, and suddenly, after walking a short distance, I return home wretched, as if some misfortune were awaiting me there. Why? Is it a cold shiver which, passing over my skin, has upset my nerves and given me low spirits? Is it the form of the clouds, or the hue of the sky, or the color of the surrounding objects which is so changeable, which have troubled my thoughts as they passed before my eyes? Who can tell? Everything that surrounds us, everything that we see without looking at it, everything that we touch without knowing it, everything

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that we handle without feeling it, all that we meet without clearly distinguishing it, has a rapid, surprising, and inexplicable effect upon us and upon our organs, and, through them, on our ideas and on our heart itself.

How profound that mystery of the Invisible is! We cannot fathom it with our miserable senses, with our eyes which are unable to perceive what is either too small or too great, too near to, or too far from us; neither the inhabitants of a star nor of a drop of water . . . with our ears that deceive us, for they transmit to us the vibrations of the air in sonorous notes. They are fairies who work the miracle of changing that movement into noise and by that metamorphosis give birth to music, which makes the mute agitation of nature musical . . . with our sense of smell which is less than that of a dog . . . with our sense of taste which can scarcely distinguish the age of a wine!

Oh, if we only had other organs which would work other miracles in our favor, what a number of fresh things we might discover around us!

May 16. I am ill, decidedly! I was so well last month! I am feverish, horribly feverish, or rather I am in a state of feverish enervation, which makes my mind suffer as much as my body. I have without ceasing that horrible sensation of some danger threatening me, that apprehension of some coming misfortune or of approaching death, that presentiment which is, no doubt, an attack of some illness which is still unknown, which germinates in the flesh and in the blood.

May 18. I have just come from consulting my medical man, for I could no longer get any sleep. He found that my pulse was high, my eyes dilated, my nerves highly strung, but no alarming symptoms. I must have a course of shower baths and bromide of potassium.

May 25. No change! My state is really very peculiar. As the evening comes on, an incomprehensible feeling of disquietude seizes me, just as if night concealed some terrible menace towards me. I dine quickly, and then try to read, but I do not understand the words, and can scarcely distinguish the letters.

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Then I walk up and down my drawing-room, oppressed by a feeling of confused and irresistible fear, the fear of sleep and fear of my bed.

About ten o'clock I go up to my room. As soon as I have got in I double lock, and bolt it; I am frightened . . . by what? Up till the present time I have been frightened by nothing . . . I open my cupboards, and look under my bed; I listen . . . I listen . . . to what? How strange it is that a simple feeling of discomfort, impeded or heightened circulation, perhaps the irritation of a nervous thread, a slight congestion, a small disturbance in the imperfect and delicate functions of our living machinery, can turn the most light-hearted of men into a melancholy one and make a coward of the bravest! Then I go to bed and wait for sleep as a man might wait for the executioner. I wait for its coming with dread, and my heart beats and my legs tremble, while my whole body shivers beneath the warmth of the bedclothes, until the moment when I suddenly fall asleep, as one would throw oneself into a pool of stagnant water in order to drown oneself. I do not feel as I used to formerly, this perfidious sleep which is close to me and watching me, which is going to seize me by the head, to close my eyes and annihilate me, coming over me.

I sleep—a long time—two or three hours perhaps—then a dream—no—a nightmare lays hold on me. I feel that I am in bed and asleep . . . I feel it and I know it . . . and I feel also that somebody is coming close to me, is looking at me, touching me, is getting on to my bed, is kneeling on my chest, is taking my neck between his hands and squeezing it . . . squeezing it with all his might in order to strangle me.

I struggle, bound by that terrible powerlessness which paralyzes us in our dreams; I try to cry out—but I cannot; I want to move—I cannot; I try, with the most violent efforts and out of breath, to turn over and throw off this being which is crushing and suffocating me—I cannot!

And then, suddenly, I wake up, shaken and bathed in perspiration; I light a candle and find that I am alone, and after

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that crisis, which occurs every night, I at length fall asleep and slumber tranquilly till morning.

June 2. My state has grown worse. What is the matter with me? The bromide does me no good, and the shower baths have no effect whatever. Sometimes, in order to tire myself out, though I am fatigued enough already, I go for a walk in the forest of Roumare. I used to think at first that the fresh light and soft air, impregnated with the odor of herbs and leaves, would instill new blood into my veins and impart fresh energy to my heart. I turned into a broad road in the wood, and then towards La Bouille, through a narrow path, between two rows of exceedingly tall trees, which placed a thick, green, almost black roof between the sky and me.

A sudden shiver ran through me, not a cold shiver, but a shiver of agony, and so I hastened my steps, uneasy at being alone in the wood, frightened stupidly and without reason, at the profound solitude. Suddenly it seemed to me as if I were being followed, that somebody was walking at my heels, close, quite close to me, near enough to touch me.

I turned round suddenly, but I was alone. I saw nothing behind me except the straight, broad road, empty and bordered by high trees, horribly empty; on the other side it also extended until it was lost in the distance, and looked just the same, terrible.

I closed my eyes. Why? And then I began to turn round on one heel very quickly, just like a top. I nearly fell down, and opened my eyes; the trees were dancing round me and the earth heaved; I was obliged to sit down. Then, ah! I no longer remembered how I had come! What a strange idea! What a strange, strange idea! I did not the least know. I started off to the right, and got back into the avenue which had led me into the middle of the forest.

June 3. I have had a terrible night. I shall go away for a few weeks, for no doubt a journey will set me up again.

July 2. I have come back, quite cured, and have had a most delightful trip into the bargain. I have been to Mont Saint-Michel, which I had not seen before.

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What a sight, when one arrives as I did, at Avranches towards the end of the day! The town stands on a hill, and I was taken into the public garden at the extremity of the town. I uttered a cry of astonishment. An extraordinarily large bay lay extended before me, as far as my eyes could reach, between two hills which were lost to sight in the mist; and in the middle of this immense yellow bay, under a clear, golden sky, a peculiar hill rose up, somber and pointed in the midst of the sand. The sun had just disappeared, and under the still flaming sky the outline of that fantastic rock stood out which bears on its summit a fantastic monument.

At daybreak I went to it. The tide was low as it had been the night before, and I saw that wonderful abbey rise up before me as I approached it. After several hours' walking I reached the enormous mass of rocks which supports the little town, dominated by the great church. Having climbed the steep and narrow street, I entered the most wonderful Gothic building that has ever been built to God on earth, as large as a town, full of low rooms which seem buried beneath vaulted roofs, and lofty galleries supported by delicate columns.

I entered this gigantic granite jewel which is as light as a bit of lace, covered with towers, with slender belfries to which spiral staircases ascend, and which raise their strange heads that bristle with chimeras, with devils, with fantastic animals, with monstrous flowers, and which are joined together by finely carved arches, to the blue sky by day and to the black sky by night.

When I had reached the summit, I said to the monk who accompanied me: "Father, how happy you must be here!" And he replied: "It is very windy, Monsieur"; and so we began to talk while watching the rising tide, which ran over the sand and covered it with a steel cuirass.

And then the monk told me stories, all the old stories belonging to the place, legends, nothing but legends.

One of them struck me forcibly. The country people, those belonging to the Mornet, declare that at night one can hear talking going on in the sand, and then that one hears two goats

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bleat, one with a strong, the other with a weak voice. Incredulous people declare that it is nothing but the cry of the sea birds, which occasionally resembles bleatings, and occasionally human lamentations; but belated fishermen swear that they have met, wandering on the downs, between two tides, round the little town placed so far out of the world, an old shepherd, whose head, covered by his cloak, they can never see, who guides, walking before them, a he-goat with a man's face, and a she-goat with a woman's face, both with white hair, who talk incessantly, quarreling in a strange language, and then suddenly cease to talk in order to bleat with all their might.

"Do you believe it?" I asked the monk. "I scarcely know," he replied, and I continued: "If there are other beings besides ourselves on this earth, how comes it that we have not known it for so long a time, or why have you not seen them? How is it that I have not seen them?" He replied: "Do we see the hundred-thousandth part of what exists? Look here; there is the wind, which is the strongest force in nature, which knocks down men, and blows down buildings, uproots trees, raises the sea into mountains of water, destroys cliffs, and casts great ships on the breakers; the wind which kills, which whistles, which sighs, which roars,—have you ever seen it, and can you see it? It exists for all that, however."

I was silent before this simple reasoning. That man was a philosopher, or perhaps a fool; I could not say which exactly, so I held my tongue. What he had said had often been in my own thoughts.

July 3. I have slept badly; certainly there is some feverish influence here, for my coachman is suffering in the same way as I am. When I went back home yesterday, I noticed his singular paleness, and I asked him: "What is the matter with you, Jean?" "The matter is that I never get any rest, and my nights devour my days. Since your departure, Monsieur, there has been a spell over me."

However, the other servants are all well, but I am very fearful of having another attack, myself.

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July 4. I am evidently seized again; for my old nightmares have returned. Last night I felt somebody leaning on me who was sucking my life from between my lips with his mouth. Yes, he was sucking it out of my neck, as a leech would have done. Then he got up, satiated, and I woke up, so beaten, crushed, and annihilated that I could not move. If this continues for a few days, I shall certainly go away again.

July 5. Have I lost my reason? What has happened, what I saw last night, is so strange that my head wanders when I think of it!

As I do now every evening, I had locked my door, and then, being thirsty, I drank half a glass of water, and I accidentally noticed that the water-bottle was full up to the cut-glass stopper.

Then I went to bed and fell into one of my terrible sleeps, from which I was aroused in about two hours by a still more terrible shock.

Picture to yourself a sleeping man who is being murdered and who wakes up with a knife in his chest, and who is rattling in his throat, covered with blood, and who can no longer breathe and is going to die and does not understand anything at all about it—there it is.

Having recovered my senses, I was thirsty again, so I lit a candle and went to the table on which my water-bottle was. I lifted it up and tilted it over my glass, but nothing came out. It was empty! It was completely empty! At first I could not understand it at all, and then suddenly I was seized by such a terrible feeling that I had to sit down, or rather I fell into a chair! Then I sprang up with a bound to look about me, and then I sat down again, overcome by astonishment and fear, in front of the transparent crystal bottle! I looked at it with fixed eyes, trying to conjecture, and my hands trembled! Somebody had drunk the water, but who? I? I, without any doubt. It could surely only be I? In that case I was a somnambulist. I lived, without knowing it, that double mysterious life which makes us doubt whether there are not two beings in us, or

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whether a strange, unknowable, and invisible being does not at such moments, when our soul is in a state of torpor, animate our captive body, which obeys this other being as it does us ourselves, and more than it does ourselves.

Oh! Who will understand my horrible agony? Who will understand the emotion of a man who is sound in mind, wide awake, full of sound sense, and who looks in horror at the remains of a little water that has disappeared while he was asleep, through the glass of a water-bottle! And I remained there until it was daylight, without venturing to go to bed again.

July 6. I am going mad. Again all the contents of my water-bottle have been drunk during the night;—or rather, I have drunk it!

But is it I? Is it I? Who could it be? Who? Oh, God! Am I going mad? Who will save me?

July 10. I have just been through some surprising ordeals. Decidedly I am mad! And yet! . . .

On July 6, before going to bed, I put some wine, milk, water, bread, and strawberries on my table. Somebody drank—I drank—all the water and a little of the milk, but neither the wine, bread, nor strawberries were touched.

On the seventh of July I renewed the same experiment, with the same results, and on July 8 I left out the water and the milk, and nothing was touched.

Lastly, on July 9 I put only water and milk on my table, taking care to wrap up the bottles in white muslin and to tie down the stoppers. Then I rubbed my lips, my beard, and my hands with pencil lead, and went to bed.

Irresistible sleep seized me, which was soon followed by a terrible awakening. I had not moved, and my sheets were not marked. I rushed to the table. The muslin round the bottles remained intact; I undid the string, trembling with fear. All the water had been drunk, and so had the milk! Ah! Great God! . . .

I must start for Paris immediately.

July 12. Paris. I must have lost my head during the last

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few days! I must be the plaything of my enervated imagination, unless I am really a somnambulist, or I have been brought under the power of one of those influences which have been proved to exist, but which have hitherto been inexplicable, which are called suggestions. In any case my mental state bordered on madness, and twenty-four hours of Paris sufficed to restore me to my equilibrium.

Yesterday after doing some business and paying some visits which instilled fresh and invigorating mental air into me, I wound up my evening at the Théâtre-Français. A play by Alexandre Dumas the Younger was being acted, and his active and powerful mind completed my cure. Certainly solitude is dangerous for active minds. We require men who can think and can talk, around us. When we are alone for a long time, we people space with phantoms.

I returned along the boulevards to my hotel in excellent spirits. Amid the jostling of the crowd I thought, not without irony, of my terrors and surmises of the previous week, because I believed, yes, I believed, that an invisible being lived beneath my roof. How weak our head is, and how quickly it is terrified and goes astray, as soon as we are struck by a small, incomprehensible fact.

Instead of concluding with these simple words: "I do not understand because the cause escapes me," we immediately imagine terrible mysteries and supernatural powers.

July 14. *Fête* of the Republic. I walked through the streets, and the crackers and flags amused me like a child. Still it is very foolish to be merry on a fixed date, by a Government decree. The populace, an imbecile flock of sheep, now steadily patient, and now in ferocious revolt. Say to it: "Amuse yourself," and it amuses itself. Say to it: "Go and fight with your neighbor," and it goes and fights. Say to it: "Vote for the Emperor," and it votes for the Emperor, and then say to it: "Vote for the Republic," and it votes for the Republic.

Those who direct it also are stupid; but instead of obeying men, they obey principles, which can only be stupid, sterile, and

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false, for the very reason that they are principles, that is to say, ideas which are considered as certain and unchangeable in this world where one is certain of nothing, since light is an illusion and noise is an illusion.

July 16. I saw some things yesterday that troubled me very much.

I was dining with my cousin Madame Sablé, whose husband is colonel of the 76th Chasseurs at Limoges. There were two young women there, one of whom had married a medical man, Dr. Parent, who devotes himself a great deal to nervous diseases and the extraordinary manifestations to which at this moment experiments in hypnotism and suggestion give rise.

He related to us at some length the remarkable results obtained by English scientists and the doctors of the medical school at Nancy, and the facts which he adduced appeared to me so strange that I declared that I was altogether incredulous.

"We are," he declared, "on the point of discovering one of the most important secrets of nature, I mean to say, one of its most important secrets on this earth, for there are certainly some which are of a different kind of importance up in the stars, yonder. Ever since man has thought, since he has been able to express and write down his thoughts, he has felt himself close to a mystery which is impenetrable to his coarse and imperfect senses, and he endeavors to supplement the want of power of his organs by the efforts of his intellect. As long as that intellect still remained in its elementary stage, this intercourse with invisible spirits assumed forms which were commonplace though terrifying. Thence sprang the popular belief in the supernatural, the legends of wandering spirits, of fairies, of gnomes, ghosts, I might even say the legend of God, for our conceptions of the workman-creator, from whatever religion they may have come down to us, are certainly the most mediocre, the stupidest, and the most unacceptable inventions that ever sprang from the frightened brain of any human creatures. Nothing is truer than what Voltaire says: 'God made man in His own image, but man has certainly paid Him back again.'

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"But for rather more than a century, men seem to have had a presentiment of something new. Mesmer and some others have put us on an unexpected track, and especially within the last two or three years, we have arrived at really surprising results."

My cousin, who is also very incredulous, smiled, and Dr. Parent said to her: "Should you like me to try and send you to sleep, Madame?" "Yes, certainly."

She sat down in an easy-chair, and he began to look at her fixedly, so as to fascinate her. I suddenly felt myself somewhat uncomfortable, with a beating heart and a choking feeling in my throat. I saw that Madame Sablé's eyes were growing heavy, her mouth twitched and her bosom heaved, and at the end of ten minutes she was asleep.

"Stand behind her," the doctor said to me, and so I took a seat behind her. He put a visiting-card into her hands, and said to her: "This is a looking-glass; what do you see in it?" And she replied: "I see my cousin." "What is he doing?" "He is twisting his moustache." "And now?" "He is taking a photograph out of his pocket." "Whose photograph is it?" "His own."

That was true, and that photograph had been given me that same evening at the hotel.

"What is his attitude in this portrait?" "He is standing up with his hat in his hand."

So she saw on that card, on that piece of white pasteboard, as if she had seen it in a looking-glass.

The young women were frightened, and exclaimed: "That is quite enough! Quite, quite enough!"

But the doctor said to her authoritatively: "You will get up at eight o'clock tomorrow morning; then you will go and call on your cousin at his hotel and ask him to lend you five thousands francs which your husband demands of you, and which he will ask for when he sets out on his coming journey."

Then he woke her up.

On returning to my hotel, I thought over this curious *séance* and I was assailed by doubts, not as to my cousin's absolute

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and undoubted good faith, for I had known her as well as if she had been my own sister ever since she was a child, but as to a possible trick on the doctor's part. Had not he, perhaps, kept a glass hidden in his hand, which he showed to the young woman in her sleep, at the same time as he did the card? Professional conjurors do things which are just as singular.

So I went home and to bed, and this morning, at about half past eight, I was awakened by my footman, who said to me: "Madame Sablé has asked to see you immediately, Monsieur," so I dressed hastily and went to her.

She sat down in some agitation, with her eyes on the floor, and without raising her veil she said to me: "My dear cousin, I am going to ask a great favor of you." "What is it, cousin?" "I do not like to tell you, and yet I must. I am in absolute want of five thousand francs." "What, you?" "Yes, I, or rather my husband, who has asked me to procure the money for him."

I was so stupefied that I stammered out my answers. I asked myself whether she had not really been making fun of me with Dr. Parent, if it were not merely a very well-acted farce which had been got up beforehand. On looking at her attentively, however, my doubts disappeared. She was trembling with grief, so painful was this step to her, and I was sure that her throat was full of sobs.

I knew that she was very rich and so I continued: "What! Has not your husband five thousand francs at his disposal! Come, think. Are you sure that he commissioned you to ask me for them?"

She hesitated for a few seconds, as if she were making a great effort to search her memory, and then she replied: "Yes . . . yes, I am quite sure of it." "He has written to you?"

She hesitated again and reflected, and I guessed the torture of her thoughts. She did not know. She only knew that she was to borrow five thousand francs of me for her husband. So she told a lie. "Yes, he has written to me." "When, pray? You did not mention it to me yesterday." "I received his letter this morning." "Can you show it me?" "No; no . . . no . . .

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it contained private matters . . . things too personal to ourselves . . . I burnt it." "So your husband runs into debt?"

She hesitated again, and then murmured: "I do not know." Thereupon I said bluntly: "I have not five thousand francs at my disposal at this moment, my dear cousin."

She uttered a kind of a cry as if she were in pain and said: "Oh! oh! I beseech you, I beseech you to get them for me . . ."

She got excited and clasped her hands as if she were praying to me! I heard her voice change its tone; she wept and stammered, harassed and dominated by the irresistible order that she had received.

"Oh! oh! I beg you to . . . if you knew what I am suffering. . . . I want them today."

I had pity on her: "You shall have them by and by, I swear to you." "Oh! thank you! thank you! How kind you are."

I continued: "Do you remember what took place at your house last night?" "Yes." "Do you remember that Dr. Parent sent you to sleep?" "Yes." "Oh! Very well then; he ordered you to come to me this morning to borrow five thousand francs, and at this moment you are obeying that suggestion."

She considered for a few moments, and then replied: "But as it is my husband who wants them . . ."

For a whole hour I tried to convince her, but could not succeed, and when she had gone I went to the doctor. He was just going out, and he listened to me with a smile, and said: "Do you believe now?" "Yes, I cannot help it." "Let us go to your cousin's."

She was already dozing on a couch, overcome with fatigue. The doctor felt her pulse, looked at her for some time with one hand raised towards her eyes which she closed by degrees under the irresistible power of this magnetic influence, and when she was asleep, he said:

"Your husband does not require the five thousand francs any longer! You must, therefore, forget that you asked your cousin to lend them to you, and, if he speaks to you about it, you will not understand him."

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Then he woke her up, and I took out a pocketbook and said: "Here is what you asked me for this morning, my dear cousin." But she was so surprised, that I did not venture to persist; nevertheless, I tried to recall the circumstance to her, but she denied it vigorously, thought that I was making fun of her, and in the end, very nearly lost her temper.

There! I have just come back, and I have not been able to eat any lunch, for this experiment has altogether upset me.

July 19. Many people to whom I have told the adventure have laughed at me. I no longer know what to think. The wise man says: Perhaps!

July 21. I dined at Bougival, and then I spent the evening at a boatmen's ball. Decidedly everything depends on place and surroundings. It would be the height of folly to believe in the supernatural on the *île de la Grenouillière*[1] . . . but on the top of Mont Saint-Michel? . . . and in India? We are terribly under the influence of our surroundings. I shall return home next week.

July 30. I came back to my own house yesterday. Everything is going on well.

August 2. Nothing new. It is splendid weather, and I spend my days in watching the Seine flow past.

August 4. Quarrels among my servants. They declare that the glasses are broken in the cupboards at night. The footman accuses the cook, who accuses the needlewoman, who accuses the other two. Who is the culprit? A clever person, to be able to tell.

August 6. This time, I am not mad. I have seen . . . I have seen . . . I have seen! . . . I can doubt no longer . . . I have seen it! . . .

I was walking at two o'clock among my rose trees, in the full sunlight . . . in the walk bordered by autumn roses which are beginning to fall. As I stopped to look at a *Géant de Bataille*, which had three splendid blooms, I distinctly saw the stalk of

[1] Frog-Island.

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one of the roses bend, close to me, as if an invisible hand had bent it, and then break, as if that hand had picked it! Then the flower raised itself, following the curve which a hand would have described in carrying it towards a mouth, and it remained suspended in the transparent air, all alone and motionless, a terrible red spot, three yards from my eyes. In desperation I rushed at it to take it! I found nothing; it had disappeared. Then I was seized with furious rage against myself, for it is not allowable for a reasonable and serious man to have such hallucinations.

But was it a hallucination? I turned round to look for the stalk, and I found it immediately under the bush, freshly broken, between two other roses which remained on the branch, and I returned home then, with a much disturbed mind; for I am certain now, as certain as I am of the alternation of day and night, that there exists close to me an invisible being that lives on milk and on water, which can touch objects, take them, and change their places; which is, consequently, endowed with a material nature, although it is imperceptible to our senses, and which lives as I do, under my roof. . . .

August 7. I slept tranquilly. He drank the water out of my decanter, but did not disturb my sleep.

I ask myself whether I am mad. As I was walking just now in the sun by the riverside, doubts as to my own sanity arose in me, not vague doubts such as I have had hitherto, but precise and absolute doubts. I have seen mad people, and I have known some who have been quite intelligent, lucid, even clear-sighted in every concern of life, except on one point. They spoke clearly, readily, profoundly on everything, when suddenly their thoughts struck upon the breakers of their madness and broke to pieces there, and were dispersed and foundered in that furious and terrible sea, full of bounding waves, fogs, and squalls, which is called *madness*.

I certainly should think that I was mad, absolutely mad, if I were not conscious, did not perfectly know my state, if I did not fathom it by analyzing it with the most complete

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lucidity. I should, in fact, be a reasonable man who was laboring under a hallucination. Some unknown disturbance must have been excited in my brain, one of those disturbances which physiologists of the present day try to note and to fix precisely, and that disturbance must have caused a profound gulf in my mind and in the order and logic of my ideas. Similar phenomena occur in the dreams which lead us through the most unlikely phantasmagoria, without causing us any surprise, because our verifying apparatus and our sense of control have gone to sleep, while our imaginative faculty wakes and works. Is it not possible that one of the imperceptible keys of the cerebral finger-board has been paralyzed in me? Some men lose the recollection of proper names, or of verbs or of numbers or merely of dates, in consequence of an accident. The localization of all the particles of thought has been proved nowadays; what then would there be surprising in the fact that my faculty of controlling the unreality of certain hallucinations should be destroyed for the time being!

I thought of all this as I walked by the side of the water. The sun was shining brightly on the river and made earth delightful, while it filled my vision with love for life, for the swallows whose agility is always delightful in my eyes, for the plants by the riverside, whose rustling is a pleasure to my ears.

By degrees, however, an inexplicable feeling of discomfort seized me. It seemed to me as if some unknown force were numbing and stopping me, were preventing me from going farther, and were calling me back. I felt that painful wish to return which oppresses you when you have left a beloved invalid at home, and when you are seized by a presentiment that he is worse.

I, therefore, returned in spite of myself, feeling certain that I should find some bad news awaiting me, a letter or a telegram. There was nothing, however, and I was more surprised and uneasy than if I had had another fantastic vision.

August 8. I spent a terrible evening, yesterday. He does not show himself any more, but I feel that he is near me, watching

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me, looking at me, penetrating me, dominating me, and more redoubtable when he hides himself thus, than if he were to manifest his constant and invisible presence by supernatural phenomena. However, I slept.

August 9. Nothing, but I am afraid.

August 10. Nothing; what will happen tomorrow?

August 11. Still nothing; I cannot stay at home with this fear hanging over me and these thoughts in my mind; I shall go away.

August 12. Ten o'clock at night. All day long I have been trying to get away, and have not been able. I wished to accomplish this simple and easy act of liberty—go out—get into my carriage in order to go to Rouen—and I have not been able to do it. What is the reason?

August 13. When we are attacked by certain maladies, all the springs of our physical being appear to be broken, all our energies destroyed, all our muscles relaxed, our bones to have become as soft as our flesh, and our blood as liquid as water. I am experiencing that condition in my moral being in a strange and distressing manner. I have no longer any strength, any courage, any self-control, nor even any power to set my own will in motion. I have no power left to *will* anything, but someone does it for me and I obey.

August 14. I am lost! Somebody possesses my soul and governs it! Somebody orders all my acts, all my movements, all my thoughts. I am no longer anything in myself, nothing except an enslaved and terrified spectator of all the things which I do. I wish to go out; I cannot. He does not wish to, and so I remain, trembling and distracted in the armchair in which he keeps me sitting. I merely wish to get up and to rouse myself, so as to think that I am still master of myself: I cannot! I am riveted to my chair, and my chair adheres to the ground in such a manner that no force could move us.

Then suddenly, I must, I must go to the bottom of my garden to pick some strawberries and eat them, and I go there. I pick the strawberries and I eat them! Oh! my God! my God! Is

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there a God? If there be one, deliver me! save me! succor me! Pardon! Pity! Mercy! Save me! Oh! what sufferings! what torture! what horror!

August 15. Certainly this is the way in which my poor cousin was possessed and swayed, when she came to borrow five thousand francs of me. She was under the power of a strange will which had entered into her, like another soul, like another parasitic and ruling soul. Is the world coming to an end?

But who is he, this invisible being that rules me, this unknowable being, this rover of a supernatural race?

Invisible beings exist, then! How is it then that since the beginning of the world they have never manifested themselves in such a manner precisely as they do to me? I have never read anything which resembles what goes on in my house. Oh! If I could only leave it, if I could only go away and flee, so as never to return. I should be saved, but I cannot.

August 16. I managed to escape today for two hours, like a prisoner who finds the door of his dungeon accidentally open. I suddenly felt that I was free and that he was far away, and so I gave orders to put the horses in as quickly as possible, and I drove to Rouen. Oh! How delightful to be able to say to a man who obeyed you: "Go to Rouen!"

I made him pull up before the library, and I begged them to lend me Dr. Herrmann Herestauss's treatise on the unknown inhabitants of the ancient and modern world.

Then, as I was getting into my carriage, I intended to say: "To the railway station!" but instead of this I shouted,—I did not say, but I shouted,—in such a loud voice that all the passers-by turned round, "Home!" and I fell back on the cushion of my carriage, overcome by mental agony. He had found me out and regained possession of me.

August 17. Oh! What a night! what a night! And yet it seems to me that I ought to rejoice. I read until one o'clock in the morning! Herestauss, Doctor of Philosophy and Theogony, wrote the history and the manifestations of all those invisible beings which hover around man, or of whom he dreams. He

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describes their origin, their domains, their power; but none of them resembles the one which haunts me. One might say that man, ever since he has had thought, has had a foreboding of, and has feared, a new being, stronger than himself, his successor in this world, and that, feeling him near, and not being able to foretell the nature of that master, he has, in his terror, created the whole race of hidden beings, of vague phantoms born of fear.

Having, therefore, read until one o'clock in the morning, I went and sat down at the open window, in order to cool my forehead and my thoughts, in the calm night air. It was very pleasant and warm! How I should have enjoyed such a night formerly!

There was no moon, but the stars darted out their rays in the dark heavens. Who inhabits those worlds? What forms, what living beings, what animals are there? What do those who are thinkers in those distant worlds know more than we do? What can they do more than we can? What do they see which we do not know? Will not one of them, some day or other, traversing space, appear on our earth to conquer it, just as the Norsemen formerly crossed the sea in order to subjugate nations more feeble than themselves?

We are so weak, so unarmed, so ignorant, so small, we who live on this particle of mud which turns round in a drop of water.

I fell asleep, dreaming thus in the cool night air, and then, having slept for about three quarters of an hour, I opened my eyes without moving, awakened by I know not what confused and strange sensation. At first I saw nothing, and then suddenly it appeared to me as if a page of a book which had remained open on my table, turned over of its own accord. Not a breath of air had come in at my window, and I was surprised and waited. In about four minutes, I saw, I saw, yes, I saw with my own eyes another page lift itself up and fall down on the others, as if a finger had turned it over. My armchair was empty, appeared empty, but I knew that he was there, he, and sitting in my place, and that he was reading. With a furious bound, the bound of an enraged wild beast that wishes to dis-

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embowel its tamer, I crossed my room to seize him, to strangle him, to kill him! . . . But before I could reach it, my chair fell over as if somebody had run away from me . . . my table rocked, my lamp fell and went out, and my window closed as if some thief had been surprised and had fled out into the night, shutting it behind him.

So he had run away: he had been afraid: he, afraid of me!

So . . . so . . . tomorrow . . . or later . . . some day or other . . . I should be able to hold him in my clutches and crush him against the ground! Do not dogs occasionally bite and strangle their masters?

August 18. I have been thinking the whole day long. Oh! yes, I will obey him, follow his impulses, fulfill all his wishes, show myself humble, submissive, a coward. He is the stronger; but an hour will come . . .

August 19. I know . . . I know . . . I know all! I have just read the following in the *Revue du Monde Scientifique*: "A curious piece of news comes to us from Rio de Janeiro. Madness, an epidemic of madness, which may be compared to that contagious madness which attacked the people of Europe in the Middle Ages, is at this moment raging in the Province of São Paulo. The frightened inhabitants are leaving their houses, deserting their villages, abandoning their land, saying that they are pursued, possessed, governed like human cattle by invisible though tangible beings, a species of vampire, which feed on their life while they are asleep, and who, besides, drink water and milk without appearing to touch any other nourishment.

"Professor Don Pedro Henriques, accompanied by several medical savants, has gone to the Province of São Paulo, in order to study the origin and the manifestations of this surprising madness on the spot, and to propose such measures to the Emperor as may appear to him to be most fitted to restore the mad population to reason."

Ah! Ah! I remember now that fine Brazilian three-master which passed in front of my windows as it was going up the Seine, on the 8th of last May! I thought it looked so pretty,

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so white and bright! That Being was on board of her, coming from there, where its race sprang from. And it saw me! It saw my house which was also white, and he sprang from the ship onto the land. Oh! Good heavens!

Now I know, I can divine. The reign of man is over, and he has come. He whom disquieted priests exorcised, whom sorcerers evoked on dark nights, without yet seeing him appear, to whom the presentiments of the transient masters of the world lent all the monstrous or graceful forms of gnomes, spirits, genii, fairies, and familiar spirits. After the coarse conceptions of primitive fear, more clear-sighted men foresaw it more clearly. Mesmer divined him, and ten years ago physicians accurately discovered the nature of his power, even before he exercised it himself. They played with that weapon of their new Lord, the sway of a mysterious will over the human soul, which had become enslaved. They called it magnetism, hypnotism, suggestion . . . what do I know? I have seen them amusing themselves like impudent children with this horrible power! Woe to us! Woe to man! He has come, the . . . the . . . what does he call himself . . . the . . . I fancy that he is shouting out his name to me and I do not hear him . . . the . . . yes . . . he is shouting out . . . I am listening . . . I cannot . . . repeat . . . it . . . Horla . . . I have heard . . . the Horla, . . . it is he . . . the Horla . . . he has come! . . .

Ah! the vulture has eaten the pigeon; the wolf has eaten the lamb; the lion has devoured the buffalo with sharp horns; man has killed the lion with an arrow, with a sword, with gunpowder; but the Horla will make of man what we have made of the horse and of the ox: his chattel, his slave, and his food, by the mere power of his will. Woe to us!

But, nevertheless, the animal sometimes revolts and kills the man who has subjugated it. . . . I also should like . . . I shall be able to . . . but I must know him, touch him, see him! Learned men say that beasts' eyes, as they differ from ours, do not distinguish as ours do. . . . And my eye cannot distinguish this newcomer who is oppressing me.

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Why? Oh! Now I remember the words of the monk at Mont Saint-Michel: "Can we see the hundred-thousandth part of what exists? Look here; there is the wind, which is the strongest force in nature, which knocks down men, and blows down buildings, uproots trees, raises the sea into mountains of water, destroys cliffs, and casts great ships on the breakers; the wind which kills, which whistles, which sighs, which roars,—have you ever seen it, and can you see it? It exists for all that, however!"

And I went on thinking: my eyes are so weak, so imperfect, that they do not even distinguish hard bodies, if they are as transparent as glass! . . . If a glass without tinfoil behind it were to bar my way, I should run into it, just as a bird which has flown into a room breaks its head against the windowpanes. A thousand things, moreover, deceive him and lead him astray. How should it then be surprising that he cannot perceive a fresh body which is traversed by the light?

A new being! Why not? It was assuredly bound to come! Why should we be the last? We do not distinguish it, as we do all the others created before us? The reason is that its nature is more perfect, its body finer and more finished than ours, that ours is so weak, so awkwardly conceived, encumbered with organs that are always tired, always on the strain like locks that are too complicated, which lives like a plant and like a beast, nourishing itself with difficulty on air, herbs, and flesh, an animal machine, which is a prey to maladies, to malformations, to decay; broken-winded, badly regulated, simple and eccentric, ingeniously ill made, a coarse and a delicate work, the outline of a being which might become intelligent and grand.

We are only a few, so few in this world, from the oyster up to man. Why should there not be one more, when once that period is accomplished which separates the successive apparitions from all the different species?

Why not one more? Why not, also, other trees with immense, splendid flowers, perfuming whole regions? Why not other elements besides fire, air, earth, and water? There are

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four, only four, those nursing fathers of various beings! What a pity! Why are they not forty, four hundred, four thousand! How poor everything is, how mean and wretched! grudgingly given, dryly invented, clumsily made! Ah! the elephant and the hippopotamus, what grace! And the camel, what elegance!

But the butterfly, you will say, a flying flower! I dream of one that should be as large as a hundred worlds, with wings whose shape, beauty, colors, and motion I cannot even express. But I see it . . . it flutters from star to star, refreshing them and perfuming them with the light and harmonious breath of its flight! . . . And the people up there look at it as it passes in an ecstasy of delight! . . .

What is the matter with me? It is he, the Horla, who haunts me, and who makes me think of these foolish things! He is within me, he is becoming my soul; I shall kill him!

August 19. I shall kill him. I have seen him! Yesterday I sat down at my table and pretended to write very assiduously. I knew quite well that he would come prowling round me, quite close to me, so close that I might perhaps be able to touch him, to seize him. And then! . . . then I should have the strength of desperation; I should have my hands, my knees, my chest, my forehead, my teeth to strangle him, to crush him, to bite him, to tear him to pieces. And I watched for him with all my overexcited organs.

I had lighted my two lamps and the eight wax candles on my mantelpiece, as if, by this light, I could have discovered him.

My bed, my old oak bed with its columns, was opposite to me; on my right was the fireplace; on my left the door, which was carefully closed, after I had left it open for some time, in order to attract him; behind me was a very high wardrobe with a looking-glass in it, which served me to dress by every day, and in which I was in the habit of looking at myself from head to foot every time I passed it.

So I pretended to be writing in order to deceive him, for he also was watching me, and suddenly I felt, I was certain that

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he was reading over my shoulder, that he was there, almost touching my ear.

I got up so quickly, with my hands extended, that I almost fell. Eh! well? . . . It was as bright as at midday, but I did not see myself in the glass! . . . It was empty, clear, profound, full of light! But my figure was not reflected in it . . . and I, I was opposite to it! I saw the large, clear glass from top to bottom, and I looked at it with unsteady eyes; and I did not dare to advance; I did not venture to make a movement, nevertheless, feeling perfectly that he was there, but that he would escape me again, he whose imperceptible body had absorbed my reflection.

How frightened I was! And then suddenly I began to see myself through a mist in the depths of the looking-glass, in a mist as it were through a sheet of water; and it seemed to me as if this water were flowing slowly from left to right, and making my figure clearer every moment. It was like the end of an eclipse. Whatever it was that hid me, did not appear to possess any clearly defined outlines, but a sort of opaque transparency, which gradually grew clearer.

At last I was able to distinguish myself completely, as I do every day when I look at myself.

I had seen it! And the horror of it remained with me, and makes me shudder even now.

August 20. How could I kill it, as I could not get hold of it? Poison? But it would see me mix it with the water; and then, would our poisons have any effect on its impalpable body? No . . . no . . . no doubt about the matter. . . . Then? . . . then? . . .

August 21. I sent for a blacksmith from Rouen, and ordered iron shutters of him for my room, such as some private hotels in Paris have on the ground floor, for fear of thieves, and he is going to make me a similar door as well. I have made myself out as a coward, but I do not care about that! . . .

September 10. Rouen, Hotel Continental. It is done; . . . it is done. . . . But is he dead? My mind is thoroughly upset by what I have seen.

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Well, then, yesterday, the locksmith having put on the iron shutters and door, I left everything open until midnight, although it was getting cold.

Suddenly I felt that he was there, and joy, mad joy took possession of me. I got up softly, and I walked to the right and left for some time, so that he might not guess anything; then I took off my boots and put on my slippers carelessly; then I fastened the iron shutters and going back to the door quickly I double-locked it with a padlock, putting the key into my pocket.

Suddenly I noticed that he was moving restlessly round me, that in his turn he was frightened and was ordering me to let him out. I nearly yielded, though I did not yet, but putting my back to the door, I half opened, just enough to allow me to go out backwards, and as I am very tall, my head touched the lintel. I was sure that he had not been able to escape, and I shut him up quite alone, quite alone. What happiness! I had him fast. Then I ran downstairs; in the drawing-room, which was under my bed-room, I took the two lamps and I poured all the oil on the carpet, the furniture, everywhere; then I set fire to it and made my escape, after having carefully double-locked the door.

I went and hid myself at the bottom of the garden, in a clump of laurel bushes. How long it was! how long it was! Everything was dark, silent, motionless, not a breath of air and not a star, but heavy banks of clouds which one could not see, but which weighed, oh! so heavily on my soul.

I looked at my house and waited. How long it was! I already began to think that the fire had gone out of its own accord, or that he had extinguished it, when one of the lower windows gave way under the violence of the flames, and a long, soft, caressing sheet of red flame mounted up the white wall, and kissed it as high as the roof. The light fell on the trees, the branches, and the leaves, and a shiver of fear pervaded them also! The birds awoke; a dog began to howl, and it seemed to me as if the day were breaking! Almost immediately two

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other windows flew into fragments, and I saw that the whole of the lower part of my house was nothing but a terrible furnace. But a cry, a horrible, shrill, heart-rending cry, a woman's cry, sounded through the night, and two garret windows were opened! I had forgotten the servants! I saw the terror-struck faces, and their frantically waving arms! . . .

Then, overwhelmed with horror, I set off to run to the village, shouting: "Help! help! fire! fire!" I met some people who were already coming on the scene, and I went back with them to see!

By this time the house was nothing but a horrible and a magnificent funeral pile, a monstrous funeral pile which lit up the whole country, a funeral pile where men were burning, and where he was burning also, He, He, my prisoner, that new Being, the new master, the Horla!

Suddenly the whole roof fell in between the walls, and a volcano of flames darted up to the sky. Through all the windows which opened on that furnace, I saw the flames darting, and I thought that he was there, in that kiln, dead.

Dead? perhaps! . . . His body? Was not his body, which was transparent, indestructible by such means as would kill ours?

If he was not dead? . . . Perhaps time alone has power over that Invisible and Redoubtable Being. Why this transparent, unrecognizable body, this body belonging to a spirit, if it also had to fear ills, infirmities, and premature destruction?

Premature destruction? All human terror springs from that! After man the Horla. After him who can die every day, at any hour, at any moment, by any accident, he came who was to die only at his own proper hour and minute, because he had touched the limits of his existence!

No . . . no . . . without any doubt . . . he is not dead. . . . Then . . . then . . . I suppose I must kill myself! . . .

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DIAMONDS, PEARLS, AND PASTE

[The resemblance between Maupassant's "The Necklace" and Henry James's "Paste" had not been observed, I believe, till James pointed it out. The resemblance is analogous to that between Poe's "Raven" and Rossetti's "Blessed Damozel." In fact, James might have paraphrased Rossetti (see page 6) and said:

> I saw that Maupassant had done the utmost that it was possible to do with a necklace which was thought to be precious but which turned out to be paste, and so I determined to reverse the process and to make my plot hinge on a necklace which was thought to be paste but which turned out to be pearl.

What he did say, in the Preface to Volume XVI of his *Novels and Tales*, New York Edition (1909), in connection with an outline of Maupassant's story, was:

> The origin of "Paste" . . . was to consist of but the ingenious thought of transposing the terms of one of Guy de Maupassant's admirable *contes*. . . . It seemed harmless sport simply to turn that situation round—to shift, in other words, the ground of the horrid mistake, making this a matter not of a false treasure supposed to be true and precious, but of a real treasure supposed to be false and hollow: though a new little "drama," a new setting for *my* pearls—and as different as possible from the other—had of course withal to be found.

But the contrast between the styles of the two artists is greater than the resemblance between their plots. Note the simplicity and directness of Maupassant's words, the unity and coherence of his sentences, the totality of effect that arches and clasps the beginning of his story and the end. Compare the first few paragraphs of Maupassant with the first few of James. Who makes the cleaner "get away"? Compare the respective endings. Which ending, when you consider what has gone before, should you call inevitable? What characters, if any, in the two stories stand out distinctly? Does "Paste" seem to you a fair sample of what William James called the "third manner" (see page 417) of his brother? Judging from the stories you have read, how far do you consider Mr. Arthur Symons justified in saying that incidents interested Maupassant, not ideas, nor even characters?]

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THE NECKLACE

Guy de Maupassant

She was one of those pretty and charming girls who, as if by a mistake of destiny, are born in a family of employees. She had no dowry, no expectations, no means of becoming known, understood, loved, wedded by any rich and distinguished man; and so she let herself be married to a petty clerk in the Bureau of Public Instruction.

She was simple in her dress because she could not be elaborate, but she was as unhappy as if she had fallen from a higher rank, for with women there is no inherited distinction of higher and lower. Their beauty, their grace, and their natural charm fill the place of birth and family. Natural delicacy, instinctive elegance, a lively wit, are the ruling forces in the social realm, and these make the daughters of the common people the equals of the finest ladies.

She suffered intensely, feeling herself born for all the refinements and luxuries of life. She suffered from the poverty of her home as she looked at the dirty walls, the worn-out chairs, the ugly curtains. All those things of which another woman of her station would have been quite unconscious tortured her and made her indignant. The sight of the country girl who was maid-of-all-work in her humble household filled her almost with desperation. She dreamed of echoing halls hung with Oriental draperies and lighted by tall bronze candelabra, while two tall footmen in knee-breeches drowsed in great armchairs by reason of the heating stove's oppressive warmth. She dreamed of splendid parlors furnished in rare old silks, of carved cabinets loaded with priceless bric-a-brac, and of entrancing little boudoirs just right for afternoon chats with bosom friends—men famous and sought after, the envy and the desire of all the other women.

When she sat down to dinner at a little table covered with a cloth three days old, and looked across at her husband as he

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uncovered the soup and exclaimed with an air of rapture, "Oh, the delicious stew! I know nothing better than that," she dreamed of dainty dinners, of shining silverware, of tapestries which peopled the walls with antique figures and strange birds in fairy forests; she dreamed of delicious viands served in wonderful dishes, of whispered gallantries heard with a sphinx-like smile as you eat the pink flesh of a trout or the wing of a quail.

She had no dresses, no jewels, nothing; and she loved nothing else. She felt made for that alone. She was filled with a desire to please, to be envied, to be bewitching and sought after. She had a rich friend, a former schoolmate at the convent, whom she no longer wished to visit because she suffered so much when she came home. For whole days at a time she wept without ceasing in bitterness and hopeless misery.

Now, one evening her husband came home with a triumphant air, holding in his hand a large envelope.

"There," said he, "there is something for you."

She quickly tore open the paper and drew out a printed card, bearing these words:

The Minister of Public Instruction and Mme. Georges Rampouneau request the honor of M. and Mme. Loisel's company at the palace of the Ministry, Monday evening, January 18th.

Instead of being overcome with delight, as her husband expected, she threw the invitation on the table with disdain, murmuring:

"What do you wish me to do with that?"

"Why, my dear, I thought you would be pleased. You never go out, and this is such a fine opportunity! I had awful trouble in getting it. Everyone wants to go; it is very select, and they are not giving many invitations to clerks. You will see all the official world."

She looked at him with irritation, and said impatiently:

"What do you expect me to put on my back if I go?"

He had not thought of that. He stammered:

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"Why, the dress you go to the theater in. It seems all right to me."

He stopped, stupefied, distracted, on seeing that his wife was crying. Two great tears descended slowly from the corners of her eyes toward the corners of her mouth. He stuttered:

"What's the matter? What's the matter?"

By a violent effort she subdued her feelings and replied in a calm voice, as she wiped her wet cheeks:

"Nothing. Only I have no dress and consequently I cannot go to this ball. Give your invitation to some friend whose wife has better clothes than I."

He was in despair, but began again:

"Let us see, Mathilde. How much would it cost, a suitable dress, which you could wear again on future occasions, something very simple?"

She reflected for some seconds, computing the cost, and also wondering what sum she could ask without bringing down upon herself an immediate refusal and an astonished exclamation from the economical clerk.

At last she answered hesitatingly:

"I don't know exactly, but it seems to me that with four hundred francs I could manage."

He turned a trifle pale, for he had been saving just that sum to buy a gun and treat himself to a little hunting trip the following summer, in the country near Nanterre, with a few friends who went there to shoot larks on Sundays.

However, he said:

"Well, I think I can give you four hundred francs. But see that you have a pretty dress."

The day of the ball drew near, and Madame Loisel seemed sad, restless, anxious. Her dress was ready, however. Her husband said to her one evening:

"What is the matter? Come, now, you've been looking queer these last three days."

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And she replied:

"It worries me that I have no jewels, not a single stone, nothing to put on. I shall look wretched enough. I would almost rather not go to this party."

He answered:

"You might wear natural flowers. They are very fashionable this season. For ten francs you can get two or three magnificent roses."

She was not convinced.

"No; there is nothing more humiliating than to look poor among a lot of rich women."

But her husband cried:

"How stupid you are! Go and find your friend Madame Forestier and ask her to lend you some jewels. You are intimate enough with her for that."

She uttered a cry of joy.

"Of course. I had not thought of that."

The next day she went to her friend's house and told her distress.

Madame Forestier went to her handsome wardrobe, took out a large casket, brought it back, opened it, and said to Madame Loisel:

"Choose, my dear."

She saw first of all some bracelets, then a pearl necklace, then a Venetian cross of gold set with precious stones of wonderful workmanship. She tried on the ornaments before the glass, hesitated, could not make up her mind to part with them, to give them back. She kept asking:

"You have nothing else?"

"Why, yes. But I do not know what will please you."

All at once she discovered, in a black satin box, a splendid diamond necklace, and her heart began to beat with boundless desire. Her hands trembled as she took it. She fastened it around her throat, over her high-necked dress, and stood lost in ecstasy as she looked at herself.

Then she asked, hesitating, full of anxiety:

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"Would you lend me that,—only that?"

"Why, yes, certainly."

She sprang upon the neck of her friend, embraced her rapturously, then fled with her treasure.

The day of the ball arrived. Madame Loisel was a success. She was prettier than all the others, elegant, gracious, smiling, and crazy with joy. All the men stared at her, asked her name, tried to be introduced. All the cabinet officials wished to waltz with her. The minister noticed her.

She danced with delight, with passion, intoxicated with pleasure, forgetting all in the triumph of her beauty, in the glory of her success, in a sort of mist of happiness, the result of all this homage, all this admiration, all these awakened desires, this victory so complete and so sweet to the heart of woman.

She left about four o'clock in the morning. Her husband had been dozing since midnight in a little deserted anteroom with three other gentlemen, whose wives were having a good time.

He threw about her shoulders the wraps which he had brought for her to go out in, the modest wraps of common life, whose poverty contrasted sharply with the elegance of the ball dress. She felt this and wished to escape, that she might not be noticed by the other women who were wrapping themselves in costly furs.

Loisel held her back.

"Wait here, you will catch cold outside. I will go and find a cab."

But she would not listen to him, and rapidly descended the stairs. When they were at last in the street, they could find no carriage, and began to look for one, hailing the cabmen they saw passing at a distance.

They walked down toward the Seine in despair, shivering with the cold. At last they found on the quay one of those ancient nocturnal cabs that one sees in Paris only after dark, as if they were ashamed to display their wretchedness during the day.

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They were put down at their door in the Rue des Martyrs, and sadly mounted the steps to their apartments. It was all over, for her. And as for him, he reflected that he must be at his office at ten o'clock.

She took off the wraps which covered her shoulders, before the mirror, so as to take a final look at herself in all her glory. But suddenly she uttered a cry. She no longer had the necklace about her neck!

Her husband, already half undressed, inquired:

"What is the matter?"

She turned madly toward him.

"I have—I have—I no longer have Madame Forestier's necklace."

He stood up, distracted.

"What!—how!—it is impossible!"

They looked in the folds of her dress, in the folds of her cloak, in the pockets, everywhere. They could not find a trace of it.

He asked:

"You are sure you still had it when you left the ball?"

"Yes. I felt it on me in the vestibule at the palace."

"But if you had lost it in the street we should have heard it fall. It must be in the cab."

"Yes. That's probable. Did you take the number?"

"No. And you, you did not notice it?"

"No."

They looked at each other thunderstruck. At last Loisel put on his clothes again.

"I am going back," said he, "over every foot of the way we came, to see if I cannot find it."

So he started. She remained in her ball dress without strength to go to bed, sitting on a chair, with no fire, her mind a blank.

Her husband returned about seven o'clock. He had found nothing.

He went to police headquarters, to the newspapers to offer a reward, to the cab companies, everywhere, in short, where a trace of hope led him.

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She watched all day, in the same state of blank despair before this frightful disaster.

Loisel returned in the evening with cheeks hollow and pale; he had found nothing.

"You must write to your friend," said he, "that you have broken the clasp of her necklace and that you are having it repaired. It will give us time to turn around."

She wrote as he dictated.

At the end of a week they had lost all hope.

And Loisel, looking five years older, declared:

"We must consider how to replace the necklace."

The next day they took the box which had contained it, and went to the place of the jeweller whose name they found inside. He consulted his books.

"It was not I, Madame, who sold the necklace; I must simply have furnished the casket."

Then they went from jeweller to jeweller, looking for an ornament like the other, consulting their memories, both sick with grief and anguish.

They found, in a shop at the Palais Royal, a string of diamonds which seemed to them exactly what they were looking for. It was worth forty thousand francs.[1] They could have it for thirty-six thousand.

So they begged the jeweller not to sell it for three days. And they made an arrangement that he should take it back for thirty-four thousand francs if the other were found before the end of February.

Loisel had eighteen thousand francs which his father had left. He would borrow the rest.

He did borrow, asking a thousand francs of one, five hundred of another, five louis here, three louis there. He gave notes, made ruinous engagements, dealt with usurers, with all the tribe of money-lenders. He compromised the rest of his life, risked his signature without knowing if he might not be involving his

[1] A franc is equal to twenty cents of our money.

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honor, and, terrified by the anguish yet to come, by the black misery about to fall upon him, by the prospect of every physical privation and every mental torture, he went to get the new necklace, and laid down on the dealer's counter thirty-six thousand francs.

When Madame Loisel took the necklace back to Madame Forestier, the latter said coldly:

"You should have returned it sooner, for I might have needed it."

She did not open the case, to the relief of her friend. If she had detected the substitution, what would she have thought? What would she have said? Would she have taken her friend for a thief?

Madame Loisel now knew the horrible life of the needy. But she took her part heroically. They must pay this frightful debt. She would pay it. They dismissed their maid; they gave up their quarters; they rented rooms, under the roof.

She came to know the drudgery of housework, the odious labors of the kitchen. She washed the dishes, staining her rosy nails on the greasy pots and the bottoms of the saucepans. She washed the dirty linen, the shirts and the dishcloths, which she hung to dry on a line; she carried the garbage down to the street every morning, and carried up the water, stopping at each landing to rest. And, dressed like a woman of the people, she went to the fruiterer's, the grocer's, the butcher's, her basket on her arm, bargaining, abusing, defending sou[1] by sou her miserable money.

Each month they had to pay some notes, renew others, obtain more time.

The husband worked every evening, neatly footing up the account books of some tradesman, and often far into the night he sat copying manuscript at five sous a page.

And this life lasted ten years.

[1] A sou, or five-centime piece, is equal to one cent of our money.

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At the end of ten years they had paid everything,—everything, with the exactions of usury and the accumulations of compound interest.

Madame Loisel seemed aged now. She had become the woman of impoverished households,—strong and hard and rough. With hair half combed, with skirts awry, and reddened hands, she talked loud as she washed the floor with great swishes of water. But sometimes, when her husband was at the office, she sat down near the window and thought of that evening at the ball so long ago, when she had been so beautiful and so admired.

What would have happened if she had not lost that necklace? Who knows, who knows? How strange life is, how changeful! How little a thing is needed for us to be lost or to be saved!

But one Sunday, as she was going for a walk in the Champs Élysées to refresh herself after the labors of the week, all at once she saw a woman walking with a child. It was Madame Forestier, still young, still beautiful, still charming.

Madame Loisel was agitated. Should she speak to her? Why, of course. And now that she had paid, she would tell her all. Why not?

She drew near.

"Good morning, Jeanne."

The other, astonished to be addressed so familiarly by this woman of the people, did not recognize her. She stammered:

"But—Madame—I do not know you. You must have made a mistake."

"No, I am Mathilde Loisel."

Her friend uttered a cry.

"Oh! my poor Mathilde, how changed you are!"

"Yes, I have had days hard enough since I saw you, days wretched enough—and all because of you!"

"Me? How so?"

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"You remember that necklace of diamonds that you lent me to wear to the ministerial ball?"

"Yes. Well?"

"Well, I lost it."

"How can that be? You returned it to me."

"I returned to you another exactly like it. These ten years we've been paying for it. You know it was not easy for us, who had nothing. At last it is over, and I am very glad."

Madame Forestier was stunned.

"You say that you bought a diamond necklace to replace mine?"

"Yes; you did not notice it, then? They were just alike."

And she smiled with a proud and naïve pleasure.

Madame Forestier, deeply moved, took both her hands.

"Oh, my poor Mathilde! Why, my necklace was paste. It was worth five hundred francs at most."

PASTE[1]

Henry James

"I've found a lot more things," her cousin said to her the day after the second funeral; "they're up in her room—but they're things I wish *you'd* look at."

The pair of mourners, sufficiently stricken, were in the garden of the vicarage together, before luncheon, waiting to be summoned to that meal, and Arthur Prime had still in his face the intention, she was moved to call it rather than the expression, of feeling something or other. Some such appearance was in itself of course natural within a week of his stepmother's death, within three of his father's; but what was most present to the girl, herself sensitive and shrewd, was that he seemed somehow to brood without sorrow, to suffer without what she in her own case would have called pain. He turned away from her after

[1] From *The Soft Side*, 1900, by permission of and arrangement with The Macmillan Company and Henry James, Jr.

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this last speech—it was a good deal his habit to drop an observation and leave her to pick it up without assistance. If the vicar's widow, now in her turn finally translated, had not really belonged to him it was not for want of her giving herself, so far as he ever would take her; and she had lain for three days all alone at the end of the passage, in the great cold chamber of hospitality, the dampish, greenish room where visitors slept, and where several of the ladies of the parish had, without effect, offered, in pairs and successions, piously to watch with her. His personal connection with the parish was now slighter than ever, and he had really not waited for this opportunity to show the ladies what he thought of them. She felt that she herself had, during her doleful month's leave from Bleet, where she was governess, rather taken her place in the same snubbed order; but it was presently, none the less, with a better little hope of coming in for some remembrance, some relic, that she went up to look at the things he had spoken of, the identity of which, as a confused cluster of bright objects on a table in the darkened room, shimmered at her as soon as she opened the door.

They met her eyes for the first time, but in a moment, before touching them, she knew them as things of the theater, as very much too fine to have been, with any verisimilitude, things of the vicarage. They were too dreadfully good to be true, for her aunt had had no jewels to speak of, and these were coronets and girdles, diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. Flagrant tinsel and glass, they looked strangely vulgar, but if, after the first queer shock of them, she found herself taking them up, it was for the very proof, never yet so distinct to her, of a far-off faded story. An honest widowed cleric with a small son and a large sense of Shakespeare had, on a brave latitude of habit as well as of taste—since it implied his having in very fact dropped deep into the "pit"—conceived for an obscure actress, several years older than himself, an admiration of which the prompt offer of his reverend name and hortatory hand was the sufficiently candid sign. The response had, perhaps, in those dim years, in the way

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of eccentricity, even bettered the proposal, and Charlotte, turning the tale over, had long since drawn from it a measure of the career renounced by the undistinguished *comédienne*—doubtless also tragic, or perhaps pantomimic, at a pinch—of her late uncle's dreams. This career could not have been eminent, and must much more probably have been comfortless.

"You see what it is—old stuff of the time she never liked to mention."

Our young woman gave a start; her companion had, after all, rejoined her and had apparently watched a moment her slightly scared recognition. "So I said to myself," she replied. Then, to show intelligence, yet keep clear of twaddle: "How peculiar they look!"

"They look awful," said Arthur Prime. "Cheap gilt, diamonds as big as potatoes. These are trappings of a ruder age than ours. Actors do themselves better now."

"Oh, now," said Charlotte, not to be less knowing, "actresses have real diamonds."

"Some of them." Arthur spoke dryly.

"I mean the bad ones—the nobodies too."

"Oh, some of the nobodies have the biggest. But mamma wasn't of that sort."

"A nobody?" Charlotte risked.

"Not a nobody to whom somebody—well, not a nobody with diamonds. It isn't all worth, this trash, five pounds."

There was something in the old gewgaws that spoke to her, and she continued to turn them over. "They're relics. I think they have their melancholy and even their dignity."

Arthur observed another pause. "Do you care for them?" he then asked. "I mean," he promptly added, "as a souvenir."

"Of you?" Charlotte threw off.

"Of me? What have I to do with it? Of your poor dead aunt who was so kind to you," he said with virtuous sternness.

"Well, I would rather have them than nothing."

"Then please take them," he returned in a tone of relief which expressed somehow more of the eager than of the gracious.

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"Thank you." Charlotte lifted two or three objects up and set them down again. Though they were lighter than the materials they imitated they were so much more extravagant that they struck her in truth as rather an awkward heritage, to which she might have preferred even a matchbox or a penwiper. They were indeed shameless pinchbeck. "Had you any idea she had kept them?"

"I don't at all believe she *had* kept them or knew they were there, and I'm very sure my father didn't. They had quite equally worked off any tenderness for the connection. These odds and ends, which she thought had been given away or destroyed, had simply got thrust into a dark corner and been forgotten."

Charlotte wondered. "Where then did you find them?"

"In that old tin box"—and the young man pointed to the receptacle from which he had dislodged them and which stood on a neighboring chair. "It's rather a good box still, but I'm afraid I can't give you *that*."

The girl gave the box no look; she continued only to look at the trinkets. "What corner had she found?"

"She hadn't 'found' it," her companion sharply insisted; "she had simply lost it. The whole thing had passed from her mind. The box was on the top shelf of the old schoolroom closet, which, until one put one's head into it from a step-ladder, looked, from below, quite cleared out. The door is narrow and the part of the closet to the left goes well into the wall. The box had stuck there for years."

Charlotte was conscious of a mind divided and a vision vaguely troubled, and once more she took up two or three of the subjects of this revelation; a big bracelet in the form of a gilt serpent with many twists and beady eyes, a brazen belt studded with emeralds and rubies, a chain, of flamboyant architecture, to which, at the Theatre Royal, Little Peddlington, Hamlet's mother had probably been careful to attach the portrait of the successor to Hamlet's father. "Are you very sure they're not really worth something? Their mere weight alone—!" she

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vaguely observed, balancing a moment a royal diadem that might have crowned one of the creations of the famous Mrs. Jarley.

But Arthur Prime, it was clear, had already thought the question over and found the answer easy. "If they had been worth anything to speak of she would long ago have sold them. My father and she had unfortunately never been in a position to keep any considerable value locked up." And while his companion took in the obvious force of this he went on with a flourish just marked enough not to escape her: "If they're worth anything at all—why, you're only the more welcome to them."

Charlotte had now in her hand a small bag of faded, figured silk—one of those antique conveniences that speak to us, in the terms of evaporated camphor and lavender, of the part they have played in some personal history; but, though she had for the first time drawn the string, she looked much more at the young man than at the questionable treasure it appeared to contain. "I shall like them. They're all I have."

"All you have—?"

"That belonged to her."

He swelled a little, then looked about him as if to appeal—as against her avidity—to the whole poor place. "Well, what else do you want?"

"Nothing. Thank you very much." With which she bent her eyes on the article wrapped, and now only exposed, in her superannuated satchel—a necklace of large pearls, such as might once have graced the neck of a provincial Ophelia and borne company to a flaxen wig. "This perhaps *is* worth something. Feel it." And she passed him the necklace, the weight of which she had gathered for a moment into her hand.

He measured it in the same way with his own, but remained quite detached. "Worth at most thirty shillings."

"Not more?"

"Surely not if it's paste?"

"But *is* it paste?"

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He gave a small sniff of impatience. "Pearls nearly as big as filberts?"

"But they're heavy," Charlotte declared.

"No heavier than anything else." And he gave them back with an allowance for her simplicity. "Do you imagine for a moment they're real?"

She studied them a little, feeling them, turning them round. "Mightn't they possibly be?"

"Of that size—stuck away with that trash?"

"I admit it isn't likely," Charlotte presently said. "And pearls are so easily imitated."

"That's just what—to a person who knows—they're not. These have no luster, no play."

"No—they *are* dull. They're opaque."

"Besides," he lucidly inquired, "how could she ever have come by them?"

"Mightn't they have been a present?"

Arthur stared at the question as if it were almost improper. "Because actresses are exposed—?" He pulled up, however, not saying to what, and before she could supply the deficiency had, with the sharp ejaculation of "No, they mightn't!" turned his back on her and walked away. His manner made her feel that she had probably been wanting in tact, and before he returned to the subject, the last thing that evening, she had satisfied herself on the ground of his resentment. They had been talking of her departure the next morning, the hour of her train and the fly that would come for her, and it was precisely these things that gave him his effective chance. "I really can't allow you to leave the house under the impression that my stepmother was at *any* time of her life the sort of person to allow herself to be approached—"

"With pearl necklaces and that sort of thing?" Arthur had made for her somehow the difficulty that she couldn't show him she understood without seeming pert.

It at any rate only added to his own gravity. "That sort of thing, exactly."

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"I didn't think when I spoke this morning—but I see what you mean."

"I mean that she was beyond reproach," said Arthur Prime.

"A hundred times yes."

"Therefore if she couldn't, out of her slender gains, ever have paid for a row of pearls—"

"She couldn't, in that atmosphere, ever properly have had one? Of course she couldn't. I've seen perfectly since our talk," Charlotte went on, "that that string of beads isn't even, as an imitation, very good. The little clasp itself doesn't seem even gold. With false pearls, I suppose," the girl mused, "it naturally wouldn't be."

"The whole thing's rotten paste," her companion returned as if to have done with it. "If it were *not*, and she had kept it all these years hidden—"

"Yes?" Charlotte sounded as he paused.

"Why, I shouldn't know what to think!"

"Oh, I see." She had met him with a certain blankness, but adequately enough, it seemed, for him to regard the subject as dismissed; and there was no reversion to it between them before, on the morrow, when she had with difficulty made a place for them in her trunk, she carried off these florid survivals.

At Bleet she found small occasion to revert to them and, in an air charged with such quite other references, even felt, after she had laid them away, much enshrouded, beneath various piles of clothing, as if they formed a collection not wholly without its note of the ridiculous. Yet she was never, for the joke, tempted to show them to her pupils, though Gwendolen and Blanche, in particular, always wanted, on her return, to know what she had brought back; so that without an accident by which the case was quite changed they might have appeared to enter on a new phase of interment. The essence of the accident was the sudden illness, at the last moment, of Lady Bobby, whose advent had been so much counted on to spice the five days' feast laid out for the coming of age of the eldest son of

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the house; and its equally marked effect was the dispatch of a pressing message, in quite another direction, to Mrs. Guy, who, could she by a miracle be secured—she was always engaged ten parties deep—might be trusted to supply, it was believed, an element of exuberance scarcely less active. Mrs. Guy was already known to several of the visitors already on the scene, but she was not yet known to our young lady, who found her, after many wires and counterwires had at last determined the triumph of her arrival, a strange, charming little red-haired, black-dressed woman, with the face of a baby and the authority of a commodore. She took on the spot the discreet, the exceptional young governess into the confidence of her designs and, still more, of her doubts; intimating that it was a policy she almost always promptly pursued.

"Tomorrow and Thursday are all right," she said frankly to Charlotte on the second day, "but I'm not half satisfied with Friday."

"What improvement then do you suggest?"

"Well, my strong point, you know, is *tableaux vivants*."

"Charming. And what is your favorite character?"

"Boss!" said Mrs. Guy with decision; and it was very markedly under that ensign that she had, within a few hours, completely planned her campaign and recruited her troop. Every word she uttered was to the point, but none more so than, after a general survey of their equipment, her final inquiry of Charlotte. She had been looking about, but half appeased, at the muster of decoration and drapery. "We shall be dull. We shall want more color. You've nothing else?"

Charlotte had a thought. "No—I've *some* things."

"Then why don't you bring them?"

The girl hesitated. "Would you come to my room?"

"No," said Mrs. Guy—"bring them tonight to mine."

So Charlotte at the evening's end, after candlesticks had flickered through brown old passages bedward, arrived at her friend's door with the burden of her aunt's relics. But she promptly expressed a fear. "Are they too garish?"

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When she had poured them out on the sofa Mrs. Guy was but a minute, before the glass, in clapping on the diadem. "Awfully jolly—we can do Ivanhoe!"

"But they're only glass and tin."

"Larger than life they are, *rather*!—which is exactly what, for tableaux, is wanted. *Our* jewels, for historic scenes, don't tell—the real thing falls short. Rowena must have rubies as big as eggs. Leave them with me," Mrs. Guy continued—"they'll inspire me. Good-night."

The next morning she was in fact—yet very strangely—inspired. "Yes, *I'll* do Rowena. But I don't, my dear, understand."

"Understand what?"

Mrs. Guy gave a very lighted stare. "How you come to have such things."

Poor Charlotte smiled. "By inheritance."

"Family jewels?"

"They belonged to my aunt, who died some months ago. She was on the stage a few years in early life, and these are a part of her trappings."

"She left them to you?"

"No; my cousin, her stepson, who naturally had no use for them, gave them to me for remembrance of her. She was a dear kind thing, always so nice to me, and I was fond of her."

Mrs. Guy had listened with visible interest. "But it's *he* who must be a dear kind thing!"

Charlotte wondered. "You think so?"

"Is *he*," her friend went on, "also 'always so nice' to you?"

The girl, at this, face to face there with the brilliant visitor in the deserted breakfast-room, took a deeper sounding. "What is it?"

"Don't you know?"

Something came over her. "The pearls—?" But the question fainted on her lips.

"Doesn't *he* know?"

Charlotte found herself flushing. "They're *not* paste?"

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"Haven't you looked at them?"

She was conscious of two kinds of embarrassment. "*You* have?"

"Very carefully."

"And they're real?"

Mrs. Guy became slightly mystifying and returned for all answer: "Come again, when you're done with the children, to my room."

Our young woman found she had done with the children, that morning, with a promptitude that was a new joy to them, and when she reappeared before Mrs. Guy this lady had already encircled a plump white throat with the only ornament, surely, in the late Mrs. Prime's—the effaced Miss Bradshaw's—collection, in the least qualified to raise a question. If Charlotte had never yet once, before the glass, tied the string of pearls about her own neck, this was because she had been capable of no such condescension to approved "imitation"; but she had now only to look at Mrs. Guy to see that, so disposed, the ambiguous objects might have passed for frank originals. "What in the world have you done to them?"

"Only handled them, understood them, admired them, and put them on. That's what pearls want; they want to be worn—it wakes them up. They're alive, don't you see? How *have* these been treated? They must have been buried, ignored, despised. They were half dead. Don't you *know* about pearls?" Mrs. Guy threw off as she fondly fingered the necklace.

"How *should* I? Do *you*?"

"Everything. These were simply asleep, and from the moment I really touched them—well," said their wearer lovingly, "it only took one's eye!"

"It took more than mine—though I did just wonder; and than Arthur's," Charlotte brooded. She found herself almost panting. "Then their value—?"

"Oh, their value's excellent."

The girl, for a deep moment, took another plunge into the wonder, the beauty and mystery, of them. "Are you *sure*?"

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Her companion wheeled round for impatience. "Sure? For what kind of an idiot, my dear, do you take me?"

It was beyond Charlotte Prime to say. "For the same kind as Arthur—and as myself," she could only suggest. "But my cousin didn't know. He thinks they're worthless."

"Because of the rest of the lot? Then your cousin's an ass. But what—if, as I understood you, he gave them to you—has he to do with it?"

"Why, if he gave them to me as worthless and they turn out precious—"

"You must give them back? I don't see that—if he was such a noodle. He took the risk."

Charlotte fed, in fancy, on the pearls, which, decidedly, were exquisite, but which at the present moment somehow presented themselves much more as Mrs. Guy's than either as Arthur's or as her own. "Yes—he did take it; even after I had distinctly hinted to him that they looked to me different from the other pieces."

"Well, then!" said Mrs. Guy with something more than triumph—with a positive odd relief.

But it had the effect of making our young woman think with more intensity. "Ah, you see he thought they couldn't be different, because—so peculiarly—they shouldn't be."

"Shouldn't? I don't understand."

"Why, how would she have got them?"—so Charlotte candidly put it.

"She? Who?" There was a capacity in Mrs. Guy's tone for a sinking of persons—!

"Why, the person I told you of: his stepmother, my uncle's wife—among whose poor old things, extraordinarily thrust away and out of sight, he happened to find them."

Mrs. Guy came a step nearer to the effaced Miss Bradshaw. "Do you mean she may have stolen them?"

"No. But she had been an actress."

"Oh, well then," cried Mrs. Guy, "wouldn't that be just how?"

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"Yes, except that she wasn't at all a brilliant one, nor in receipt of large pay." The girl even threw off a nervous joke. "I'm afraid she couldn't have been our Rowena."

Mrs. Guy took it up. "Was she very ugly?"

"No. She may very well, when young, have looked rather nice."

"Well, then!" was Mrs. Guy's sharp comment and fresh triumph.

"You mean it was a present? That's just what he so dislikes the idea of her having received—a present from an admirer capable of going such lengths."

"Because she wouldn't have taken it for nothing? *Speriamo* —that she wasn't a brute. The 'length' her admirer went was the length of a whole row. Let us hope she was just a little kind."

"Well," Charlotte went on, "that she was 'kind' might seem to be shown by the fact that neither her husband, nor his son, nor I, his niece, knew or dreamed of her possessing anything so precious; by her having kept the gift all the rest of her life beyond discovery—out of sight and protected from suspicion."

"As if, you mean"—Mrs. Guy was quick—"she had been wedded to it and yet was ashamed of it? Fancy," she laughed while she manipulated the rare beads, "being ashamed of *these*!"

"But you see she had married a clergyman."

"Yes, she must have been 'rum.' But at any rate he had married *her*. What did he suppose?"

"Why, that she had never been of the sort by whom such offerings are encouraged."

"Ah, my dear, the sort by whom they are *not*—!" But Mrs. Guy caught herself up. "And her stepson thought the same?"

"Overwhelmingly."

"Was he, then, if only her stepson—"

"So fond of her as that comes to? Yes; he had never known, consciously, his real mother, and, without children of her own,

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she was very patient and nice with him. And *I* liked her so," the girl pursued, "that at the end of ten years, in so strange a manner, to 'give her away' —"

"Is impossible to you? Then don't!" said Mrs. Guy with decision.

"Ah, but if they're real I can't keep them!" Charlotte, with her eyes on them, moaned in her impatience. "It's too difficult."

"Where's the difficulty, if he has such sentiments that he would rather sacrifice the necklace than admit it, with the presumption it carries with it, to be genuine? You've only to be silent."

"And keep it? How can *I* ever wear it?"

"You'd have to hide it, like your aunt?" Mrs. Guy was amused. "You can easily sell it."

Her companion walked round her for a look at the affair from behind. The clasp was certainly, doubtless intentionally, misleading, but everything else was indeed lovely. "Well, I must think. Why didn't *she* sell them?" Charlotte broke out in her trouble.

Mrs. Guy had an instant answer. "Doesn't that prove what they secretly recalled to her? You've only to be silent!" she ardently repeated.

"I must think—I must think!"

Mrs. Guy stood with her hands attached but motionless.

"Then you want them back?"

As if with the dread of touching them Charlotte retreated to the door. "I'll tell you tonight."

"But may I wear them?"

"Meanwhile?"

"This evening—at dinner."

It was the sharp, selfish pressure of this that really, on the spot, determined the girl; but for the moment, before closing the door on the question, she only said: "As you like!"

They were busy much of the day with preparation and rehearsal, and at dinner, that evening, the concourse of guests was such that a place among them for Miss Prime failed to find itself

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marked. At the time the company rose she was therefore alone in the schoolroom, where, towards eleven o'clock, she received a visit from Mrs. Guy. This lady's white shoulders heaved, under the pearls, with an emotion that the very red lips which formed, as if for the full effect, the happiest opposition of color, were not slow to translate. "My dear, you should have seen the sensation—they've had a success!"

Charlotte, dumb a moment, took it all in. "It *is* as if they knew it—they're more and more alive. But so much the worse for both of us! I can't," she brought out with an effort, "be silent."

"You mean to return them?"

"If I don't, I'm a thief."

Mrs. Guy gave her a long, hard look: what was decidedly not of the baby in Mrs. Guy's face was a certain air of established habit in the eyes. Then, with a sharp little jerk of her head and a backward reach of her bare beautiful arms, she undid the clasp and, taking off the necklace, laid it on the table. "If you do, you're a goose."

"Well, of the two —!" said our young lady, gathering it up with a sigh. And as if to get it, for the pang it gave, out of sight as soon as possible, she shut it up, clicking the lock, in the drawer of her own little table; after which, when she turned again, her companion, without it, looked naked and plain. "But what will you say?" it then occurred to her to demand.

"Downstairs—to explain?" Mrs. Guy was, after all, trying at least to keep her temper. "Oh, I'll put on something else and say that the clasp is broken. And you won't of course name *me* to him," she added.

"As having undeceived me? No—I'll say that, looking at the thing more carefully, it's my own private idea."

"And does he know how little you really know?"

"As an expert—surely. And he has much, always, the conceit of his own opinion."

"Then he won't believe you—as he so hates to. He'll stick to his judgment and maintain his gift, and we shall have the

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darlings back!" With which reviving assurance Mrs. Guy kissed her young friend for good-night.

She was not, however, to be gratified or justified by any prompt event, for, whether or no paste entered into the composition of the ornament in question, Charlotte shrank from the temerity of dispatching it to town by post. Mrs. Guy was thus disappointed of the hope of seeing the business settled—"by return," she had seemed to expect—before the end of the revels. The revels, moreover, rising to a frantic pitch, pressed for all her attention, and it was at last only in the general confusion of leave-taking that she made, parenthetically, a dash at her young friend.

"Come, what will you take for them?"

"The pearls? Ah, you'll have to treat with my cousin."

Mrs. Guy, with quick intensity, lent herself. "Where then does he live?"

"In chambers in the Temple. You can find him."

"But what's the use if *you* do neither one thing nor the other?"

"Oh, I *shall* do the 'other,'" Charlotte said; "I'm only waiting till I go up. You want them so awfully?" She curiously, solemnly again, sounded her.

"I'm dying for them. There's a special charm in them—I don't know what it is: they tell so their history."

"But what do you know of that?"

"Just what they themselves say. It's all *in* them—and it comes out. They breathe a tenderness—they have the white glow of it. My dear," hissed Mrs. Guy in supreme confidence and as she buttoned her glove—"they're things of love!"

"Oh!" our young woman vaguely exclaimed.

"They're things of passion!"

"Mercy!" she gasped, turning short off. But these words remained, though indeed their help was scarce needed, Charlotte being in private face to face with a new light, as she by this time felt she must call it, on the dear dead, kind, colorless lady whose career had turned so sharp a corner in the middle. The

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pearls had quite taken their place as a revelation. She might have received them for nothing—admit that; but she couldn't have kept them so long and so unprofitably hidden, couldn't have enjoyed them only in secret, for nothing; and she had mixed them, in her reliquary, with false things, in order to put curiosity and detection off the scent. Over this strange fact poor Charlotte interminably mused: it became more touching, more attaching for her than she could now confide to any ear. How bad, or how happy—in the sophisticated sense of Mrs. Guy and the young man at the Temple—the effaced Miss Bradshaw must have been to have had to be so mute! The little governess at Bleet put on the necklace now in secret sessions; she wore it sometimes under her dress; she came to feel, verily, a haunting passion for it. Yet in her penniless state she would have parted with it for money; she gave herself also to dreams of what in this direction it would do for her. The sophistry of her so often saying to herself that Arthur had after all definitely pronounced her welcome to any gain from his gift that might accrue—this trick remained innocent, as she perfectly knew it for what it was. Then there was always the possibility of his—as she could only picture it—rising to the occasion. Mightn't he have a grand magnanimous moment?—mightn't he just say: "Oh, of course I couldn't have afforded to let you have it if I had known; but since you *have* got it, and have made out the truth by your own wit, I really can't screw myself down to the shabbiness of taking it back"?

She had, as it proved, to wait a long time—to wait till, at the end of several months, the great house of Bleet had, with due deliberation, for the season, transferred itself to town; after which, however, she fairly snatched at her first freedom to knock, dressed in her best and armed with her disclosure, at the door of her doubting kinsman. It was still with doubt and not quite with the face she had hoped that he listened to her story. He had turned pale, she thought, as she produced the necklace, and he appeared, above all, disagreeably affected. Well, perhaps there was reason, she more than ever remembered; but

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what on earth was one, in close touch with the fact, to do? She had laid the pearls on his table, where, without his having at first put so much as a finger to them, they met his hard, cold stare.

"I don't believe in them," he simply said at last.

"That's exactly, then," she returned with some spirit, "what I wanted to hear!"

She fancied that at this his color changed; it was indeed vivid to her afterwards—for she was to have a long recall of the scene—that she had made him quite angrily flush. "It's a beastly unpleasant imputation, you know!"—and he walked away from her as he had always walked at the vicarage.

"It's none of *my* making, I'm sure," said Charlotte Prime. "If you're afraid to believe they're real—"

"Well?"—and he turned, across the room, sharp round at her.

"Why, it's not my fault."

He said nothing more, for a moment, on this; he only came back to the table. "They're what I originally said they were. They're rotten paste."

"Then I may keep them?"

"No. I want a better opinion."

"Than your own?"

"Than *your* own." He dropped on the pearls another queer stare, then, after a moment, bringing himself to touch them, did exactly what she had herself done in the presence of Mrs. Guy at Bleet—gathered them together, marched off with them to a drawer, put them in and clicked the key. "You say I'm afraid," he went on as he again met her; "but I shan't be afraid to take them to Bond Street."

"And if the people say they're real—?"

He hesitated—then had his strangest manner. "They won't say it! They shan't!"

There was something in the way he brought it out that deprived poor Charlotte, as she was perfectly aware, of any manner at all. "Oh!" she simply sounded, as she had sounded for her last word to Mrs. Guy; and, within a minute, without more conversation, she had taken her departure.

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A fortnight later she received a communication from him, and towards the end of the season one of the entertainments in Eaton Square was graced by the presence of Mrs. Guy. Charlotte was not at dinner, but she came down afterwards, and this guest, on seeing her, abandoned a very beautiful young man on purpose to cross and speak to her. The guest had on a lovely necklace and had apparently not lost her habit of overflowing with the pride of such ornaments.

"Do you see?" She was in high joy.

They were indeed splendid pearls—so far as poor Charlotte could feel that she knew, after what had come and gone, about such mysteries. Charlotte had a sickly smile. "They're almost as fine as Arthur's."

"Almost? Where, my dear, are your eyes? They *are* 'Arthur's'!" After which, to meet the flood of crimson that accompanied her young friend's start: "I tracked them—after your folly, and, by miraculous luck, recognized them in the Bond Street window to which he had disposed of them."

"*Disposed* of them?" the girl gasped. "He wrote me that I had insulted his mother and that the people had shown him he was right—had pronounced them utter paste."

Mrs. Guy gave a stare. "Ah, I told you he wouldn't bear it! No. But I had, I assure you," she wound up, "to drive my bargain!"

Charlotte scarce heard or saw; she was full of her private wrong. "He wrote me," she panted, "that he had smashed them."

Mrs. Guy could only wonder and pity. "He's really morbid!" But it was not quite clear which of the pair she pitied; though Charlotte felt really morbid too after they had separated and she found herself full of thought. She even went the length of asking herself what sort of a bargain Mrs. Guy had driven and whether the marvel of the recognition in Bond Street had been a veracious account of the matter. Hadn't she perhaps in truth dealt with Arthur directly? It came back to Charlotte almost luridly that she had had his address.

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HABIT

["Habit," says William James in his masterly essay on the subject, "is thus the enormous fly-wheel of society, its most precious conservative agent. It alone is what keeps us all within the bounds of ordinance." In "The Harbinger" O. Henry hails habit as "the power that keeps the earth from flying to pieces, though there is some silly theory of gravitation." Other stories of habit by O. Henry are "The Passing of Black Eagle," "A Comedy in Rubber," "From the Cabby's Seat," and "The Girl and the Habit." Armistead Churchill Gordon's story called "Baytop" (in *Ommirandy*) is a narrative illustration of William James's remark about habit in animals: "Riderless cavalry-horses, at many a battle, have been seen to come together and go through their customary evolutions at the sound of the bugle-call." Another story of habit, far inferior to any hitherto mentioned, is "The Philanthropist" (in *Les Bourreurs de Crâne*), by Pierre Mac Orlan.

In Maupassant's "The Artist" we have an illustration of how habit, by long discipline, may become not only a second nature but a second nature that will not yield to first nature. The man wants to kill his wife in a particular way, but that way is barred to him by the iron wall of habit. "A character," says John Stuart Mill, "is a completely fashioned will." In this sense our would-be murderer is more a character than an artist. His drill in knife-throwing has been so thorough that its effects, embodied in his nerve centers, have passed into his will and radiated out into his muscles. He may miss sometimes, but he cannot miss by willing to miss. The psychology of the story is sound.

O. Henry's two stories treat habit from an entirely different angle, and appeal to a far wider constituency. Maupassant's husband and wife have hardly any personality; they are mere agents to illustrate a highly specialized aspect of habit. But in both of O. Henry's stories the man and wife are human and normal; they are not sacrificed to a theory. The reader has much in common with them, and the smile at the close is likely to be accompanied by the silent query "Do I not do the same thing?" "The Pendulum" is so plainly a revised edition of "Round the Circle" that O. Henry did not select the latter story for republication in book form. Habit in ranch life, habit in city life,—these are the

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two settings of a single theme. Which of the two stories of O. Henry do you prefer? Why? After reading "The Necklace" and "An Artist," by Maupassant, and the last two stories, by O. Henry, how should you contrast the respective attitudes of the two writers to their characters?]

AN ARTIST

Guy de Maupassant

"Bah! Monsieur," the old mountebank said to me; "it is a matter of practice and habit, that is all! Of course you have to be a little gifted that way and not butter-fingered, but what is chiefly necessary is patience and daily practice for long, long years."

His modesty surprised me all the more because, of all those performers who are generally infatuated with their own skill, he was the most wonderfully clever that I had ever met. Certainly I frequently had seen him and everybody had seen him in some circus or other, or even in traveling shows, performing the trick that consists in putting a man or a woman with extended arms against a wooden target, and in throwing knives between their fingers and round their head, from a distance. There is nothing very extraordinary in it, after all, when one knows *the tricks of the trade*, and that the knives are not the least sharp, and stick into the wood at some distance from the flesh. It is the rapidity of the throws, the glitter of the blades, the curve which the handles make towards their living aim, which give an air of danger to an exhibition that has become commonplace, and requires only very middling skill.

But here there was no trick and no deception, and no dust thrown into the eyes. It was done in good earnest and in all sincerity. The knives were as sharp as razors, and the old mountebank planted them close to the flesh, exactly in the angle between the fingers, and surrounded the head with a perfect halo of knives, and the neck with a collar from which nobody could have extricated himself without cutting his carotid artery, while to increase the difficulty, the old fellow went

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through the performance without looking, his whole face being covered with a close mask of thick oil-cloth.

Naturally, like other great artists, he was not understood by the crowd, who confounded him with vulgar tricksters, and his mask appeared to them only a trick, and a very common trick into the bargain. "He must think us very stupid," they said. "How could he possibly aim without having his eyes open?" And they thought there must be imperceptible holes in the oil-cloth, a sort of lattice work concealed in the material. It was useless for him to allow the public to examine the mask for themselves before the exhibition began. It was all very well that they could not discover any trick, but they were only all the more convinced that they were being tricked. Did not the people know that they ought to be tricked?

I had recognized a great artist in the old mountebank, and I was quite sure that he was altogether incapable of any trickery, and I told him so, while expressing my admiration to him; and he had been touched both by my admiration and above all by the justice I had done him. Thus we became good friends and he explained to me, very modestly, the real trick which the crowd cannot understand, the eternal trick comprised in these simple words: "To be gifted by nature, and to practice every day for long, long years."

He had been especially struck by the certainty which I expressed, that any trickery must become impossible to him. "Yes," he said to me; "quite impossible! Impossible to a degree which you cannot imagine. If I were to tell you! But what would be the use?"

His face clouded and his eyes filled with tears, but I did not venture to force myself into his confidence. My looks, however, not so discreet as my silence, begged him to speak, and so he responded to their mute appeal. "After all," he said, "why should I not tell you about it? You will understand me." And he added, with a look of sudden ferocity: "She understood it at any rate!" "Who?" I asked. "My unfaithful wife," he replied. "Ah! Monsieur, what an abominable creature she was,

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if you only knew! Yes, she understood it too well, too well, and that is why I hate her so, even more on that account than for having deceived me. For that is a natural fault, is it not, and may be pardoned? But the other thing was a crime, a horrible crime."

The woman who stood against the wooden target every night with her arms stretched out and her fingers extended, and whom the old mountebank fitted with gloves and with a halo formed of his knives which were as sharp as razors and which he planted close to her, was his wife. She might have been a woman of forty, and must have been fairly pretty, but with perverse prettiness, an impudent mouth, a mouth that was at the same time sensual and bad, with the lower lip too thick for the thin, dry upper lip.

I had several times noticed that every time he planted a knife in the board, she uttered a laugh, so low as scarcely to be heard, but which was very significant when one heard it, for it was a hard and very mocking laugh; but I had always attributed that sort of reply to an artifice which the occasion required. It was intended, I thought, to accentuate the danger she incurred and the contempt that she felt for it, thanks to the sureness of the thrower's hands, and so I was much surprised when the mountebank said to me:

"Have you observed her laugh, I say? Her evil laugh which makes fun of me, and her cowardly laugh, which defies me? Yes, cowardly, because she knows nothing can happen to her, nothing, in spite of all she deserves, in spite of all that I ought to do to her, in spite of all that I *want* to do to her." "What do you want to do?" "Confound it! Cannot you guess? I want . . . to kill her." "To kill her, because she has . . ." "Because she has deceived me? No, no, not that, I tell you again. I have forgiven her for that, a long time ago, and I am too much accustomed to it! But the worst of it is, that the first time I forgave her, I told her that all the same, I might some day have my revenge by cutting her throat, if I chose, without seeming to do it on purpose, as if it were an accident, mere awkward-

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ness." "Oh! So you said that to her?" "Of course I did, and I meant it. I thought I might be able to do it, for you see I had a perfect right to do so. It was so simple, so easy, so tempting! Just think! A mistake of less than half an inch, and her skin would be cut at the neck where the jugular vein is, and the jugular would be severed. My knives cut very well! And when once the jugular is cut . . . good-by. The blood would spurt out, and one, two, three red jets, and all would be over; she would be dead, and I should have had my revenge!"

"That is true, certainly, horribly true!" "And without any risk to me, eh? An accident, that is all; bad luck, one of those mistakes which happen every day in our business. What could they accuse me of? Who would think of accusing me? Homicide through imprudence, that would be all! They would even pity me, rather than accuse me. 'My wife! My poor wife!' I should say, sobbing. 'My wife, who is so necessary to me, who is half the bread-winner, who takes part in my performance!' You must acknowledge that I should be pitied!"

"Certainly; there is not the least doubt about that." "And you must allow that such a revenge would be a very nice revenge, the best possible revenge, which I could have with assured impunity?" "Evidently that is so." "Very well! But when I told her so, just as I have told you, and better still, threatening her, as I was mad with rage and ready to do the deed that I had dreamt of, on the spot, what do you think she said?" "That you were a good fellow, and would certainly not have the atrocious courage to . . ."

"Tut! tut! tut! I am not such a good fellow as you think. I am not frightened at blood, and that I have proved already, though it would be useless to tell you how and where. But I had no necessity to prove it to her, for she knows that I am capable of a good many things, even of crime, especially of a crime." "And she was not frightened?" "No. She merely replied that I could not do what I said; you understand. That I could not do it!" "Why not?" "Ah! Monsieur, so you do not understand? Why do you not? Have I not ex-

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plained to you by what constant, long, daily practice I have learnt to plant my knives without seeing what I am doing?" "Yes, well, what then?" "Well! Cannot you understand what she has understood with such terrible results, that now my hand would no longer obey me if I wished to make a mistake as I threw?" "Is it possible?" "Nothing is truer, I am sorry to say. For I really have wished to have my revenge, which I have dreamt of and which I thought so easy. Exasperated by that bad woman's insolence and confidence in her own safety, I have several times made up my mind to kill her and have exerted all my energy and all my skill to make my knives fly aside when I threw them to make a border round her neck. I tried with all my might to make them deviate half an inch, just enough to cut her throat. I wanted to, and I have never succeeded, never. And always the horrible laugh makes fun of me, always, always."

And with a deluge of tears, with something like a roar of unsatiated and muzzled rage, he ground his teeth as he concluded: "She knows me, the jade; she is in the secret of my work, of my patience, of my trick, routine, whatever you may call it! She lives in my innermost being, and sees into it more closely than you do, or than I do myself. She knows what a faultless machine I have become, the machine of which she makes fun, the machine which is too well wound up, the machine which cannot get out of order, and she knows that I *cannot* make a mistake."

ROUND THE CIRCLE[1]

O. Henry

"Find yo' shirt all right, Sam?" asked Mrs. Webber, from her chair under the live-oak, where she was comfortably seated with a paper-back volume for company.

"It balances perfeckly, Marthy," answered Sam, with a sus-

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picious pleasantness in his tone. "At first I was about ter be a little reckless and kick 'cause ther buttons was all off, but since I diskiver that the button holes is all busted out, why, I wouldn't go so fur as to say the buttons is any loss to speak of."

"Oh, well," said his wife, carelessly, "put on your necktie—that'll keep it together."

Sam Webber's sheep ranch was situated in the loneliest part of the country between the Nueces and the Frio. The ranch house—a two-room box structure—was on the rise of a gently swelling hill in the midst of a wilderness of high chaparral. In front of it was a small clearing where stood the sheep pens, shearing shed, and wool house. Only a few feet back of it began the thorny jungle.

Sam was going to ride over to the Chapman ranch to see about buying some more improved merino rams. At length he came out, ready for his ride. This being a business trip of some importance, and the Chapman ranch being almost a small town in population and size, Sam had decided to "dress up" accordingly. The result was that he had transformed himself from a graceful, picturesque frontiersman into something much less pleasing to the sight. The tight white collar awkwardly constricted his muscular, mahogany-colored neck. The buttonless shirt bulged in stiff waves beneath his unbuttoned vest. The suit of "ready-made" effectually concealed the fine lines of his straight, athletic figure. His berry-brown face was set to the melancholy dignity befitting a prisoner of state. He gave Randy, his three-year-old son, a pat on the head, and hurried out to where Mexico, his favorite saddle horse, was standing.

Marthy, leisurely rocking in her chair, fixed her place in the book with her finger, and turned her head, smiling mischievously as she noted the havoc Sam had wrought with his appearance in trying to "fix up."

"Well, ef I must say it, Sam," she drawled, "you look jest like one of them hayseeds in the picture papers, 'stead of a free and independent sheepman of ther State o' Texas."

Sam climbed awkwardly into the saddle.

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"You're the one ought to be 'shamed to say so," he replied hotly. "'Stead of 'tendin' to a man's clothes you're al'ays settin' around a-readin' them billy-by-dam yallėr-back novils."

"Oh, shet up and ride along," said Mrs. Webber, with a little jerk at the handles of her chair; "you al'ays fussin' 'bout my readin'. I do a-plenty; and I'll read when I wanter. I live in the bresh here like a varmint, never seein' nor hearin' nothin', and what other 'musement kin I have? Not in listenin' to you talk, for it's complain, complain, one day after another. Oh, go on, Sam, and leave me in peace."

Sam gave his pony a squeeze with his knees and "shoved" down the wagon trail that connected his ranch with the old, open Government road. It was eight o'clock, and already beginning to be very warm. He should have started three hours earlier. Chapman ranch was only eighteen miles away, but there was a road for only three miles of the distance. He had ridden over there once with one of the Half-Moon cow-punchers, and he had the direction well defined in his mind.

Sam turned off the old Government road at the split mesquite, and struck down the arroyo of the Quintanilla. Here was a narrow stretch of smiling valley, upholstered with a rich mat of green, curly mesquite grass; and Mexico consumed those few miles quickly with his long, easy lope. Again, upon reaching Wild Duck Waterhole, must he abandon well-defined ways. He turned now to his right up a little hill, pebble-covered, upon which grew only the tenacious and thorny prickly pear and chaparral. At the summit of this he paused to take his last general view of the landscape for, from now on, he must wind through brakes and thickets of chaparral, pear, and mesquite, for the most part seeing scarcely farther than twenty yards in any direction, choosing his way by the prairie-dweller's instinct, guided only by an occasional glimpse of a far distant hilltop, a peculiarly shaped knot of trees, or the position of the sun.

Sam rode down the sloping hill and plunged into the great pear flat that lies between the Quintanilla and the Piedra.

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In about two hours he discovered that he was lost. Then came the usual confusion of mind and the hurry to get somewhere. Mexico was anxious to redeem the situation, twisting with alacrity along the tortuous labyrinths of the jungle. At the moment his master's sureness of the route had failed his horse had divined the fact. There were no hills now that they could climb to obtain a view of the country. They came upon a few, but so dense and interlaced was the brush that scarcely could a rabbit penetrate the mass. They were in the great, lonely thicket of the Frio bottoms.

It was a mere nothing for a cattleman or a sheepman to be lost for a day or night. The thing often happened. It was merely a matter of missing a meal or two and sleeping comfortably on your saddle blankets on a soft mattress of mesquite grass. But in Sam's case it was different. He had never been away from his ranch at night. Marthy was afraid of the country—afraid of Mexicans, of snakes, of panthers, even of sheep. So he had never left her alone.

It must have been about four in the afternoon when Sam's conscience awoke. He was limp and drenched, rather from anxiety than the heat or fatigue. Until now he had been hoping to strike the trail that led to the Frio crossing and the Chapman ranch. He must have crossed it at some dim part of it and ridden beyond. If so, he was now something like fifty miles from home. If he could strike a ranch—a camp—any place where he could get a fresh horse and inquire the road, he would ride all night to get back to Marthy and the kid.

So, I have hinted, Sam was seized by remorse. There was a big lump in his throat as he thought of the cross words he had spoken to his wife. Surely it was hard enough for her to live in that horrible country without having to bear the burden of his abuse. He cursed himself grimly, and felt a sudden flush of shame that overglowed the summer heat as he remembered the many times he had flouted and railed at her because she had a liking for reading fiction.

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"Ther only so'ce ov amusement ther po' gal's got," said Sam aloud, with a sob, which unaccustomed sound caused Mexico to shy a bit. "A-livin' with a sore-headed kiote like me—a low-down skunk that ought to be licked to death with a saddle cinch—a-cookin' and a-washin' and a-livin' on mutton and beans— and me abusin' her fur takin' a squint or two in a little book!"

He thought of Marthy as she had been when he first met her in Dogtown—smart, pretty, and saucy—before the sun had turned the roses in her cheeks brown and the silence of the chaparral had tamed her ambitions.

"Ef I ever speaks another hard word to ther little gal," muttered Sam, "or fails in the love and affection that's comin' to her in the deal, I hopes a wildcat'll t'ar me to pieces."

He knew what he would do. He would write to Garcia & Jones, his San Antonio merchants where he bought his supplies and sold his wool, and have them send down a big box of novels and reading matter for Marthy. Things were going to be different. He wondered whether a little piano could be placed in one of the rooms of the ranch house without the family having to move out of doors.

In nowise calculated to allay his self-reproach was the thought that Marthy and Randy would have to pass that night alone. In spite of their bickerings, when night came Marthy was wont to dismiss her fears of the country, and rest her head upon Sam's strong arm with a sigh of peaceful content and dependence. And were her fears so groundless? Sam thought of roving, marauding Mexicans, of stealthy cougars that sometimes invaded the ranches, of rattlesnakes, centipedes, and a dozen possible dangers. Marthy would be frantic with fear. Randy would cry, and call for "dada" to come.

Still the interminable succession of stretches of brush, cactus, and mesquite. Hollow after hollow, slope after slope—all exactly alike—all familiar by constant repetition, and yet all strange and new. If he could only arrive *somewhere.*

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The straight line is Art. Nature moves in circles. A straightforward man is more an artificial product than a diplomatist is. Men lost in the snow travel in exact circles until they sink, exhausted, as their footprints have attested. Also, travelers in philosophy and other mental processes frequently wind up at their starting-point.

It was when Sam Webber was fullest of contrition and good resolves that Mexico, with a heavy sigh, subsided from his regular, brisk trot into a slow, complacent walk. They were winding up an easy slope covered with brush ten or twelve feet high.

"I say now, Mex," demurred Sam, "this here won't do. I know you're plumb tired out, but we got ter git along. Oh, Lordy, ain't there no mo' houses in the world!" He gave Mexico a smart kick with his heels.

Mexico gave a protesting grunt as if to say: "What's the use of that, now we're so near?" He quickened his gait into a languid trot. Rounding a great clump of black chaparral, he stopped short. Sam dropped the bridle reins and sat, looking into the back door of his own house, not ten yards away.

Marthy, serene and comfortable, sat in her rocking-chair before the door in the shade of the house, with her feet resting luxuriously upon the steps. Randy, who was playing with a pair of spurs on the ground, looked up for a moment at his father and went on spinning the rowels and singing a little song. Marthy turned her head lazily against the back of the chair and considered the arrivals with emotionless eyes. She held a book in her lap with her finger holding the place.

Sam shook himself queerly, like a man coming out of a dream, and slowly dismounted. He moistened his dry lips.

"I see you are still a-settin'," he said, "a-readin' of them billy-by-dam yaller-back novils."

Sam had traveled round the circle and was himself again.

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THE PENDULUM[1]

O. Henry

"Eighty-first Street—let 'em out, please," yelled the shepherd in blue.

A flock of citizen sheep scrambled out and another flock scrambled aboard. Ding-ding! The cattle cars of the Manhattan Elevated rattled away, and John Perkins drifted down the stairway of the station with the released flock.

John walked slowly toward his flat. Slowly, because in the lexicon of his daily life there was no such word as "perhaps." There are no surprises awaiting a man who has been married two years and lives in a flat. As he walked John Perkins prophesied to himself with gloomy and downtrodden cynicism the foregone conclusions of the monotonous day.

Katy would meet him at the door with a kiss flavored with cold cream and butter-scotch. He would remove his coat, sit upon a macadamized lounge, and read, in the evening paper, of Russians and Japs slaughtered by the deadly linotype. For dinner there would be pot roast, a salad flavored with a dressing warranted not to crack or injure the leather, stewed rhubarb, and the bottle of strawberry marmalade blushing at the certificate of chemical purity on its label. After dinner Katy would show him the new patch in her crazy quilt that the iceman had cut for her off the end of his four-in-hand. At half-past seven they would spread newspapers over the furniture to catch the pieces of plastering that fell when the fat man in the flat overhead began to take his physical-culture exercises. Exactly at eight Hickey & Mooney, of the vaudeville team (unbooked) in the flat across the hall, would yield to the gentle influence of delirium tremens and begin to overturn chairs under the delusion that Hammerstein was pursuing them with a five-hundred-dollar-a-week contract. Then the gent at the windows across

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the air-shaft would get out his flute; the nightly gas leak would steal forth to frolic in the highways; the dumbwaiter would slip off its trolley; the janitor would drive Mrs. Zanowitski's five children once more across the Yalu; the lady with the champagne shoes and the Skye terrier would trip downstairs and paste her Thursday name over her bell and letter-box—and the evening routine of the Frogmore flats would be under way.

John Perkins knew these things would happen. And he knew that at a quarter past eight he would summon his nerve and reach for his hat, and that his wife would deliver this speech in a querulous tone:

"Now, where are you going, I'd like to know, John Perkins?"

"Thought I'd drop up to McCloskey's," he would answer, "and play a game or two of pool with the fellows."

Of late such had been John Perkins's habit. At ten or eleven he would return. Sometimes Katy would be asleep; sometimes waiting up, ready to melt in the crucible of her ire a little more gold plating from the wrought-steel chains of matrimony. For these things Cupid will have to answer when he stands at the bar of justice with his victims from the Frogmore flats.

Tonight John Perkins encountered a tremendous upheaval of the commonplace when he reached his door. No Katy was there with her affectionate, confectionate kiss. The three rooms seemed in portentous disorder. All about lay her things in confusion. Shoes in the middle of the floor, curling tongs, hair bows, kimonos, powder box, jumbled together on dresser and chairs—this was not Katy's way. With a sinking heart John saw the comb with a curling cloud of her brown hair among its teeth. Some unusual hurry and perturbation must have possessed her, for she always carefully placed these combings in the little blue vase on the mantel to be some day formed into the coveted feminine "rat."

Hanging conspicuously to the gas jet by a string was a folded paper. John seized it. It was a note from his wife running thus:

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"*Dear John: I just had a telegram saying mother is very sick. I am going to take the 4.30 train. Brother Sam is going to meet me at the depot there. There is cold mutton in the ice box. I hope it isn't her quinsy again. Pay the milkman 50 cents. She had it bad last spring. Don't forget to write to the company about the gas meter, and your good socks are in the top drawer. I will write tomorrow.*

Hastily, *KATY*."

Never during their two years of matrimony had he and Katy been separated for a night. John read the note over and over in a dumfounded way. Here was a break in a routine that had never varied, and it left him dazed.

There on the back of a chair hung, pathetically empty and formless, the red wrapper with black dots that she always wore while getting the meals. Her week-day clothes had been tossed here and there in her haste. A little paper bag of her favorite butter-scotch lay with its string yet unwound. A daily paper sprawled on the floor, gaping rectangularly where a railroad time-table had been clipped from it. Everything in the room spoke of a loss, of an essence gone, of its soul and life departed. John Perkins stood among the dead remains with a queer feeling of desolation in his heart.

He began to set the rooms tidy as well as he could. When he touched her clothes a thrill of something like terror went through him. He had never thought what existence would be without Katy. She had become so thoroughly annealed into his life that she was like the air he breathed—necessary but scarcely noticed. Now, without warning, she was gone, vanished, as completely absent as if she had never existed. Of course it would be only for a few days, or at most a week or two, but it seemed to him as if the very hand of death had pointed a finger at his secure and uneventful home.

John dragged the cold mutton from the ice box, made coffee, and sat down to a lonely meal face to face with the strawberry marmalade's shameless certificate of purity. Bright among

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withdrawn blessings now appeared to him the ghosts of pot roasts and the salad with tan polish dressing. His home was dismantled. A quinsied mother-in-law had knocked his lares and penates sky-high. After his solitary meal John sat at a front window.

He did not care to smoke. Outside the city roared to him to come join in its dance of folly and pleasure. The night was his. He might go forth unquestioned and thrum the strings of jollity as free as any gay bachelor there. He might carouse and wander and have his fling until dawn if he liked; and there would be no wrathful Katy waiting for him, bearing the chalice that held the dregs of his joy. He might play pool at McCloskey's with his roistering friends until Aurora dimmed the electric bulbs if he chose. The hymeneal strings that had curbed him always when the Frogmore flats had palled upon him were loosened. Katy was gone.

John Perkins was not accustomed to analyzing his emotions. But as he sat in his Katy-bereft 10 x 12 parlor he hit unerringly upon the keynote of his discomfort. He knew now that Katy was necessary to his happiness. His feeling for her, lulled into unconsciousness by the dull round of domesticity, had been sharply stirred by the loss of her presence. Has it not been dinned into us by proverb and sermon and fable that we never prize the music till the sweet-voiced bird has flown—or in other no less florid and true utterances?

"I'm a double-dyed dub," mused John Perkins, "the way I've been treating Katy. Off every night playing pool and bumming with the boys instead of staying home with her. The poor girl here all alone with nothing to amuse her, and me acting that way! John Perkins, you're the worst kind of a shine. I'm going to make it up for the little girl. I'll take her out and let her see some amusement. And I'll cut out the McCloskey gang right from this minute."

Yes, there was the city roaring outside for John Perkins to come dance in the train of Momus. And at McCloskey's the boys were knocking the balls idly into the pockets against the

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hour for the nightly game. But no primrose way nor clicking cue could woo the remorseful soul of Perkins the bereft. The thing that was his, lightly held and half scorned, had been taken away from him, and he wanted it. Backward to a certain man named Adam, whom the cherubim bounced from the orchard, could Perkins, the remorseful, trace his descent.

Near the right hand of John Perkins stood a chair. On the back of it stood Katy's blue shirtwaist. It still retained something of her contour. Midway of the sleeves were fine, individual wrinkles made by the movements of her arms in working for his comfort and pleasure. A delicate but impelling odor of blue-bells came from it. John took it and looked long and soberly at the unresponsive grenadine. Katy had never been unresponsive. Tears—yes, tears—came into John Perkins's eyes. When she came back things would be different. He would make up for all his neglect. What was life without her?

The door opened. Katy walked in carrying a little hand satchel. John stared at her stupidly.

"My! I'm glad to get back," said Katy. "Ma wasn't sick to amount to anything. Sam was at the depot, and said she just had a little spell, and got all right soon after they telegraphed. So I took the next train back. I'm just dying for a cup of coffee."

Nobody heard the click and rattle of the cog-wheels as the third-floor front of the Frogmore flats buzzed its machinery back into the Order of Things. A band slipped, a spring was touched, the gear was adjusted, and the wheels revolved in their old orbit.

John Perkins looked at the clock. It was 8.15. He reached for his hat and walked to the door.

"Now, where are you going, I'd like to know, John Perkins?" asked Katy, in a querulous tone.

"Thought I'd drop up to McCloskey's," said John, "and play a game or two of pool with the fellows."

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DEMOCRACY

[In reading these two epochal addresses you will do well to remember that there is a vast difference between the two kinds of democracy that they represent. Modern democracy excludes all hereditary right to rule; it declares that no class, however trained or capable, can so free itself from bias as not to need the consent of the governed; it demands its rights, but recognizes more and more its duties; it makes the general welfare of society its chief end, but it exalts the individual as the unit and measure of all social progress; it believes in equality, but it has learned that there can be no equality without equality of opportunity, and that equality of opportunity is impossible without universal education at public expense. This was not the kind of democracy advocated by Pericles. In Woodrow Wilson's words:

> Democracy as we know it is no older than the end of the eighteenth century. . . . The citizens who constituted the people of the ancient republics, were, when most numerous, a mere privileged class, a ruling minority of the population taken as a whole. It never entered into the thought of any ancient republican to conceive of all men as equally entitled to take part in any government, or even in the control of any government, by votes cast or lots drawn.

But as I read and re-read the two great speeches the dissimilarities become fused in the ardor of a common and controlling ideal. The two are one in spirit and one in the circumstances that called them forth. Each orator gave back as rain the patriotic public impulses that before had been only mist. Each stood as the supreme representative of the best democratic thought of his age. Each had helped mightily to create the democracy of which he was now the chosen spokesman. Each felt passionately that if democracy perished, his country perished. Each caught his inspiration from the example of the dead that lay close by. Each referred proudly to the past, resolutely to the present, and confidently to the future. And each was about to fall a martyr to the cause that with imperishable eloquence he now proclaimed. Resemblances and differences will stand out more clearly if you will re-read both speeches and ask yourself, "What changes would be required in Pericles' address to make it fit Lincoln's audience, and what changes in Lincoln's address to make it fit Pericles' audience?" Is not the best of the Greek's

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thought summarized in the later address, and is not much of the American's thought diffused through the older address? I hope the audience made Pericles feel that his speech was worthy of the occasion. Lincoln said of his own speech: "It is a flat failure. The people won't like it." Lincoln did not live to know that later opinion would rank the Gettysburg Address as the greatest short speech in the English language.]

FUNERAL ORATION

Pericles

Most of those who have spoken here before me have commended the lawgiver who added this oration to our other funeral customs; it seemed to them a worthy thing that such an honor should be given at their burial to the dead who have fallen on the field of battle. But I should have preferred that, when men's deeds have been brave, they should be honored in deed only, and with such an honor as this public funeral, which you are now witnessing. Then the reputation of many would not have been imperiled on the eloquence or want of eloquence of one, and their virtues believed or not as he spoke well or ill. For it is difficult to say neither too little nor too much; and even moderation is likely not to give the impression of truthfulness. The friend of the dead who knows the facts is likely to think that the words of the speaker fall short of his knowledge and of his wishes; another who is not so well informed, when he hears of anything which surpasses his own powers, will be envious and will suspect exaggeration. Mankind are tolerant of the praises of others so long as each hearer thinks that he can do as well or nearly as well himself, but, when the speaker rises above him, jealousy is aroused and he begins to be incredulous. However, since our ancestors have set the seal of their approval upon the practice, I must obey, and to the utmost of my power shall endeavor to satisfy the wishes and beliefs of all who hear me.

I will speak first of our ancestors, for it is right and seemly that now, when we are lamenting the dead, a tribute should be

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paid to their memory. There has never been a time when they did not inhabit this land, which by their valor they have handed down from generation to generation; and we have received from them a free state. But if they were worthy of praise, still more were our fathers, who added to their inheritance, and after many a struggle transmitted to us their sons this great empire. And we ourselves assembled here today, who are still most of us in the vigor of life, have carried the work of improvement further, and have richly endowed our city with all things, so that she is sufficient for herself both in peace and war. Of the military exploits by which our various possessions were acquired, or of the energy with which we or our fathers drove back the tide of war, Hellenic or Barbarian, I will not speak; for the tale would be long and is familiar to you. But before I praise the dead, I should like to point out by what principles of action we rose to power, and under what institutions and through what manner of life our empire became great. For I conceive that such thoughts are not unsuited to the occasion, and that this numerous assembly of citizens and strangers may profitably listen to them.

Our form of government does not enter into rivalry with the institutions of others. We do not copy our neighbors, but are an example to them. It is true that we are called a democracy, for the administration is in the hands of the many and not of the few. But while the law secures equal justice to all alike in their private disputes, the claim of excellence is also recognized; and when a citizen is in any way distinguished, he is preferred to the public service, not as a matter of privilege, but as the reward of merit. Neither is poverty a bar, but a man may benefit his country whatever be the obscurity of his condition. There is no exclusiveness in our public life, and in our private intercourse we are not suspicious of one another, nor angry with our neighbor if he does what he likes; we do not put on sour looks at him which, though harmless, are not pleasant. While we are thus unconstrained in our private intercourse, a spirit of reverence pervades our public acts; we are prevented

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from doing wrong by respect for the authorities and for the laws, having an especial regard to those which are ordained for the protection of the injured as well as to those unwritten laws which bring upon the transgressor of them the reprobation of the general sentiment.

And we have not forgotten to provide for our weary spirits many relaxations from toil; we have regular games and sacrifices throughout the year; our homes are beautiful and elegant; and the delight which we daily feel in all these things helps to banish melancholy. Because of the greatness of our city the fruits of the whole earth flow in upon us; so that we enjoy the goods of other countries as freely as of our own.

Then, again, our military training is in many respects superior to that of our adversaries. Our city is thrown open to the world, and we never expel a foreigner or prevent him from seeing or learning anything of which the secret if revealed to an enemy might profit him. We rely not upon management or trickery, but upon our own hearts and hands. And in the matter of education, whereas they from early youth are always undergoing laborious exercises which are to make them brave, we live at ease, and yet are equally ready to face the perils which they face. And here is the proof. The Lacedæmonians come into Attica not by themselves, but with their whole confederacy following; we go alone into a neighbor's country; and although our opponents are fighting for their homes and we on a foreign soil, we have seldom any difficulty in overcoming them. Our enemies have never yet felt our united strength; the care of a navy divides our attention, and on land we are obliged to send our own citizens everywhere. But they, if they meet and defeat a part of our army, are as proud as if they had routed us all, and when defeated they pretend to have been vanquished by us all.

If then we prefer to meet danger with a light heart but without laborious training, and with a courage which is gained by habit and not enforced by law, are we not greatly the gainers? We do not anticipate the pain, although, when the hour comes,

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we can be as brave as those who never allow themselves to rest; and thus, too, our city is equally admirable in peace and war. For we are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate the mind without loss of manliness. Wealth we employ, not for talk and ostentation, but when there is a real use for it. To avow poverty with us is no disgrace; the true disgrace is in doing nothing to avoid it. An Athenian citizen does not neglect the state because he takes care of his own household; and even those of us who are engaged in business have a very fair idea of politics. We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs, not as a harmless, but as a useless character; and if few of us are originators, we are all sound judges of a policy. The great impediment to action is, in our opinion, not a discussion, but the want of that knowledge which is gained by discussion preparatory to action. For we have a peculiar power of thinking before we act and of acting too, whereas other men are courageous from ignorance but hesitate upon reflection. And they are surely to be esteemed the bravest spirits who, having the clearest sense both of the pains and pleasures of life, do not on that account shrink from danger. In doing good, again, we are unlike others; we make our friends by conferring, not by receiving favors. Now he who confers a favor is a firmer friend, because he would fain by kindness keep alive the memory of an obligation; but the recipient is colder in his feelings, because he knows that in requiting another's generosity he will not be winning gratitude but only paying a debt. We alone do good to our neighbors not upon a calculation of interest, but in the confidence of freedom and in a frank and fearless spirit.

To sum up: I say that Athens is the school of Hellas, and that the individual Athenian in his own person seems to have the power of adapting himself to the most varied forms of action with the utmost versatility and grace. This is no passing and idle word, but truth and fact; and the assertion is verified by the position to which these qualities have raised the state. For in the hour of trial Athens alone among her contemporaries

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is superior to the report of her. No enemy who comes against her is indignant at the reverses which he sustains at the hands of such a city; no subject complains that his masters are unworthy of him. And we shall assuredly not be without witnesses; there are mighty monuments of our power which will make us the wonder of this and succeeding ages; we shall not need the praises of Homer or of any other panegyrist whose poetry may please for the moment, although his representation of the facts will not bear the light of day. For we have compelled every land and every sea to open a path for our valor, and we have everywhere planted eternal memorials of our friendship and of our enmity. Such is the city for whose sake these men nobly fought and died; they could not bear the thought that she might be taken from them; and every one of us who survive should gladly toil on in her behalf.

I have dwelt upon the greatness of Athens because I want to show you that we are contending for a higher prize than those who enjoy none of these privileges, and to establish by manifest proof the merit of these men whom I am now commemorating. Their loftiest praise has been already spoken. For in magnifying the city I have magnified them, and men like them whose virtues made her glorious. And of how few Hellenes can it be said as of them, that their deeds when weighed in the balance have been found equal to their fame! Methinks that a death such as theirs has been gives the true measure of a man's worth; it may be the first revelation of his virtues, but it is at any rate their final seal. For even those who come short in other ways may justly plead the valor with which they have fought for their country; they have blotted out the evil with the good, and have benefited the state more by their public services than they have injured her by their private actions. None of these men were enervated by wealth or hesitated to resign the pleasures of life; none of them put off the evil day in the hope, natural to poverty, that a man, though poor, may one day become rich. But, deeming that the punishment of their enemies was sweeter than any of these things, and that they could fall in no nobler

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cause, they determined at the hazard of their lives to be honorably avenged and to leave the rest. They resigned to hope their unknown chance of happiness; but in the face of death they resolved to rely upon themselves alone. And when the moment came they were minded to resist and suffer, rather than to fly and save their lives; they ran away from the word of dishonor, but on the battlefield their feet stood fast, and in an instant, at the height of their fortune, they passed away from the scene, not of their fear, but of their glory.

Such was the end of these men; they were worthy of Athens, and the living need not desire to have a more heroic spirit, although they may pray for a less fatal issue. The value of such a spirit is not to be expressed in words. Anyone can discourse to you forever about the advantages of a brave defence, which you know already. But instead of listening to him I would have you day by day fix your eyes upon the greatness of Athens, until you become filled with the love of her; and when you are impressed by the spectacle of her glory, reflect that this empire has been acquired by men who knew their duty and had the courage to do it, who in the hour of conflict had the fear of dishonor always present to them, and who, if ever they failed in an enterprise, would not allow their virtues to be lost to their country, but freely gave their lives to her as the fairest offering which they could present at her feast. The sacrifice which they collectively made was individually repaid to them; for they received again each one for himself a praise which grows not old, and the noblest of all sepulchers—I speak not of that in which their remains are laid, but of that in which their glory survives, and is proclaimed always and on every fitting occasion both in word and deed. For the whole earth is the sepulcher of famous men; not only are they commemorated by columns and inscriptions in their own country, but in foreign lands there dwells also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not on stone but in the hearts of men. Make them your examples, and, esteeming courage to be freedom and freedom to be happiness, do not weigh too nicely the perils of war. The unfortunate who

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has no hope of a change for the better has less reason to throw away his life than the prosperous, who, if he survives, is always liable to a change for the worse, and to whom any accidental fall makes the most serious difference. To a man of spirit, cowardice and disaster coming together are far more bitter than death striking him unperceived at a time when he is full of courage and animated by the general hope.

Wherefore I do not now commiserate the parents of the dead who stand here; I would rather comfort them. You know that your life has been passed amid manifold vicissitudes, and that they may be deemed fortunate who have gained most honor, whether an honorable death like theirs or an honorable sorrow like yours, and whose days have been so ordered that the term of their happiness is likewise the term of their life. I know how hard it is to make you feel this, when the good fortune of others will too often remind you of the gladness which once lightened your hearts. And sorrow is felt at the want of those blessings, not which a man never knew, but which were a part of his life before they were taken away from him. Some of you are of an age at which you may hope to have other children, and you ought to bear your sorrow better; not only will the children who will hereafter be born make you forget your own lost ones, but the city will be doubly a gainer. She will not be left desolate, and she will be safer. For a man's counsel cannot have equal weight or worth, when he alone has no children to risk in the general danger. To those of you who have passed your prime, I say: "Congratulate yourselves that you have been happy during the greater part of your days; remember that your life of sorrow will not last long, and be comforted by the glory of those who are gone. For the love of honor alone is ever young; and not riches, as some say, but honor is the delight of men when they are old and useless."

To you who are the sons and brothers of the departed, I see that the struggle to emulate them will be an arduous one. For all men praise the dead; and, however preëminent your virtue may be, hardly will you be thought, I do not say to equal, but

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even to approach them. The living have their rivals and detractors, but when a man is out of the way, the honor and good will which he receives is unalloyed. And, if I am to speak of womanly virtues to those of you who will henceforth be widows, let me sum them up in one short admonition: To a woman not to show more weakness than is natural to her sex is a great glory, and not to be talked about for good or for evil among men.

I have paid the required tribute in obedience to the law, making use of such fitting words as I had. The tribute of deeds has been paid in part; for the dead have been honorably interred, and it remains only that their children should be maintained at the public charge until they are grown up: this is the solid prize with which, as with a garland, Athens crowns her sons living and dead, after a struggle like theirs. For where the rewards of virtue are greatest, there the noblest citizens are enlisted in the service of the state. And now, when you have duly lamented, every one his own dead, you may depart.

GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

19 November, 1863

Abraham Lincoln

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor

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power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

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EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP

[Every American should review the history of the United States at least once a year. Current events will not assume their rightful significance unless seen through the lens of past events, and past events will take on a new meaning if pitted against current events. But not only will you find yourself appraising events in a new light: leading characters also will show new facets. When you compare first things with last things, when you view it all as something in the making rather than as something made, American history will assume a unity and a continuity that you cannot find in it unless you make repeated surveys from constantly advancing outposts. But you will find your survey greatly enriched if you have before you some definite quest. The determination merely to brush up on names or dates or bare facts will not avail. Before your reading will be nuclear and adhesive, you will need to have in mind a problem to be solved, a question to be answered, a generalization to be confirmed or invalidated. Such an incentive is furnished by the two addresses that follow.

Do you agree with Phillips that "rarely in this country have scholarly men joined, as a class, in these great popular schools, in these social movements which make the great interests of society 'crash and jostle against each other like frigates in a storm'"? Phillips is very specific, mentioning at least six of these social movements in which he thought that our scholars had been laggards instead of leaders. Curtis, in his rejoinder, asks indignantly, "Does the educated class of America deserve this condemnation of political recreancy and moral cowardice?" He thinks not, and gives his reasons. "But this is not true of the past alone," adds Curtis. "As educated America was the constructive power, so it is still the conservative force of the Republic."

There is a ring and bite in Phillips's style that we miss in the words of Curtis. But Curtis seems to me to get the better of the argument. More than two generations have come and gone, however, since the two disputants contended. Whose argument holds the firmer for the crowded years that have followed 1882? How has it been in your state? How does Phillips's judgment of the relation, or lack of relation, between pure science and applied science square with the facts as you know them today?]

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THE SCHOLAR IN A REPUBLIC[1]

WENDELL PHILLIPS

MR. PRESIDENT AND BROTHERS OF THE Φ.B.K.:—A hundred years ago our society was planted—a slip from the older root in Virginia. The parent seed, tradition says, was French—part of that conspiracy for free speech whose leaders prated democracy in the salons, while they carefully held on to the fleshpots of society by crouching low to kings and their mistresses, and whose final object of assault was Christianity itself. Voltaire gave the watchword:

"Crush the wretch,"
"*Écrasez l'infame.*"

No matter how much or how little truth there may be in the tradition: no matter what was the origin or what was the object of our society, if it had any special one, both are long since forgotten. We stand now simply a representative of free, brave, American scholarship. I emphasize *American* scholarship.

In one of those glowing, and as yet unequaled pictures which Everett drew for us, here and elsewhere, of Revolutionary scenes, I remember his saying that the independence we then won, if taken in its literal and narrow sense, was of no interest and little value; but, construed in the fullness of its real meaning, it bound us to a distinctive American character and purpose, to a keen sense of large responsibility, and to a generous self-devotion. It is under the shadow of such unquestioned authority that I used the term "American scholarship."

Our society was, no doubt, to some extent, a protest against the somber theology of New England, where, a hundred years ago, the atmosphere was black with sermons, and where religious speculation beat uselessly against the narrowest limits.

The first generation of Puritans—though Lowell does let Cromwell call them "a small colony of pinched fanatics"—in-

[1] Address at the Centennial Anniversary of the Phi Beta Kappa of Harvard College, June 30, 1881.

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cluded some men, indeed not a few, worthy to walk close to Roger Williams and Sir Harry Vane, the two men deepest in thought and bravest in speech of all who spoke English in their day, and equal to any in practical statesmanship. Sir Harry Vane—in my judgment the noblest human being who ever walked the streets of yonder city—I do not forget Franklin or Sam Adams, Washington or Fayette, Garrison or John Brown. But Vane dwells an arrow's flight above them all, and his touch consecrated the continent to measureless toleration of opinion and entire equality of rights. We are told we can find in Plato "all the intellectual life of Europe for two thousand years"; so you can find in Vane the pure gold of two hundred and fifty years of American civilization, with no particle of its dross. Plato would have welcomed him to the Academy, and Fénelon kneeled with him at the altar. He made Somers and John Marshall possible; like Carnot, he organized victory; and Milton pales before him in the stainlessness of his record. He stands among English statesmen preëminently the representative, in practice and in theory, of serene faith in the safety of trusting truth wholly to her own defense. For other men we walk backward, and throw over their memories the mantle of charity and excuse, saying reverently, "Remember the temptation and the age." But Vane's ermine has no stain; no act of his needs explanation or apology; and in thought he stands abreast of our age—like pure intellect, belongs to all time.

Carlyle said, in years when his words were worth heeding, "Young men, close your Byron, and open your Goethe." If my counsel had weight in these halls, I should say, "Young men, close your John Winthrop and Washington, your Jefferson and Webster, and open Sir Harry Vane." The generation that knew Vane gave to our Alma Mater for a seal the simple pledge: *Veritas.*

But the narrowness and poverty of colonial life soon starved out this element. Harvard was rededicated *Christo et Ecclesiae*; and, up to the middle of the last century, free thought in religion meant Charles Chauncy and the Brattlestreet Church protest,

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while free thought hardly existed anywhere else. But a single generation changed all this. A hundred years ago there were pulpits that led the popular movement; while outside of religion and of what called itself literature, industry and a jealous sense of personal freedom obeyed, in their rapid growth, the law of their natures. English common sense and those municipal institutions born of the common law, and which had saved and sheltered it, grew inevitably too large for the eggshell of English dependence, and allowed it to drop off as naturally as the chick does when she is ready. There was no change of law—nothing that could properly be called revolution; only noiseless growth, the seed bursting into flower, infancy becoming manhood. It was life, in its omnipotence, rending whatever dead matter confined it. So have I seen the tiny weeds of a luxuriant Italian spring upheave the colossal foundations of the Cæsars' palace, and leave it a mass of ruins.

But when the veil was withdrawn, what stood revealed astonished the world. It showed the undreamt power, the serene strength, of simple manhood, free from the burden and restraint of absurd institutions in church and state. The grandeur of this new Western constellation gave courage to Europe, resulting in the French Revolution, the greatest, the most unmixed, the most unstained and wholly perfect blessing Europe has had in modern times, unless we may possibly except the Reformation, and the invention of printing.

What precise effect that giant wave had when it struck our shore we can only guess. History is, for the most part, an idle amusement, the day dream of pedants and triflers. The details of events, the actors' motives, and their relation to each other, are buried with them. How impossible to learn the exact truth of what took place yesterday under your next neighbor's roof! Yet we complacently argue and speculate about matters a thousand miles off, and a thousand years ago, as if we knew them. When I was a student here, my favorite study was history. The world and affairs have shown me that one-half of history is loose conjecture, and much of the rest is the writer's opinion. But

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most men see facts, not with their eyes, but with their prejudices. Anyone familiar with courts will testify how rare it is for an honest man to give a perfectly correct account of a transaction. We are tempted to see facts as we think they ought to be, or wish they were. And yet journals are the favorite original sources of history. Tremble, my good friend, if your sixpenny neighbor keeps a journal. "It adds a new terror to death." You shall go down to your children not in your fair lineaments and proportions, but with the smirks, elbows, and angles he sees you with. Journals are excellent to record the depth of the last snow and the date when the mayflower opens; but when you come to men's motives and characters, journals are the magnets that get near the chronometer of history and make all its records worthless. You can count on the fingers of your two hands all the robust minds that ever kept journals. Only milksops and fribbles indulge in that amusement, except now and then a respectable mediocrity. One such journal nightmares New England annals, emptied into history by respectable middle-aged gentlemen, who fancy that narrowness and spleen, like poor wine, mellow into truth when they get to be a century old. But you might as well cite *The Daily Advertiser* of 1850 as authority on one of Garrison's actions.

And, after all, of what value are these minutiæ? Whether Luther's zeal was partly kindled by lack of gain from the sale of indulgences, whether Boston rebels were half smugglers and half patriots, what matters it now? Enough that he meant to wrench the gag from Europe's lips, and that they were content to suffer keenly, that we might have an untrammeled career. We can only hope to discover the great currents and massive forces which have shaped our lives; all else is trying to solve a problem of whose elements we know nothing. As the poet historian of the last generation says so plaintively, "History comes like a beggarly gleaner in the field, after Death, the great lord of the domain, has gathered the harvest, and lodged it in his garner, which no man may open."

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But we may safely infer that French debate and experience broadened and encouraged our fathers. To that we undoubtedly owe, in some degree, the theoretical perfection, ingrafted on English practical sense and old forms, which marks the foundation of our republic. English civil life, up to that time, grew largely out of custom, rested almost wholly on precedent. For our model there was no authority in the record, no precedent on the file; unless you find it, perhaps, partially, in that Long Parliament bill with which Sir Harry Vane would have outgeneraled Cromwell, if the shameless soldier had not crushed it with his muskets.

Standing on Saxon foundations, and inspired, perhaps, in some degree, by Latin example, we have done what no race, no nation, no age, had before dared even to try. We have founded a republic on the unlimited suffrage of the millions. We have actually worked out the problem that man, as God created him, may be trusted with self-government. We have shown the world that a church without a bishop, and a state without a king, is an actual, real, everyday possibility. Look back over the history of the race: where will you find a chapter that precedes us in that achievement? Greece had her republics, but they were the republics of a few freemen and subjects and many slaves; and "the battle of Marathon was fought by slaves, unchained from the doorposts of their masters' houses." Italy had her republics; they were the republics of wealth and skill and family, limited and aristocratic. The Swiss republics were groups of cousins. Holland had her republic—a republic of guilds and landholders, trusting the helm of state to property and education. And all these, which, at their best, held but a million or two within their narrow limits, have gone down in the ocean of time.

A hundred years ago our fathers announced this sublime, and, as it seemed then, foolhardy declaration, that God intended all men to be free and equal—all men, without restriction, without qualification, without limit. A hundred years have rolled away

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since that venturous declaration; and today, with a territory that joins ocean to ocean, with fifty millions of people, with two wars behind her, with the grand achievement of having grappled with the fearful disease that threatened her central life, and broken four millions of fetters, the great republic, stronger than ever, launches into the second century of her existence. The history of the world has no such chapter in its breadth, its depth, its significance, or its bearing on future history.

What Wycliffe did for religion, Jefferson and Sam Adams did for the State; they trusted it to the people. He gave the masses the Bible, the right to think. Jefferson and Sam Adams gave them the ballot, the right to rule. His intrepid advance contemplated theirs as its natural, inevitable result. Their serene faith completed the gift which the Anglo-Saxon race makes to humanity. We have not only established a new measure of the possibilities of the race; we have laid on strength, wisdom, and skill a new responsibility. Grant that each man's relations to God and his neighbor are exclusively his own concern, and that he is entitled to all the aid that will make him the best judge of these relations; that the people are the source of all power, and their measureless capacity the lever of all progress; their sense of right the court of final appeal in civil affairs; the institutions they create the only ones any power has a right to impose; that the attempt of one class to prescribe the law, the religion, the morals, or the trade of another is both unjust and harmful—and the Wycliffe and Jefferson of history mean this if they mean anything; then, when, in 1867, Parliament doubled the English franchise, Robert Lowe was right in affirming, amid the cheers of the House, "Now the first interest and duty of every Englishman is to educate the masses—our masters." Then, whoever sees farther than his neighbor is that neighbor's servant to lift him to such higher level. Then, power, ability, influence, character, virtue, are only trusts with which to serve our time.

We all agree in the duty of scholars to help those less favored in life, and that this duty of scholars to educate the mass is still

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more imperative in a republic, since a republic trusts the state wholly to the intelligence and moral sense of the people. The experience of the last forty years shows every man that law has no atom of strength, either in Boston or New Orleans, unless, and only so far as, public opinion indorses it, and that your life, goods, and good name rest on the moral sense, self-respect, and law-abiding mood of the men that walk the streets, and hardly a whit on the provisions of the statute book. Come, any one of you, outside of the ranks of popular men, and you will not fail to find it so. Easy men dream that we live under a government of law. Absurd mistake! We live under a government of men and newspapers. Your first attempt to stem dominant and keenly-cherished opinions will reveal this to you.

But what is education? Of course it is not book learning. Book learning does not make five per cent of that mass of common sense that "runs" the world, transacts its business, secures its progress, trebles its power over nature, works out in the long run a rough average justice, wears away the world's restraints, and lifts off its burdens. The ideal Yankee, who "has more brains in his hand than others have in their skulls," is not a scholar; and two-thirds of the inventions that enable France to double the world's sunshine, and make Old and New England the workshops of the world, did not come from colleges or from minds trained in the schools of science, but struggled up, forcing their way against giant obstacles, from the irrepressible instinct of untrained natural power. Her workshops, not her colleges, made England, for a while, the mistress of the world; and the hardest job her workman had was to make Oxford willing he should work his wonders.

So of moral gains. As shrewd an observer as Governor Marcy of New York often said he cared nothing for the whole press of the seaboard, representing wealth and education (he meant book learning), if it set itself against the instincts of the people. Lord Brougham, in a remarkable comment on the life of Romilly, enlarges on the fact that the great reformer of the penal law found all the legislative and all the judicial power of

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England, its colleges and its bar, marshaled against him, and owed his success, *as all such reforms do*, says his lordship, to public meetings and popular instinct. It would be no exaggeration to say that government itself began in usurpation, in the feudalism of the soldier and the bigotry of the priest; that liberty and civilization are only fragments of rights wrung from the strong hands of wealth and book learning. Almost all the great truths relating to society were not the result of scholarly meditation, "hiving up wisdom with each curious year," but have been first heard in the solemn protests of martyred patriotism and the loud cries of crushed and starving labor. When common sense and the common people have stereotyped a principle into a statute, then book men come to explain how it was discovered and on what ground it rests. The world makes history, and scholars write it, one-half truly, and the other half as their prejudices blur and distort it.

New England learned more of the principles of toleration from a lyceum committee doubting the dicta of editors and bishops when they forbade it to put Theodore Parker on its platform; more from a debate whether the antislavery cause should be so far countenanced as to invite one of its advocates to lecture; from Sumner and Emerson, George William Curtis, and Edwin Whipple, refusing to speak unless a negro could buy his way into their halls as freely as any other—New England has learned more from all these lessons than she has or could have done from all the treatises on free printing from Milton and Roger Williams, through Locke, down to Stuart Mill.

Selden, the profoundest scholar of his day, affirmed, "No man is wiser for his learning"; and that was only an echo of the Saxon proverb, "No fool is a perfect fool until he learns Latin." Bancroft says of our fathers, that "the wildest theories of the human reason were reduced to practice by a community so humble that no statesman condescended to notice it, and a legislation without precedent was produced offhand by the instincts of the people." And Wordsworth testifies that, while German schools might well blush for their subserviency—

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A few strong instincts and a few plain rules,
Among the herdsmen of the Alps, have wrought
More for mankind at this unhappy day
Than all the pride of intellect and thought.

Wycliffe was, no doubt, a learned man. But the learning of his day would have burned him, had it dared, as it did burn his dead body afterwards. Luther and Melanchthon were scholars, but were repudiated by scholarship of their time, which followed Erasmus, trying "all his life to tread on eggs without breaking them"; he who proclaimed that "peaceful error was better than tempestuous truth." What would college-graduate Seward weigh, in any scale, against Lincoln bred in affairs?

Hence, I do not think the greatest things have been done for the world by its book men. Education is not the chips of arithmetic and grammar—nouns, verbs, and the multiplication table; neither is it that last year's almanac of dates, or series of lies agreed upon, which we so often mistake for history. Education is not Greek and Latin and the air pump. Still, I rate at its full value the training we get in these walls. Though what we actually carry away is little enough, we do get some training of our powers, as the gymnast or the fencer does of his muscles; we go hence also with such general knowledge of what mankind has agreed to consider proved and settled, that we know where to reach for the weapon when we need it.

I have often thought the motto prefixed to his college library catalogue by the father of the late Professor Peirce—Professor Peirce, the largest natural genius, the man of the deepest reach and firmest grasp and widest sympathy, that God has given to Harvard in our day—whose presence made you the loftiest peak and farthest outpost of more than mere scientific thought—the magnet who, with his twin Agassiz, made Harvard for forty years the intellectual Mecca of forty states—his father's catalogue bore for a motto, "*Scire ubi aliquid invenias magna pars eruditionis est*"; and that always seemed to me to gage very nearly all we acquired at college, except facility in the use of our powers. Our influence in the community does not really

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spring from superior attainments, but from this thorough training of faculties, and more even, perhaps, from the deference men accord to us.

Gibbon says we have two educations: one from teachers, and the other we give ourselves. This last is the real and only education of the masses—one gotten from life, from affairs, from earning one's bread; necessity, the mother of invention; responsibility, that teaches prudence, and inspires respect for right. Mark the critic out of office—how reckless in assertion, how careless of consequences; and then the caution, forethought, and fair play of the same man charged with administration. See that young, thoughtless wife suddenly widowed—how wary and skillful! what ingenuity in guarding her child and saving his rights! Anyone who studied Europe forty or fifty years ago could not but have marked the level of talk there, far below that of our masses. It was of crops and rents, markets and marriages, scandal and fun. Watch men here, and how often you listen to the keenest discussions of right and wrong, this leader's honesty, that party's justice, the fairness of this law, the impolicy of that measure—lofty broad topics, training morals, widening views. Niebuhr said of Italy, sixty years ago, "No one feels himself a citizen. Not only are the people destitute of hope, but they have not even wishes touching the world's affairs; and hence all the springs of great and noble thoughts are choked up."

In this sense the Frémont campaign of 1856 taught Americans more than a hundred colleges; and John Brown's pulpit at Harpers Ferry was equal to any ten thousand ordinary chairs. God lifted a million of hearts to his gibbet, as the Roman cross lifted a world to itself in that divine sacrifice of two thousand years ago. As much as statesmanship had taught in our previous eighty years, that one week of intellectual watching and weighing and dividing truth taught twenty millions of people. Yet how little, brothers, can we claim for book men in that uprising and growth of 1856! And while the first of American scholars could hardly find, in the rich vocabulary of Saxon

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scorn, words enough to express, amid the plaudits of his class, his loathing and contempt for John Brown, Europe thrilled to him as proof that our institutions had not lost all their native and distinctive life. She had grown tired of our parrot note and cold moonlight reflection of older civilizations. Lansdowne and Brougham could confess to Sumner that they had never read a page of their contemporary, Daniel Webster; and you spoke to vacant eyes when you named Prescott, fifty years ago, to average Europeans; while Vienna asked, with careless indifference, "Seward, who is he?" But long before our ranks marched up State Street to the John Brown song, the banks of the Seine and of the Danube hailed the new life which had given us another and nobler Washington. Lowell foresaw him when, forty years ago, he sang of—

> Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne,—
> Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
> Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.

And yet the book men, as a class, have not yet acknowledged him.

It is here that letters betray their lack of distinctive American character. Fifty million of men God gives us to mold; burning questions, keen debate, great interests trying to vindicate their right to be, sad wrongs brought to the bar of public judgment—these are the people's schools. Timid scholarship either shrinks from sharing in these agitations, or denounces them as vulgar and dangerous interference by incompetent hands with matters above them. A chronic distrust of the people pervades the book-educated class of the North; they shrink from that free speech which is God's normal school for educating men, throwing upon them the grave responsibility of deciding great questions, and so lifting them to a higher level of intellectual and moral life. Trust the people—the wise and the ignorant, the good and the bad—with the gravest questions, and in the end you educate the race. At the same time you secure, not perfect institutions, not necessarily good ones, but

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the best institutions possible while human nature is the basis and the only material to build with. Men are educated and the State uplifted by allowing all—everyone—to broach all their mistakes and advocate all their errors. The community that will not protect its most ignorant and unpopular member in the free utterance of his opinions, no matter how false or hateful, is only a gang of slaves!

Anacharsis went into the Archon's court of Athens, heard a case argued by the great men of that city, and saw the vote by five hundred men. Walking in the streets, someone asked him, "What do you think of Athenian liberty?" "I think," said he, "wise men argue cases, and fools decide them." Just what that timid scholar, two thousand years ago, said in the streets of Athens, that which calls itself scholarship here says today of popular agitation: that it lets wise men argue questions and fools decide them. But that Athens where fools decided the gravest questions of policy and of right and wrong, where property you had gathered wearily today might be wrung from you by the caprice of the mob tomorrow—that very Athens probably secured, for its era, the greatest amount of human happiness and nobleness; invented art, and sounded for us the depths of philosophy. God lent to it the largest intellects, and it flashes today the torch that gilds yet the mountain peaks of the Old World; while Egypt, the hunker conservative of antiquity, where nobody dared to differ from the priest or to be wiser than his grandfather; where men pretended to be alive, though swaddled in the grave clothes of creed and custom as close as their mummies were in linen—that Egypt is hid in the tomb it inhabited, and the intellect Athens has trained for us digs today those ashes to find out how buried and forgotten hunkerism lived and acted.

I knew a signal instance of this disease of scholar's distrust, and the cure was as remarkable. In boyhood and early life I was honored with the friendship of Lothrop Motley. He grew up in the thin air of Boston provincialism, and pined on such weak diet. I remember sitting with him once in the State House

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when he was a member of our Legislature. With biting words and a keen crayon he sketched the ludicrous points in the minds and persons of his fellow members, and, tearing up the pictures, said scornfully, "What can become of a country with such fellows as these making its laws? No safe investments; your good name lied away any hour, and little worth keeping if it were not." In vain I combated the folly. He went to Europe —spent four or five years. I met him the day he landed, on his return. As if our laughing talk in the State House had that moment ended, he took my hand with the sudden exclamation, "You were all right; I was all wrong! It *is* a country worth dying for; better still, worth living and working for, to make it all it can be!" Europe made him one of the most American of all Americans. Some five years later, when he sounded that bugle note in his letter to *The London Times*, some critics who knew his early mood, but not its change, suspected there might be a taint of ambition in what they thought so sudden a conversion. I could testify that the mood was five years old—years before the slightest shadow of political expectation had dusked the clear mirror of his scholar life.

This distrust shows itself in the growing dislike of universal suffrage, and the efforts to destroy it made of late by all our easy classes. The white South hates universal suffrage; the so-called cultivated North distrusts it. Journal and college, social-science convention and the pulpit, discuss the propriety of restraining it. Timid scholars tell their dread of it. Carlyle, that bundle of sour prejudices, flouts universal suffrage with a blasphemy that almost equals its ignorance. See his words: "Democracy will prevail when men believe the vote of Judas as good as that of Jesus Christ." No democracy ever claimed that the vote of ignorance and crime was as good in any sense as that of wisdom and virtue. It only asserts that crime and ignorance have the same right to vote that virtue has. Only by allowing that right, and so appealing to their sense of justice, and throwing upon them the burden of their full responsibility, can we hope ever to raise crime and ignorance to the level of self-

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respect. The right to choose your governor rests on precisely the same foundation as the right to choose your religion; and no more arrogant or ignorant arraignment of all that is noble in the civil and religious Europe of the last five hundred years ever came from the triple crown on the Seven Hills than this sneer of the bigot Scotsman. Protestantism holds up its hands in holy horror, and tells us that the Pope scoops out the brains of his churchmen, saying, "I'll think for you; you need only obey." But the danger is, you meet such popes far away from the Seven Hills; and it is sometimes difficult at first to recognize them, for they do not by any means always wear the triple crown.

Evarts and his committee, appointed to inquire why the New York City government is a failure, were not wise enough, or did not dare, to point out the real cause, the tyranny of that tool of the demagogue, the corner grog shop; but they advised taking away the ballot from the poor citizen. But this provision would not reach the evil. Corruption does not so much rot the masses: it poisons Congress. Credit-Mobilier and money rings are not housed under thatched roofs; they flaunt at the Capitol. As usual in chemistry, the scum floats uppermost. The railway king disdained canvassing for voters: "It is cheaper," he said, "to buy legislatures."

It is not the masses who have most disgraced our political annals. I have seen many mobs between the seaboard and the Mississippi. I never saw or heard of any but well-dressed mobs, assembled and countenanced, if not always led in person, by respectability and what called itself education. That unrivaled scholar, the first and greatest New Englander ever lent to Congress, signaled his advent by quoting the original Greek of the New Testament in support of slavery, and offering to shoulder his musket in its defense; and forty years later the last professor who went to quicken and lift the moral mood of those halls is found advising a plain, blunt, honest witness to forge and lie, that this scholarly reputation might be saved from wreck. Singular comment on Landor's sneer, that there is a spice of the

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scoundrel in most of our literary men. But no exacting level of property qualification for a vote would have saved those stains. In those cases Judas did not come from the unlearned class.

Grown gray over history, Macaulay prophesied twenty years ago that soon in these states the poor, worse than another inroad of Goths and Vandals, would begin a general plunder of the rich. It is enough to say that our national funds sell as well in Europe as English consols; and the universal-suffrage Union can borrow money as cheaply as Great Britain, ruled, one-half by Tories, and the other half by men not certain that they dare call themselves Whigs. Some men affected to scoff at democracy as no sound basis for national debt, doubting the payment of ours. Europe not only wonders at its rapid payment, but the only taint of fraud that touches even the hem of our garment is the fraud of the capitalist cunningly adding to its burdens, and increasing unfairly the value of his bonds; not the first hint from the people of repudiating an iota even of its unjust additions.

Yet the poor and the unlearned class is the one they propose to punish by disfranchisement.

No wonder the humbler class looks on the whole scene with alarm. They see their dearest right in peril. When the easy class conspires to steal, what wonder the humbler class draws together to defend itself? True, universal suffrage is a terrible power; and, with all the great cities brought into subjection to the dangerous classes by grog, and Congress sitting to register the decrees of capital, both sides may well dread the next move. Experience proves that popular governments are the best protectors of life and property. But suppose they were not, Bancroft allows that "the fears of one class are no measure of the rights of another."

Suppose that universal suffrage endangered peace and threatened property. There is something more valuable than wealth; there is something more sacred than peace. As Humboldt says, "The finest fruit earth holds up to its Maker is a man." To ripen, lift, and educate a man is the first duty. Trade, law,

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learning, science, and religion are only the scaffolding wherewith to build a man. Despotism looks down into the poor man's cradle, and knows it can crush resistance and curb ill will. Democracy sees the ballot in that baby hand; and selfishness bids her put integrity on one side of those baby footsteps and intelligence on the other, lest her own hearth be in peril. Thank God for his method of taking bonds of wealth and culture to share all their blessings with the humblest soul he gives to their keeping! The American should cherish as serene a faith as his fathers had. Instead of seeking a coward safety by battening down the hatches and putting men back into chains, he should recognize that God places him in this peril that he may work out a noble security by concentrating all moral forces to lift this weak, rotting, and dangerous mass into sunlight and health. The fathers touched their highest level when, with stout-hearted and serene faith, they trusted God that it was safe to leave men with all the rights He gave them. Let us be worthy of their blood, and save this sheet-anchor of the race—universal suffrage—God's church, God's school, God's method of gently binding men into commonwealths in order that they may at last melt into brothers.

I urge on college-bred men, that, as a class, they fail in republican duty when they allow others to lead in the agitation of the great social questions which stir and educate the age. Agitation is an old word with a new meaning. Sir Robert Peel, the first English leader who felt himself its tool, defined it to be "marshaling the conscience of a nation to mold its laws." Its means are reason and argument—no appeal to arms. Wait patiently for the growth of public opinion. That secured, then every step taken is taken forever. An abuse once removed never reappears in history. The freer a nation becomes, the more utterly democratic in its form, the more need of this outside agitation. Parties and sects laden with the burden of securing their own success cannot afford to risk new ideas. "Predominant opinions," said Disraeli, "are the opinions of a class that is vanishing." The agitator must stand outside of organizations, with no

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bread to earn, no candidate to elect, no party to save, no object but truth; to tear a question open and riddle it with light.

In all modern constitutional governments, agitation is the only peaceful method of progress. Wilberforce and Clarkson, Rowland Hill and Romilly, Cobden and John Bright, Garrison and O'Connell, have been the master spirits in this new form of crusade. Rarely in this country have scholarly men joined, as a class, in these great popular schools, in these social movements which make the great interests of society "crash and jostle against each other like frigates in a storm."

It is not so much that the people need us, or will feel any lack from our absence. They can do without us. By sovereign and superabundant strength they can crush their way through all obstacles.

> They will march prospering,—not through our presence;
> Songs will inspirit them,—not from our lyre;
> Deeds will be done—while we boast our quiescence;
> Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire.

The misfortune is, we lose a God-given opportunity of making the change an unmixed good, or with the slightest possible share of evil, and are recreant besides to a special duty. These "agitations" are the opportunities and the means God offers us to refine the taste, mold the character, lift the purpose, and educate the moral sense of the masses, on whose intelligence and self-respect rests the State. God furnishes these texts. He gathers for us this audience, and only asks of our coward lips to preach the sermons.

There have been four or five of these great opportunities. The crusade against slavery—that grand hypocrisy which poisoned the national life of two generations—was one—a conflict between two civilizations which threatened to rend the Union. Almost every element among us was stirred to take a part in the battle. Every great issue, civil and moral, was involved: toleration of opinion, limits of authority, relation of citizen to law, place of the Bible, priest and layman, sphere of

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woman, question of race, state rights and nationality; and Channing testified that free speech and free printing owed their preservation to the struggle. But the pulpit flung the Bible at the reformer; law visited him with its penalties; society spewed him out of its mouth; bishops expurgated the pictures of their Common Prayer books; and editors omitted pages in republishing English history; even Pierpont emasculated his class book; Bancroft remodeled his chapters; and Everett carried Washington through thirty states, remembering to forget the brave words the wise Virginian had left on record warning his countrymen of this evil. Amid this battle of the giants, scholarship sat dumb for thirty years until imminent deadly peril convulsed it into action, and colleges, in their despair, gave to the army that help they had refused to the market place and the rostrum.

There was here and there an exception. That earthquake scholar at Concord, whose serene word, like a whisper among the avalanches, topples down superstitions and prejudices, was at his post, and, with half a score of others, made the exception that proved the rule. Pulpits, just so far as they could not boast of culture, and nestled closest down among the masses, were infinitely braver than the "spires and antique towers" of stately collegiate institutions.

Then came reform of penal legislation—the effort to make law mean justice, and substitute for its barbarism Christianity and civilization. In Massachusetts Rantoul represents Beccaria and Livingston, Mackintosh and Romilly. I doubt if he ever had one word of encouragement from Massachusetts letters; and, with a single exception, I have never seen, till within a dozen years, one that could be called a scholar active in moving the Legislature to reform its code.

The London Times proclaimed, twenty years ago, that intemperance produced more idleness, crime, disease, want, and misery than all other causes put together; and *The Westminster Review* calls it a "curse that far eclipses every other calamity under which we suffer." Gladstone, speaking as Prime Minis-

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ter, admitted that "greater calamities are inflicted on mankind by intemperance than by the three great historical scourges: war, pestilence, and famine." De Quincey says, "The most remarkable instance of a combined movement in society which history, perhaps, will be summoned to notice, is that which, in our day, has applied itself to the abatement of intemperance. Two vast movements are hurrying into action by velocities continually accelerated: the great revolutionary movement from *political* causes concurring with the great *physical* movement in locomotion and social intercourse from the gigantic power of steam. At the opening of such a crisis, had no *third movement arisen of resistance to intemperate habits*, there would have been ground of despondency as to the melioration of the human race." These are English testimonies, where the State rests more than half on bayonets. Here we are trying to rest the ballot box on a drunken people. "We can rule a great city," said Sir Robert Peel, "America cannot"; and he cited the mobs of New York as sufficient proof of his assertion.

Thoughtful men see that up to this hour the government of great cities has been with us a failure; that worse than the dry rot of legislative corruption, than the rancor of party spirit, than Southern barbarism, than even the tyranny of incorporated wealth, is the giant burden of intemperance, making universal suffrage a failure and a curse in every great city. Scholars who play statesmen, and editors who masquerade as scholars, can waste much excellent anxiety that clerks shall get no office until they know the exact date of Cæsar's assassination, as well as the latitude of Pekin, and the Rule of Three. But while this crusade—the temperance movement—has been, for sixty years, gathering its facts and marshaling its arguments, rallying parties, besieging legislatures and putting great states on the witness stand as evidence of the soundness of its methods, scholars have given it nothing but a sneer. But if universal suffrage ever fails here for a time—permanently it cannot fail—it will not be incapable civil service, nor an ambitious soldier, nor Southern vandals, nor venal legislatures, nor the greed of wealth, nor

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boy statesmen rotten before they are ripe, that will put universal suffrage into eclipse; it will be rum intrenched in great cities and commanding every vantage ground.

Social science affirms that woman's place in society marks the level of civilization. From its twilight in Greece, through the Italian worship of the Virgin, the dreams of chivalry, the justice of the civil law, and the equality of French society, we trace her gradual recognition; while our common law, as Lord Brougham confessed, was, with relation to women, the opprobrium of the age and of Christianity. For forty years, plain men and women, working noiselessly, have washed away that opprobrium; the statute books of thirty states have been remodeled, and woman stands today almost face to face with her last claim—the ballot. It has been a weary and thankless, though successful, struggle. But if there be any refuge from that ghastly curse, the vice of great cities—before which social science stands palsied and dumb—it is in this more equal recognition of woman. If, in this critical battle for universal suffrage—our fathers' noblest legacy to us, and the greatest trust God leaves in our hands—there be any weapon, which, once taken from the armory, will make victory certain, it will be, as it has been in art, literature, and society, summoning woman into the political arena.

But, at any rate, up to this point, putting suffrage aside, there can be no difference of opinion; everything born of Christianity, or allied to Grecian culture or Saxon law, must rejoice in the gain. The literary class, until half a dozen years, has taken note of this great uprising, only to fling every obstacle in its way. The first glimpse we get of Saxon blood in history is that line of Tacitus in his "Germany," which reads, "In all grave matters they consult their women." Years hence, when robust Saxon sense has flung away Jewish superstition and Eastern prejudice, and put under its foot fastidious scholarship and squeamish fashion, some second Tacitus, from the valley of the Mississippi, will answer to him of the Seven Hills, "In all grave questions we consult our women."

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I used to think that then we could say to letters as Henry of Navarre wrote to the Sir Philip Sidney of his realm, Crillon, "the bravest of the brave," "We have conquered at Arques, *et tu n'y étais pas, Crillon*"—"You were not there, my Crillon." But a second thought reminds me that what claims to be literature has been always present in that battlefield, and always in the ranks of the foe.

Ireland is another touchstone which reveals to us how absurdly we masquerade in democratic trappings while we have gone to seed in tory distrust of the people; false to every duty, which, as eldest born of democratic institutions, we owe to the oppressed, and, careless of the lesson, every such movement may be made in keeping public thought clear, keen, and fresh as to principles which are the essence of our civilization, the groundwork of all education in republics.

Sydney Smith said, "The moment Ireland is mentioned the English seem to bid adieu to common sense, and to act with the barbarity of tyrants and the fatuity of idiots." "As long as the patient will suffer, the cruel will kick. . . . If the Irish go on withholding and forbearing, and hesitating whether this is the time for discussion or that is the time, they will be laughed at another century as fools, and kicked for another century as slaves." Byron called England's union with Ireland "the union of the shark with his prey." Bentham's conclusion, from a survey of five hundred years of European history, was, "Only by making the ruling few uneasy can the oppressed many obtain a particle of relief." Edmund Burke—Burke, the noblest figure in the Parliamentary history of the last hundred years, greater than Cicero in the senate and almost Plato in the academy—Burke affirmed, a century ago, "Ireland has learnt at last that justice is to be had from England, only when demanded at the sword's point." And a century later, only last year Gladstone himself proclaimed in a public address in Scotland, "England never concedes anything to Ireland except when moved to do so by fear."

When we remember these admissions, we ought to clap our hands at every fresh Irish "outrage," as a parrot press styles it;

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aware that it is only a far-off echo of the musket shots that rattled against the Old State House on the 5th of March, 1770, and of the war whoop that made the tiny spire of the Old South tremble when Boston rioters emptied the three India tea ships into the sea—welcome evidence of living force and rare intelligence in the victim, and a sign that the day of deliverance draws each hour nearer. Cease ringing endless changes of eulogy on the men who made North's Boston port bill a failure while every leading journal sends daily over the water wishes for the success of Gladstone's copy of the bill for Ireland. If all rightful government rests on consent—if, as the French say, you "can do almost anything with a bayonet except sit on it"—be at least consistent, and denounce the man who covers Ireland with regiments to hold up a despotism, which, within twenty months, he has confessed rests wholly upon fear.

Then note the scorn and disgust with which we gather up our garments about us and disown the Sam Adams and William Prescott, the George Washington and John Brown, of St. Petersburg, the spiritual descendants, the living representatives, of those who make our history worth anything in the world's annals—the Nihilists.

Nihilism is the righteous and honorable resistance of a people crushed under an iron rule. Nihilism is evidence of life. When "order reigns in Warsaw," it is spiritual death. Nihilism is the last weapon of victims choked and manacled beyond all other resistance. It is crushed humanity's only means of making the oppressor tremble. God means that unjust power shall be insecure; and every move of the giant, prostrate in chains, whether it be to lift a single dagger or stir a city's revolt, is a lesson in justice. One might well tremble for the future of the race if such a despotism could exist without provoking the bloodiest resistance. I honor Nihilism; since it redeems human nature from the suspicion of being utterly vile, made up only of heartless oppressors and contented slaves. Every line in our history, every interest of civilization, bids us rejoice when the tyrant grows pale and the slave rebellious. We cannot but pity

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the suffering of any human being, however richly deserved; but such pity must not confuse our moral sense. Humanity gains. Chatham rejoiced when our fathers rebelled. For every single reason they alleged, Russia counts a hundred, each one ten times bitterer than any Hancock or Adams could give. Sam Johnson's standing toast in Oxford port was, "Success to the first insurrection of slaves in Jamaica," a sentiment Southey echoed. "Eschew cant," said that old moralist. But of all the cants that are canted in this canting world, though the cant of piety may be the worst, the cant of Americans bewailing Russian Nihilism is the most disgusting.

I know what reform needs, and all its needs, in a land where discussion is free, the press untrammeled, and where public halls protect debate. There, as Emerson says, "What the tender and poetic youth dreams today, and conjures up with inarticulate speech, is tomorrow the vociferated result of public opinion, and the day after is the charter of nations." Lieber said, in 1870, "Bismarck proclaims today in the Diet the very principles for which we were hunted and exiled fifty years ago." Submit to risk your daily bread, expect social ostracism, count on a mob now and then, "be in earnest, don't equivocate, don't excuse, don't retreat a single inch," and you will finally be heard. No matter how long and weary the waiting, at last—

> Ever the truth comes uppermost, and ever is justice done.
> For Humanity sweeps onward: where today the martyr stands,
> On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hands;
> Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling fagots burn,
> While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
> To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn.

In such a land he is doubly and trebly guilty who, except in some most extreme case, disturbs the sober rule of law and order.

But such is not Russia. In Russia there is no press, no debate, no explanation of what government does, no remonstrance allowed, no agitation of public issues. Dead silence, like that

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which reigns at the summit of Mont Blanc, freezes the whole empire, long ago described as "a despotism tempered by assassination." Meanwhile, such despotism has unsettled the brains of the ruling family, as unbridled power doubtless made some of the twelve Cæsars insane—a madman, sporting with the lives and comfort of a hundred million of men. The young girl whispers in her mother's ear, under a ceiled roof, her pity for a brother knouted and dragged half dead into exile for his opinions. The next week she is stripped naked, and flogged to death in the public square. No inquiry, no explanation, no trial, no protest, one dead uniform silence, the law of the tyrant. Where is there ground for any hope of peaceful change? Where the fulcrum upon which you can plant any possible lever?

Machiavelli's sorry picture of poor human nature would be fulsome flattery if men could keep still under such oppression. No, no! in such a land dynamite and the dagger are the necessary and proper substitutes for Faneuil Hall and *The Daily Advertiser*. Anything that will make the madman quake in his bed chamber, and rouse his victims into reckless and desperate resistance. This is the only view an American, the child of 1620 and 1776, can take of Nihilism. Any other unsettles and perplexes the ethics of our civilization.

Born within sight of Bunker Hill, in a commonwealth which adopts the motto of Algernon Sidney, *sub libertate quietem* ("accept no peace without liberty")—son of Harvard, whose first pledge was "Truth," citizen of a republic based on the claim that no government is rightful unless resting on the consent of the people, and which assumes to lead in asserting the rights of humanity—I at least can say nothing else and nothing less—no, not if every tile on Cambridge roofs were a devil hooting my words!

I shall bow to any rebuke from those who hold Christianity to command entire non-resistance. But criticism from any other quarter is only that nauseous hypocrisy, which, stung by threepenny tea tax, piles Bunker Hill with granite and statues, prating all the time of patriotism and broadswords, while, like

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another Pecksniff, it recommends a century of dumb submission and entire non-resistance to the Russians, who, for a hundred years, have seen their sons by thousands dragged to death or exile, no one knows which, in this worse than Venetian mystery of police, and their maidens flogged to death in the market place, and who share the same fate if they presume to ask the reason why.

"It is unfortunate," says Jefferson, "that the efforts of mankind to secure the freedom of which they have been deprived should be accompanied with violence and even with crime. But while we weep over the means, we must pray for the end." Pray fearlessly for such ends; there is no risk! "Men are all tories by nature," says Arnold, "when tolerably well off: only monstrous injustice and atrocious cruelty can rouse them." Some talk of the rashness of the uneducated classes. Alas! ignorance is far oftener obstinate than rash. Against one French Revolution—that scarecrow of the ages—weigh Asia, "carved in stone," and a thousand years of Europe, with her half dozen nations meted out and trodden down to be the dull and contented footstools of priests and kings. The customs of a thousand years ago are the sheet anchor of the passing generation, so deeply buried, so fixed, that the most violent efforts of the maddest fanatic can drag it but a hand's breadth.

Before the war Americans were like the crowd in that terrible hall of Eblis which Beckford painted for us—each man with his hand pressed on the incurable sore in his bosom, and pledged not to speak of it; compared with other lands, we were intellectually and morally a nation of cowards.

When I first entered the Roman States, a custom house official seized all my French books. In vain I held up to him a treatise by Fénelon, and explained that it was by a Catholic archbishop of Cambray. Gruffly he answered, "It makes no difference; *it is French.*" As I surrendered the volume to his remorseless grasp, I could not but honor the nation which had made its revolutionary purpose so definite that despotism feared its very language. I only wished that injustice and despotism

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everywhere might one day have as good cause to hate and to fear everything American.

At last that disgraceful seal of slave complicity is broken. Let us inaugurate a new departure, recognize that we are afloat on the current of Niagara—eternal vigilance the condition of our safety; that we are irrevocably pledged to the world not to go back to bolts and bars—could not if we would, and would not if we could. Never again be ours the fastidious scholarship that shrinks from rude contact with the masses. Very pleasant it is to sit high up in the world's theater and criticize the ungraceful struggles of the gladiators, shrug one's shoulders at the actors' harsh cries, and let everyone know that but for "this villainous saltpeter you would yourself have been a soldier." But Bacon says, "In the theater of man's life, God and his angels only should be lookers-on." "Sin is not taken out of man as Eve was out of Adam, by putting him to sleep." "Very beautiful," says Richter, "is the eagle when he floats with outstretched wings aloft in the clear blue; but sublime when he plunges down through the tempest to his eyry on the cliff, where his unfledged young ones dwell and are starving." Accept proudly the analysis of Fisher Ames: "A monarchy is a man-of-war, stanch, iron ribbed, and resistless when under full sail; yet a single hidden rock sends her to the bottom. Our republic is a raft, hard to steer, and your feet always wet; but nothing can sink her." If the Alps, piled in cold and silence, be the emblem of despotism, we joyfully take the ever-restless ocean for ours—only pure because never still.

Journalism must have more self-respect. Now it praises good and bad men so indiscriminately that a good word from nine-tenths of our journals is worthless. In burying our Aaron Burrs, both political parties—in order to get the credit of magnanimity—exhaust the vocabulary of eulogy so thoroughly that there is nothing left with which to distinguish our John Jays. The love of a good name in life and a fair reputation to survive us—that strong bond to well-doing—is lost where every career, however stained, is covered with the same fulsome flattery, and

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where what men say in the streets is the exact opposite of what they say to each other. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* most men translate, "Speak only good of the dead." I prefer to construe it, "Of the dead say nothing unless you can tell something good." And if the sin and the recreancy have been marked and far-reaching in their evil, even the charity of silence is not permissible.

To be as good as our fathers we must be better. They silenced their fears and subdued their prejudices, inaugurating free speech and equality with no precedent on the file. Europe shouted "Madmen!" and gave us forty years for the shipwreck. With serene faith they persevered. Let us rise to their level. Crush appetite and prohibit temptation if it rots great cities. Intrench labor in sufficient bulwarks against that wealth which, without the tenfold strength of modern incorporation, wrecked the Grecian and Roman States; and, with a sterner effort still, summon women into civil life as reënforcement to our laboring ranks in the effort to make our civilization a success.

Sit not, like the figure on our silver coin, looking ever backward.

> New occasions teach new duties; time makes ancient good uncouth;
> They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth;
> Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves must Pilgrims be,
> Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea,
> Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.

THE LEADERSHIP OF EDUCATED MEN[1]

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

There is a modern English picture which the genius of Hawthorne might have inspired. The painter calls it, "How they met themselves." A man and a woman, haggard and weary, wandering lost in a somber wood, suddenly meet the shadowy

[1] Delivered before the alumni of Brown University, Providence, June 20, 1882.

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figures of a youth and a maid. Some mysterious fascination fixes the gaze and stills the hearts of the wanderers, and their amazement deepens into awe as they gradually recognize themselves as once they were; the soft bloom of youth upon their rounded cheeks, the dewy light of hope in their trusting eyes, exulting confidence in their springing step, themselves blithe and radiant with the glory of the dawn. Today, and here, we meet ourselves. Not to these familiar scenes alone—yonder college green with its reverend traditions; the halcyon cove of the Seekonk, upon which the memory of Roger Williams broods like a bird of calm; the historic bay, beating forever with the muffled oars of Barton and of Abraham Whipple; here, the humming city of the living; there, the peaceful city of the dead —not to these only or chiefly do we return, but to ourselves as we once were. It is not the smiling freshmen of the year, it is your own beardless and unwrinkled faces, that are looking from the windows of University Hall and of Hope College. Under the trees upon the hill it is yourselves whom you see walking, full of hopes and dreams, glowing with conscious power, and "nourishing a youth sublime"; and in this familiar temple, which surely has never echoed with eloquence so fervid and inspiring as that of your commencement orations, it is not yonder youths in the galleries who, as they fondly believe, are whispering to yonder maids; it is your younger selves who, in the days that are no more, are murmuring to the fairest mothers and grandmothers of those maids.

Happy the worn and weary man and woman in the picture could they have felt their older eyes still glistening with that earlier light, and their hearts yet beating with undiminished sympathy and aspiration. Happy we, brethren, whatever may have been achieved, whatever left undone, if, returning to the home of our earlier years, we bring with us the illimitable hope, the unchilled resolution, the inextinguishable faith of youth.

It was as scholars that you were here; it is to the feeling and life of scholars that you return. I mean the scholar not as a specialist or deeply proficient student, not like Darwin, a con-

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queror greater than Alexander, who extended the empire of human knowledge; nor like Emerson, whose serene wisdom, a planet in the cloudless heaven, lighted the path of his age to larger spiritual liberty; nor like Longfellow, sweet singer of our national springtime, whose scholarship decorated his pure and limpid song as flowers are mirrored in a placid stream—not as scholars like these, but as educated men, to whom the dignity and honor and renown of the educated class are precious, however remote from study your lives may have been, you return to the annual festival of letters. "Neither years nor books," says Emerson, speaking of his own college days, "have yet availed to extirpate a prejudice then rooted in me that a scholar is the favorite of heaven and earth, the excellency of his country, the happiest of men."

But every educated man is aware of a profound popular distrust of the courage and sagacity of the educated class. Franklin and Lincoln are good enough for us, exclaims this jealous skepticism; as if Franklin and Lincoln did not laboriously repair by vigorous study the want of early opportunity. The scholar appealing to experience is proudly told to close his books, for what has America to do with experience? as if books were not the ever-burning lamps of accumulated wisdom. When Voltaire was insulted by the London mob, he turned at his door and complimented them upon the nobleness of their national character, their glorious constitution, and their love of liberty. The London mob did not feel the sarcasm. But when I hear that America may scorn experience because she is a law to herself, I remember that a few years ago a foreign observer came to the city of Washington, and said: "I did not fully comprehend your greatness until I saw your Congress. Then I felt that if you could stand that you could stand anything, and I understood the saying that God takes care of children, drunken men, and the United States."

The scholar is denounced as a coward. Humanity falls among thieves, we are told, and the college Levite, the educated Pharisee, pass by on the other side. Slavery undermines the

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Republic, but the clergy in America are the educated class, and the Church makes itself the bulwark of slavery. Strong drink slays its tens of thousands, but the educated class leaves the gospel of temperance to be preached by the ignorant and the enthusiast, as the English Establishment left the preaching of regeneration to Methodist itinerants in fields and barns. Vast questions cast their shadows upon the future: the just relations of capital and labor; the distribution of land; the towering power of corporate wealth; reform in administrative methods; but the educated class, says the critic, instead of advancing to deal with them promptly, wisely, and courageously, and settling them as morning dissipates the night, without a shock, leaves them to be kindled to fury by demagogues, lifts a panic cry of communism, and sinks paralyzed with terror. It is the old accusation. Erasmus was the great pioneer of modern scholarship. But in the fierce contest of the Reformation Luther denounced him as a timeserver and a coward. With the same feeling, Theodore Parker, the spiritual child of Luther, asked of Goethe, "Tell me, what did he ever do for the cause of man?" and when nothing remained for his country but the dread alternative of slavery or civil war, Parker exclaimed sadly of the class to which he belonged, "If our educated men had done their duty, we should not now be in the ghastly condition we bewail."

Gentlemen, we belong to the accused class. Its honor and dignity are very precious to us. Is this humiliating arraignment true? Does the educated class of America especially deserve this condemnation of political recreancy and moral cowardice? Faithless scholars, laggard colleges, bigoted pulpits, there may be; signal instances you may find of feebleness and pusillanimity. This has been always true. Leigh Hunt said, "I thought that my Horace and Demosthenes gave me a right to sit at table with any man, and I think so still." But when DeQuincey met Dr. Parr, who knew Horace and Demosthenes better than any man of his time, he described him as a lisping scandal-monger, retailing gossip fit only for washerwomen to hear. During the earthquake of the great civil war in Eng-

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land, Sir Thomas Browne sat tranquilly in scholarly seclusion, polishing the conceits of the "Urn Burial," and modulating the long-drawn music of the "Religio Medici." Looking at Browne and Parr, at Erasmus and Goethe, is it strange that scholars are impatiently derided as useless pedants or literary voluptuaries, and that the whole educated class is denounced as feeble and impracticable?

But remember what Coleridge said to Washington Alston, "Never judge a work of art by its defects." The proper comment to make upon recreant scholars is that of Brummell's valet upon the tumbled cambric in his hands, "These are our failures." Luther, impatient of the milder spirit of Erasmus and Colet and Sir Thomas More, might well have called them our failures, because he was of their class, and while they counseled moderation, his fiery and impetuous soul sought to seize triple-crowned error and drag it from its throne. But Luther was no less a scholar, and stands equally with them for the scholarly class and the heroism of educated men. Even Erasmus said of him with friendly wit, "He has hit the Pope on the crown and the monks on the belly." If the cowled scholars of the Church rejected him, and universities under their control renounced and condemned him, yet Luther is justified in saying, as he sweeps his hand across them and speaks for himself and for the scholars who stood with him, "These are not our representatives; these are our failures."

So on our side of the sea the educated body of Puritan Massachusetts Bay, the clergy and the magistrates, drove Roger Williams from their borders—Roger Williams, also a scholar and a clergyman, and, with John Milton, the bright consummate flower of Puritanism. But shall not he stand for the scholar rather than Cotton Mather, torturing terrified old women to death as witches! I appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober—from the scholarship that silenced Mrs. Hutchinson and hung Mary Dyer and pressed Giles Corey to death, to the scholarship that argued with George Fox and founded a political commonwealth upon soul-liberty. A year ago I sat with my brethren of

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the Phi Beta Kappa at Cambridge, and seemed to catch echoes of Edmund Burke's resounding impeachment of Warren Hastings in the sparkling denunciation of the timidity of American scholarship. Under the spell of Burke's burning words Hastings half believed himself to be the villain he heard described. But the scholarly audience of the scholarly orator of the Phi Beta Kappa, with an exquisite sense of relief, felt every count of his stinging indictment recoil upon himself. He was the glowing refutation of his own argument. Gentleman, scholar, orator—his is the courage that never quailed; his the white plume of Navarre that flashed meteor-like in the front of battle; his the Amphion music of an eloquence that leveled the more than Theban walls of American slavery. At once judge, culprit, and accuser, in the noble record of his own life he and his class are triumphantly acquitted.

Must we count such illustrations as exceptions? But how can we do so when we see that the Reformation, the mental and moral new birth of Christendom, was the work of the educated class? Follow the movement of liberty in detail, and still the story is the same. The great political contest in England, inspired by the Reformation, was directed by university men. John Pym in the Commons, John Hampden in the field, John Milton in the Cabinet—three Johns, and all of them well-beloved disciples of liberty—with the grim Oliver himself, purging England of royal despotism, and avenging the slaughtered saints on Alpine mountains cold, were all of them children of Oxford and Cambridge. In the next century, like a dawn lurid but bright, the French Revolution broke upon the world. But the only hope of a wise direction of the elemental forces that upheaved France vanished when the educated leadership lost control, and Marat became the genius and the type of the Revolution. Ireland also bears witness. As its apostle and tutelary saint was a scholar, so its long despair of justice has found its voice and its hand among educated Irishmen. Swift and Molyneux, and Flood and Grattan and O'Connell, Duffy, and the young enthusiasts around Thomas Davis who sang of

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an Erin that never was and dreamed of an Ireland that cannot be, were men of the colleges and the schools, whose long persistence of tongue and pen fostered the life of their country and gained for her all that she has won. For modern Italy, let Silvio Pellico and Foresti and Maroncelli answer. It was Italian education which Austria sought to smother, and it was not less Cavour than Garibaldi who gave constitutional liberty to Italy. When Germany sank at Jena under the heel of Napoleon, and Stein—whom Napoleon hated, but could not appal—asked if national life survived, the answer rang from the universities, and from them modern Germany came forth. With prophetic impulse Theodore Koerner called his poems "The Lyre and the Sword," for, like the love which changed the sea-numph into the harp, the fervent patriotism of the educated youth of Germany turned the poet's lyre into the soldier's victorious sword. In the splendor of our American day let us remember and honor our brethren, first in every council, dead upon every field of freedom from the Volga to the Rhine, from John o' Groat's to the Adriatic, who have steadily drawn Europe from out the night of despotism, and have vindicated for the educated class the leadership of modern civilization.

Here in America, where as yet there are no ruins save those of ancient wrongs, undoubtedly New England has inspired and molded our national life. But if New England has led the Union, what has led New England? Her scholarly class. Her educated men. And our Roger Williams gave the keynote. "He has broached and divulged new and dangerous opinions against the authority of magistrates," said Massachusetts as she banished him. A century later his dangerous opinions had captured Massachusetts. Young Sam Adams, taking his master's degree at Cambridge, argued that it was lawful to resist the supreme magistrate if the State could not otherwise be preserved. He was a college stripling. But seven years afterward, in 1750, the chief pulpit orator in New England, Jonathan Mayhew, preached in Boston the famous sermon which Thornton called the morning gun of the Revolution, applying to the political

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situation the principles of Roger Williams. The New England pulpit echoed and reëchoed that morning gun, arousing the country, and twenty-five years later its warning broke into the rattle of musketry at Lexington and Concord and the glorious thunder of Bunker Hill.

It was a son of Harvard, James Otis, who proposed the assembly of an American congress without asking the king's leave. It was a son of Yale, John Morin Scott, who declared that if taxation without representation were to be enforced, the colonies ought to separate from England. It was a group of New York scholars, John Jay and Scott and the Livingstones, which spoke for the colony in response to the Boston Port Bill and proposed the Continental Congress. It was a New England scholar in that Congress, whom Rufus Choate declared to be the distinctive and comprehensive orator of the Revolution, John Adams, who, urging every argument, touching every stop of passion, pride, tenderness, interest, conscience, and lofty indignation, swept up his country as into a chariot of fire and soared to independence.

I do not forget that Virginian tongue of flame, Patrick Henry, nor that patriotism of the field and fireside which recruited the Sons of Liberty. The inspiring statue of the Minute Man at Concord—and a nobler memorial figure does not stand upon our soil—commemorates the spirit that left the plow standing in the furrow, that drew Nathaniel Greene from his anvil and Esek Hopkins from his farm; the spirit that long before had sent the poor parishioners of Scrooby to Holland, and filled the victorious ranks of the Commonwealth at Naseby and at Marston Moor. But in America as in England they were educated men who were in the pulpit, on the platform, and, through the press, conducted the mighty preliminary argument of the Revolution, defended the ancient traditions of English liberty against reactionary England, aroused the colonists to maintain the cause of human nature, and led them from the Gaspee and Bunker Hill across the plains of Saratoga, the snows of Valley Forge, the sands of Monmouth, the hills of Carolina, until at

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Yorktown once more the king surrendered to the people, and educated America had saved constitutional liberty.

In the next brief and critical period, when through the travail of a half-anarchical confederation the independent States, always instinctively tending to union, rose into a rural constitutional republic, the good genius of America was still the educated mind of the country. Of the fifty-five members of the Convention, which Bancroft, changing the poet's line, calls "the goodliest fellowship of lawgivers whereof this world holds record," thirty-three were college graduates, and the eight leaders of the great debate were all college men. The Convention adjourned, and while, from out the strong hand of George Clinton, Hamilton, the son of Columbia, drew New York into the Union, that placid son of Princeton, James Madison, withstanding the fiery energy of Patrick Henry, placed Virginia by her side. Then Columbia and Princeton, uniting in Hamilton, Jay, and Madison, interpreted the Constitution in that greatest of commentaries, which, as the dome crowns the Capitol, completed the majestic argument which long before the sons of Harvard had begun. Take away the scholarly class from the discussion that opened the Revolution, from the deliberations that guided it, from the debates of the Constitutional Convention that ended it—would the advance of America have been more triumphant? Would the guarantees of individual liberty, of national union, of a common prosperity, have been more surely established? The critics laughed at the pictured grapes as unnatural. But the painter was satisfied when the birds came and pecked at them. Daily the educated class is denounced as impracticable and visionary. But the Constitution of the United States is the work of American scholars.

Doubtless the leaders expressed a sentiment which was shared by the men and women around them. But it was they who had formed and fostered that sentiment. They were not the puppets of the crowd, light weathercocks which merely showed the shifting gusts of popular feeling. They did not follow what they could not resist, and make their voices the tardy echo of a

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thought they did not share. They were not dainty and feeble hermits because they were educated men. They were equal citizens with the rest; men of strong convictions and persuasive speech, who showed their brethren what they ought to think and do. That is the secret of leadership. It is not servility to the mob, it is not giving vehement voice to popular frenzy, that makes a leader. That makes a demagogue; Cleon, not Pericles; Catiline, not Cicero. Leadership is the power of kindling a sympathy and trust which all will eagerly follow. It is the genius that molds the lips of the stony Memnon to such sensitive life that the first sunbeam of opportunity strikes them into music. In a great crisis it is thinking so as to make others think, feeling so as to make others feel, which tips the orator's tongue with fire that lights as well as burns. So when Lord Chatham stood at the head of England organizing her victories by land and sea, and told in Parliament their splendid story, his glowing form was Britain's self, and the roar of British guns and the proud acclamation of British hearts all around the globe flashed and thundered in his eloquence. "This is a glorious morning," said the scholar Samuel Adams, with a price set on his head, as he heard the guns at Lexington. "Dulce et decorum est," said the young scholar Joseph Warren gayly, as he passed to his death on Bunker Hill. They spoke for the lofty enthusiasm of patriotism which they had kindled. It was not a mob, an ignorant multitude swayed by a mysterious impulse; it was a body of educated men, wise and heroic because they were educated, who lifted this country to independence and laid deep and strong the foundations of the Republic.

Is this less true of the maintenance and development of the government? Thirty years ago, walking on the Cliff at Newport with Mr. Bancroft, I asked him to what point he proposed to continue his history. He answered: "If I were an artist painting a picture of this ocean, my work would stop at the horizon. I can see no further. My history will end with the adoption of the Constitution. All beyond that is experiment." This was long ago. But the Republic is an experiment no

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longer. It has been strained to the utmost along the very vital fiber of its frame, and it has emerged from the ordeal recreated. Happy venerable historian, who has survived both to witness the triumph of the experiment, and to complete his stately story to the very point which he contemplated thirty years ago! He has reached what was then the horizon, and may a gracious Providence permit him yet to depict the new and further and radiant prospect which he and all his countrymen behold!

In achieving this great result has educated America been sluggish or skeptical or cowardly? The Constitution was but ten years old when the author of the Declaration of Independence, speaking with great authority and for a great party, announced that the Constitution was a compact of which every State must judge for itself both the fact of violation and the mode of redress. Jefferson sowed dragon's teeth in the fresh soil of the young Union. He died, but the armed men appeared. The whole course of our politics for nearly a century was essentially revolutionary. Beneath all specific measures and party policies lay the supreme question of the nature of the government which Jefferson had raised. Is the Union a league or a nation? Are we built upon the solid earth or unstably encamped, like Sinbad's company, upon the back of a sea-monster which may dive at any moment? Until this doubt was settled there could be no peace. Yet the question lay in our politics only like the far black cloud along the horizon, flashing and muttering scarce heard thunders until the slavery agitation began. That was a debate which devoured every other, until the slave power, foiled in the hope of continental empire, pleaded Jefferson's theory of the Constitution as an argument for national dissolution. This was the third great crisis of the country, and in the tremendous contention, as in the war that followed, was the American scholar recreant and dumb?

I do not ask, for it is not necessary, whether in the ranks of the powerful host that resisted agitation there were not scholars and educated men. I do not ask whether the educated or any other class alone maintained the fight, nor whether there were

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not unquailing leaders who were not educated men, nor whether all were first, or all approved the same methods, or all were equally wise or equally zealous. Of course, I make no exclusive claim. I do not now speak of men like Garrison, whose name is that of a great patriot and a great human benefactor, and whose sturdy leadership was that of an old Hebrew prophet. But was the great battle fought and won while we and our guild stood passive and hostile by?

The slavery agitation began with the moral appeal, and as in the dawn of the Revolution educated America spoke in the bugle note of James Otis, so in the moral onset of the anti-slavery agitation rings out the clear voice of a son of Otis's college, himself the Otis of the later contest, Wendell Phillips. By his side, in the stormy dawn of the movement, stands a grandson of Quincy of the Revolution, and among the earliest antislavery leaders is more than a proportionate part of liberally educated men. In Congress the commanding voice for freedom was that of the most learned, experienced, and courageous of American statesmen, the voice of a scholar and an old college professor, John Quincy Adams. Whittier's burning words scattered the sacred fire, Longfellow and Lowell mingled their songs with his, and Emerson gave to the cause the loftiest scholarly heart in the Union. And while Parker's and Beecher's pulpits echoed Jonathan Mayhew's morning gun and fired words like cannon-balls, in the highest pulpit of America, foremost among the champions of liberty stood the slight and radiant figure of the scholarly son of Rhode Island, upon whom more than upon any of her children the mantle of Roger Williams had worthily fallen, William Ellery Channing.

When the national debate was angriest, it was the scholar of the Senate of the United States who held highest in his undaunted hands the flag of humanity and his country. While others bowed and bent and broke around him, the form of Charles Sumner towered erect. Commerce and trade, the mob of the clubs and of the street, hissed and sneered at him as a pedantic dreamer and fanatic. No kind of insult and defiance

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was spared. But the unbending scholar revealed to the haughty foe an antagonist as proud and resolute as itself. He supplied what the hour demanded, a sublime faith in liberty, the uncompromising spirit which interpreted the Constitution and the statutes for freedom and not for slavery. The fiery agitation became bloody battle. Still he strode on before. "I am only six weeks behind you," said Abraham Lincoln, the Western frontiersman, to the New England scholar; and along the path that the scholar blazed in the wild wilderness of civil war, the path of emancipation, and the constitutional equality of all citizens, his country followed fast to union, peace, and prosperity. The public service of this scholar was not less than that of any of his predecessors or any of his contemporaries. Criticize him as you will, mark every shadow you can find,

> Though round his base the rolling clouds are spread,
> Eternal sunshine settles on his head.

It would indeed be a sorrowful confession for this day and this assembly, to own that experience proves the air of the college to be suffocating to generous thought and heroic action. Here it would be especially unjust, for what son of this college does not proudly remember that when, in the Revolution, Rhode Island was the seat of war, the college boys left the recitation room for the field, and the college became a soldiers' barrack and hospital? And what son of any college in the land, what educated American, does not recall with grateful pride that legion of college youth in our own day—"Integer vitae scelerisque purus"—who were not cowards or sybarites because they were scholars, but whose consecration to the cause of country and man vindicated the words of John Milton, "A complete and generous education is that which fits a man to perform justly, skillfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war"? That is the praise of the American scholar. The glory of this day and of this commencement season is that the pioneers, the courageous and independent leaders in public affairs, the great apostles of

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religious and civil liberty, have been, in large part, educated men, sustained by the sympathy of the educated class.

But this is not true of the past alone. As educated America was the constructive power, so it is still the true conservative force of the Republic. It is decried as priggish and theoretical. But so Richard Henry Lee condemned the Constitution as the work of visionaries. They are always called visionaries who hold that morality is stronger than a majority. Goldwin Smith says that Cobden felt that at heart England was a gentleman and not a bully. So thinks the educated American of his own country. He has faith enough in the people to appeal to them against themselves, for he knows that the cardinal condition of popular government is the ability of the people to see and correct their own errors. In a Republic, as the majority must control action, the majority tends constantly to usurp control of opinion. Its decree is accepted as the standard of right and wrong. To differ is grotesque and eccentric. To protest is preposterous. To defy is incendiary and revolutionary. But just here interposes educated intelligence, and asserts the worth of self-reliance and the power of the individual. Gathering the wisdom of ages as into a sheaf of sunbeams, it shows that progress springs from the minority, and that if it will but stand fast, time will give it victory.

It is the educated voice of the country which teaches patience in politics and strengthens the conscience of the individual citizen by showing that servility to a majority is as degrading as servility to a Sultan or a Grand Lama. Emerson said that of all his friends he honored none more than a quiet old Quaker lady who, if she said yea and the whole world said nay, still said yea. One of the pleasantest stories of Garfield is that of his speech to his constituents in which he quaintly vindicated his own independence. "I would do anything to win your regard," he said, "but there is one man whose good opinion I must have above all, and without whose approval I can do nothing. That is the man with whom I get up every morning and go to bed every night, whose thoughts are my thoughts, whose prayers are

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my prayers; I cannot buy your confidence at the cost of his respect." Never was the scholarly Garfield so truly a man, so patriotically an American, and his constituents were prouder than ever of their representative who complimented them by asserting his own manhood.

It is the same voice which exposes the sophists who mislead the mob and pitilessly scourges the demagogues who flatter it. "All men know more than any man," haughtily shout the larger and lesser Talleyrands. That is a French epigram, replies the scholar, but not a general truth. A crowd is not wiser than the wisest man in it. For the purposes of the voyage the crew does not know more than the master of the ship. The Boston town meeting was not more sagacious than Sam Adams. "Vox populi vox Dei," screams the foaming rhetoric of the stump; the voice of the people is the voice of God. The voice of the people in London, says history, declared against street lamps and denounced inoculation as wanton wickedness. The voice of the people in Paris demanded the head of Charlotte Corday. The voice of the people in Jerusalem cried, "Away with him! crucify him! crucify him!" "God is on the side of the strongest battalions," sneers the party swindler who buys a majority with money or place. On the contrary, answers the cool critic, reading history and interpreting its lessons, God was with Leonidas, and not with Xerxes. He was with the exile John Robinson at Leyden, not with Laud and the hierarchy at Westminister.

Despite Napoleon, even battles are not sums in arithmetic. Strange that a general, half of whose success was due to a sentiment, the glory of France, which welded his army into a thunderbolt, and still burns for us in the fervid song of Béranger, should have supposed that it is numbers and not conviction and enthusiasm which win the final victory. The career of no man in our time illustrates this truth more signally than Garibaldi's. He was the symbol of the sentiment which the wise Cavour molded into a nation, and he will be always canonized more universally than any other Italian patriot, because no other represents so purely and simply to the national imagination the

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Italian ideal of patriotic devotion. His enthusiasm of conviction made no calculation of defeat, because while he could be baffled, he could not be beaten. It was a stream flowing from a mountain height, which might be delayed or diverted, but knew instinctively that it must reach the sea. "Italia fará da se." Garibaldi was that faith incarnate, and the prophecy is fulfilled. Italy, more proud than stricken, bears his bust to the capitol, and there the eloquent marble will say, while Rome endures, that one man with God, with country, with duty and conscience, is at last the majority.

But, still further, it is educated citizenship which, while defining the rightful limitation of the power of the majority, is most loyal to its legitimate authority, and foremost always in rescuing it from the treachery of political peddlers and parasites. The rural statesmen who founded the Republic saw in vision a homogeneous and intelligent community, the peace and prosperity and intelligence of the State reflected in the virtue and wisdom of the government. But is this our actual America or a glimpse of Arcadia? Is this the United States or Plato's Republic or Harrington's Oceana or Sir Thomas More's Utopia? What are the political maxims of the hour? In Rome, do as the Romans do. Fight fire with fire. Beat the devil with his own weapons. Take men as they are, and don't affect superior goodness. Beware of the politics of the moon and of Sunday-school statesmanship. This is our current political wisdom and the results are familiar. "This is a nasty State," cries the eager partizan, "and I hope we have done nasty work enough to carry it." "The conduct of the opposition," says another, "was infamous. They resorted to every kind of base and contemptible means, and, thank God, we have beaten them at their own game." The majority is overthrown by the political machinery intended to secure its will. The machinery is oiled by corruption and grinds the honest majority to powder. And it is educated citizenship, the wisdom and energy of men who are classed as prigs, pedants, and impracticables, which is first and most efficient in breaking the machinery and releasing the majority.

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It was this which rescued New York from Tweed, and which everywhere challenges and demolishes a Tweed tyranny by whatever name it may be known.

Every year at the college commencement the American scholar is exhorted to do his duty. But every newspaper proves that he is doing it. For he is the most practical politician who shows his fellow citizens, as the wise old sailor told his shipmates, that "God has somehow so fixed the world that a man can afford to do about right." Take from the country at this moment the educated power, which is contemned as romantic and sentimental, and you would take from the army its general, from the ship its compass, from national action its moral mainspring. It is not the demagogue and the shouting rabble; it is the people heeding the word of the thinker and the lesson of experience, which secures the welfare of the American republic and enlarges human liberty. If American scholarship is not in place, it is in power. If it does not carry the election today, it determines the policy of tomorrow. Calm, patient, confident, heroic, in our busy and material life it perpetually vindicates the truth that the things which are unseen are eternal. So in the cloudless midsummer sky serenely shines the moon, while the tumultuous ocean rolls and murmurs beneath, the type of illimitable and unbridled power; but, resistlessly marshaled by celestial laws, all the wild waters, heaving from pole to pole, rise and recede, obedient to the mild queen of heaven.

Brethren of Brown, we have come hither as our fathers came, as our children will come, to renew our observation of that celestial law; and here, upon the old altar of fervid faith and boundless anticipation, let us pledge ourselves once more that, as the courage and energy of educated men fired the morning gun and led the contest of the Revolution, founded and framed the Union, and, purifying it as with fire, have maintained the national life to this hour, so, day by day, we will do our part to lift America above the slough of mercenary politics and the cunning snares of trade, steadily forward toward the shining heights which the hopes of its nativity foretold.

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TRANSLATING HOMER

[The subject is an old one, but these two essays present new aspects of it. Whether Mr. Leacock was replying to Lang's argument or not remains untold. He seems to have been. Each essay gives its author's own experience with Homer and then applies the lesson thus learned to the case of others. Both writers illustrate by parodies, but the parodies are very different. Lang, after parodying with notable deftness the mannerisms of distinguished classicists who have tried to translate Homer, declares at last that Homer is untranslatable in either English prose or English verse. Isn't that a concession to the opposition? Lang, it is true, is pleading for Homer himself, not for translations, except as translations bring us to Homer. But can you know Homer or any other non-English author except in a translation? It may be your own translation; it may not be put into words; it may be an unspoken pleasure that comes to you as you commune, or think you do, with the text of Homer before you. But there must be a translation, a transference of thought and emotion; and this transference, if probed to its center, will be found to consist of English words, phrases, and sentences. That is the only Homer that you will ever know, and Lang's untranslatable Homer will remain forever a sealed book to you. And yet Lang thinks that you should begin the study of Greek with Homer. He hated Greek till he opened the Iliad. From the very first words it was all a revel of delight,—a real experience, of course, but so exceptional, so inexplicable on Lang's own hypothesis, as to exert little influence on others.

Mr. Leacock's picture of Ajax as he rushes to battle via the modern schoolroom is so perfect a reproduction of my own experience (and of yours?) that it cannot be called a parody. His parodies come later. But if the greatest Hellenists cannot translate Homer and if the schoolboy, who is supposed to date his love of Greek from his first joyous contact with the Iliad, makes an unconscious joke of it, in what does Homer's supreme fitness for the schoolroom consist?

The case of the classics will always be debatable. Let us admit that the study of Greek is excellent both for results and for discipline. The crux of the problem is, Are there not other studies that are richer in results and discipline? Our school curricula are short; and the question is

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not whether the time at our disposal can be well given to Greek, but whether it cannot be better given to some other language, to some other literature, to the problems of self-government, to harmonizing the clash between individualism and crowd-mindedness, or to the expanding domain of modern science.]

HOMER AND THE STUDY OF GREEK[1]

ANDREW LANG

The Greek language is being ousted from education, here, in France, and in America. The speech of the earliest democracies is not democratic enough for modern anarchy. There is nothing to be gained, it is said, by a knowledge of Greek. We have not to fight the battle of life with Hellenic waiters; and, even if we had, Romaic, or modern Greek, is much more easily learned than the old classical tongue. The reason of this comparative ease will be plain to anyone who, retaining a vague memory of his Greek grammar, takes up a modern Greek newspaper. He will find that the idioms of the modern newspaper are the idioms of all newspapers, that the grammar is the grammar of modern languages, that the opinions are expressed in barbarous translations of barbarous French and English journalistic *clichés* or commonplaces. This ugly and undignified mixture of the ancient Greek characters and of ancient Greek words with modern grammar and idioms, and stereotyped phrases, is extremely distasteful to the scholar. Modern Greek, as it is at present printed, is not the natural spoken language of the peasants. You can read a Greek leading article, though you can hardly make sense of a Greek rural ballad. The peasant speech is a thing of slow development; there is a basis of ancient Greek in it, with large elements of Slavonic, Turkish, Italian, and other imposed or imported languages. Modern literary Greek is a hybrid of revived classical words, blended with the idioms of the speeches which have arisen since the fall of the Roman Empire. Thus, thanks to the modern and familiar element in

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it, modern Greek "as she is writ" is much more easily learned than ancient Greek. Consequently, if anyone has need for the speech in business or travel, he can acquire as much of it as most of us have of French, with considerable ease. People therefore argue that ancient Greek is particularly superfluous in schools. Why waste time on it, they ask, which could be expended on science, on modern languages, or any other branch of education? There is a great deal of justice in this position. The generation of men who are now middle-aged bestowed much time and labor on Greek; and in what, it may be asked, are they better for it? Very few of them "keep up their Greek." Say, for example, that one was in a form of fifty boys who began the study, it is odds against five of the survivors still reading Greek books. The worldly advantages of the study are slight: it may lead three of the fifty to a good degree, and one to a fellowship; but good degrees may be taken in other subjects, and fellowships may be abolished, or "nationalized," with all other forms of property.

Then, why maintain Greek in schools? Only a very minute percentage of the boys who are tormented with it really learn it. Only a still smaller percentage can read it after they are thirty. Only one or two gain any material advantage by it. In very truth, most minds are not framed by nature to excel and to delight in literature, and only to such minds and to schoolmasters is Greek valuable.

This is the case against Greek put as powerfully as one can state it. On the other side, we may say, though the remark may seem absurd at first sight, that to have mastered Greek, even if you forget it, is not to have wasted time. It really is an educational and mental discipline. The study is so severe that it needs the earnest application of the mind. The study is averse to indolent intellectual ways; it will not put up with a "there or thereabouts," any more than mathematical ideas admit of being made to seem "extremely plausible." He who writes, and who may venture to offer himself as an example, is naturally of a most slovenly and slatternly mental habit. It is his constant

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temptation to "scamp" every kind of work, and to say "it will do well enough." He hates taking trouble and verifying references. And he can honestly confess that nothing in his experience has so helped, in a certain degree, to counteract those tendencies as the labor of thoroughly learning certain Greek texts —the dramatists, Thucydides, some of the books of Aristotle. Experience has satisfied him that Greek is of real educational value, and, apart from the acknowledged and unsurpassed merit of its literature, is a severe and logical training of the mind. The mental constitution is strengthened and braced by the labor, even if the language is forgotten in later life.

It is manifest, however, that this part of education is not for everybody. The real educational problem is to discover what boys Greek will be good for, and what boys will only waste time and dawdle over it. Certainly to men of a literary turn (a very minute percentage), Greek is of an inestimable value. Great poets, even, may be ignorant of it, as Shakespeare probably was, as Keats and Scott certainly were, as Alexandre Dumas was. But Dumas regretted his ignorance; Scott regretted it. We know not how much Scott's admitted laxity of style and hurried careless habit might have been modified by a knowledge of Greek; how much of grace, permanence, and generally of art, his genius might have gained from the language and literature of Hellas. The most Homeric of modern men could not read Homer. As for Keats, he was born a Greek, it has been said; but had he been born with a knowledge of Greek, he never, probably, would have been guilty of his chief literary faults. This is not certain, for some modern men of letters deeply read in Greek have all the qualities of fustian and effusiveness which Longinus most despised. Greek will not make a luxuriously Asiatic mind Hellenic, it is certain; but it may, at least, help to restrain effusive and rhetorical gabble. Our Asiatic rhetoricians might perhaps be even more barbarous than they are if Greek were a sealed book to them. However this may be, it is, at least, well to find out in a school what boys are worth instructing in the Greek language. Now, of their worthiness, of

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their chances of success in the study, Homer seems the best touchstone; and he is certainly the most attractive guide to the study.

At present boys are introduced to the language of the Muses by pedantically written grammars, full of the queerest and most arid metaphysical and philological verbiage. The very English in which these deplorable books are composed may be scientific, may be comprehensible by and useful to philologists, but is utterly heartbreaking to boys.

Philology might be made fascinating; the history of a word, and of the processes by which its different forms, in different senses, were developed, might be made as interesting as any other story of events. But grammar is not taught thus: boys are introduced to a jargon about matters meaningless, and they are naturally as much enchanted as if they were listening to a *chimæra bombinans in vacuo*. The grammar, to them, is a mere buzz in a chaos of nonsense. They have to learn the buzz by rote; and a pleasant process that is—a seductive initiation into the mysteries. When they struggle so far as to be allowed to try to read a piece of Greek prose, they are only like the Marchioness in her experience of beer: she once had a sip of it. Ten lines of Xenophon, narrating how he marched so many parasangs and took breakfast, do not amount to more than a very unrefreshing sip of Greek. Nobody even tells the boys who Xenophon was, what he did there, and what it was all about. Nobody gives a brief and interesting sketch of the great march, of its history and objects. The boys straggle along with Xenophon, knowing not whence or whither:

> They stray through a desolate region,
> And often are faint on the march.

One by one they fall out of the ranks; they mutiny against Xenophon; they murmur against that commander; they desert his flag. They determine that anything is better than Greek, that nothing can be worse than Greek, and they move the tender hearts of their parents. They are put to learn German; which

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they do not learn, unluckily, but which they find it comparatively easy to shirk. In brief, they leave school without having learned anything whatever.

Up to a certain age my experiences at school were precisely those which I have described. Our grammar was not so philological, abstruse, and arid as the instruments of torture employed at present. But I hated Greek with a deadly and sickening hatred; I hated it like a bully and a thief of time. The verbs in μι completed my intellectual discomfiture; and Xenophon routed me with horrible carnage. I could have run away to sea, but for a strong impression that a life on the ocean wave "did not set my genius," as Alan Breck says. Then we began to read Homer; and from the very first words, in which the Muse is asked to sing the wrath of Achilles, Peleus' son, my mind was altered, and I was the devoted friend of Greek. Here was something worth reading about; here one knew where one was; here was the music of words, here were poetry, pleasure, and life. We fortunately had a teacher (Dr. Hodson) who was not wildly enthusiastic about grammar. He would set us long pieces of the Iliad or Odyssey to learn, and, when the day's task was done, would make us read on, adventuring ourselves in "the unseen," and construing as gallantly as we might, without grammar or dictionary. On the following day we surveyed more carefully the ground we had pioneered or skirmished over, and then advanced again. Thus, to change the metaphor, we took Homer in large draughts, not in sips: in sips no epic can be enjoyed. We now reveled in Homer like Keats in Spenser, like young horses let loose in a pasture. The result was not the making of many accurate scholars, though a few were made; others got nothing better than enjoyment in their work, and the firm belief, opposed to that of most schoolboys, that the ancients did not write nonsense. To love Homer, as Steele said about loving a fair lady of quality, "is a liberal education."

Judging from this example, I venture very humbly to think that anyone who, even at the age of Cato, wants to learn Greek, should begin where Greek literature, where all profane litera-

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ture begins—with Homer himself. It was thus, not with grammars *in vacuo*, that the great scholars of the Renaissance began. It was thus that Ascham and Rabelais began, by jumping into Greek and splashing about till they learned to swim. First, of course, a person must learn the Greek characters. Then his or her tutor may make him read a dozen lines of Homer, marking the cadence, the surge and thunder of the hexameters—a music which, like that of the Sirens, few can hear without being lured to the seas and isles of song. Then the tutor might translate a passage of moving interest, like Priam's appeal to Achilles; first, of course, explaining the situation. Then the teacher might go over some lines, minutely pointing out how the Greek words are etymologically connected with many words in English. Next, he might take a substantive and a verb, showing roughly how their inflections arose and were developed, and how they retain forms in Homer which do not occur in later Greek. There is no reason why even this part of the lesson should be uninteresting. By this time a pupil would know, more or less, where he was, what Greek is, and what the Homeric poems are like. He might thus believe from the first that there are good reasons for knowing Greek; that it is the key to many worlds of life, of action, of beauty, of contemplation, of knowledge. Then, after a few more exercises in Homer, the grammar being judiciously worked in along with the literature of the epic, a teacher might discern whether it was worth while for his pupils to continue in the study of Greek. Homer would be their guide into the "realms of gold."

It is clear enough that Homer is the best guide. His is the oldest extant Greek, his matter is the most various and delightful, and most appeals to the young, who are wearied by scraps of Xenophon, and who cannot be expected to understand the Tragedians. But Homer is a poet for all ages, all races, and all moods. To the Greeks the epics were not only the best of romances, the richest of poetry; not only their oldest documents about their own history,—they were also their Bible, their treasury of religious traditions and moral teaching. With

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the Bible and Shakespeare, the Homeric poems are the best training for life. There is no good quality that they lack: manliness, courage, reverence for old age and for the hospitable hearth; justice, piety, pity, a brave attitude towards life and death, are all conspicuous in Homer. He has to write of battles; and he delights in the joy of battle, and in all the movement of war. Yet he delights not less, but more, in peace: in prosperous cities, hearths secure, in the tender beauty of children, in the love of wedded wives, in the frank nobility of maidens, in the beauty of earth and sky and sea, and seaward murmuring river, in sun and snow, frost and mist and rain, in the whispered talk of boy and girl beneath oak and pine tree.

Living in an age where every man was a warrior, where every city might know the worst of sack and fire, where the noblest ladies might be led away for slaves, to light the fire and make the bed of a foreign master, Homer inevitably regards life as a battle. To each man on earth comes "the wicked day of destiny," as Malory unconsciously translates it, and each man must face it as hardily as he may.

Homer encourages them by all the maxims of chivalry and honor. His heart is with the brave of either side—with Glaucus and Sarpedon of Lycia no less than with Achilles and Patroclus. "Ah, friend," cries Sarpedon, "if once escaped from this battle we were forever to be ageless and immortal, neither would I myself fight now in the foremost ranks, neither would I urge thee into the wars that give renown; but now—for assuredly ten thousand fates of death on every side beset us, and these may no man shun, nor none avoid—forward now let us go, whether we are to give glory or to win it!" And forth they go, to give and take renown and death, all the shields and helms of Lycia shining behind them, through the dust of battle, the singing of the arrows, the hurtling of spears, the rain of stones from the Locrian slings. And shields are smitten, and chariot horses run wild with no man to drive them, and Sarpedon drags down a portion of the Achæan battlement, and Aias leaps into the trench with his deadly spear, and the whole battle shifts and

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shines beneath the sun. Yet he who sings of the war, and sees it with his sightless eyes, sees also the Trojan women working at the loom, cheating their anxious hearts with broidery work of gold and scarlet, or raising the song to Athene, or heating the bath for Hector, who never again may pass within the gates of Troy. He sees the poor weaving woman, weighing the wool, that she may not defraud her employers, and yet may win bread for her children. He sees the children, the golden head of Astyanax, his shrinking from the splendor of the hero's helm. He sees the child Odysseus, going with his father through the orchard, and choosing out some apple trees "for his very own." It is in the mouth of the ruthless Achilles, the fatal, the fated, the swift-footed hero with the hands of death, that Homer places the tenderest of his similes. "Wherefore weepest thou, Patroclus, like a fond little maid, that runs by her mother's side, praying her mother to take her up, snatching at her gown, and hindering her as she walks, and tearfully looking at her till her mother takes her up?—like her, Patroclus, dost thou softly weep."

This is what Chesterfield calls "the porter-like language of Homer's heroes." Such are the moods of Homer, so full of love of life and all things living, so rich in all human sympathies, so readily moved when the great hound Argus welcomes his master, whom none knew after twenty years, but the hound knew him, and died in that welcome. With all this love of the real, which makes him dwell so fondly on every detail of armor, of implement, of art; on the divers-colored gold-work of the shield, on the making of tires for chariot-wheels, on the forging of iron, on the rose-tinted ivory of the Sidonians, on cooking and eating and sacrificing, on pet dogs, on wasps and their ways, on fishing, on the boar hunt, on scenes in baths where fair maidens lave water over the heroes, on undiscovered isles with good harbors and rich land, on ploughing, mowing, and sowing, on the furniture of houses, on the golden vases wherein the white dust of the dead is laid,—with all this delight in the real, Homer is the most romantic of poets. He walks with the surest foot in the darkling realm of dread Persephone, beneath the poplars on the

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solemn last beach of Ocean. He has heard the Siren's music, and the song of Circe, chanting as she walks to and fro, casting the golden shuttle through the loom of gold. He enters the cave of the Man Eater; he knows the unsunned land of the Cimmerians; in the summer of the North he has looked, from the fiord of the Læstrygons, on the Midnight Sun. He has dwelt on the floating isle of Æolus, with its wall of bronze unbroken, and has sailed on those Phæacian barks that need no help of helm or oar, that fear no stress either of wind or tide, that come and go and return obedient to a thought and silent as a dream. He has seen the four maidens of Circe, daughters of wells and woods, and of sacred streams. He is the second-sighted man, and beholds the shroud that wraps the living who are doomed, and the mystic dripping from the walls of blood yet unshed. He has walked in the garden closes of Phæacia, and looked on the face of gods who fare thither, and watch the weaving of the dance. He has eaten the honey-sweet fruit of the lotus, and from the hand of Helen he brings us that Egyptian nepenthe which puts all sorrow out of mind. His real world is as real as that in *Henry V*, his enchanted isles are charmed with the magic of the *Tempest*. His young wooers are as insolent as Claudio, as flushed with youth; his beggar-men are brethren of Edie Ochiltree; his Nausicaa is sister to Rosalind, with a different charm of stately purity in love. His enchantresses hold us yet with their sorceries; his Helen is very Beauty: she has all the sweetness of ideal womanhood, and her repentance is without remorse. His Achilles is youth itself, glorious, cruel, pitiful, splendid, and sad, ardent and loving, and conscious of its doom. Homer, in truth, is to be matched only with Shakespeare, and of Shakespeare he has not the occasional wilfulness, freakishness, and modish obscurity. He is a poet all of gold, universal as humanity, simple as childhood, musical now as the flow of his own rivers, now as the heavy plunging wave of his own Ocean.

Such, then, as far as weak words can speak of him, is the first and greatest of poets. This is he whom English boys are to be

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ignorant of, if Greek be ousted from our schools, or are to know only in the distorting mirror of a versified, or in the pale shadow of a prose translation. Translations are good only as teachers to bring men to Homer. English verse has no measure which even remotely suggests the various flow of the hexameter. Translators who employ verse give us a feeble Homer, dashed with their own conceits, and molded to their own style. Translators who employ prose "tell the story without the song," but, at least, they add no twopenny "beauties" and cheap conceits of their own.

I venture to offer a few examples of original translation, in which the mannerisms of poets who have, or have not, translated Homer, are parodied, and, of course (except in the case of Pope), exaggerated. The passage is the speech of the Second-sighted Man, before the slaying of the wooers in the hall:

Ah! wretched men, what ill is this ye suffer? In night are swathed your heads, your faces, your knees; and the voice of wailing is kindled, and cheeks are wet with tears, and with blood drip the walls, and the fair main beams of the roof, and the porch is full of shadows, and full is the courtyard, of ghosts that hasten hellward below the darkness, and the sun has perished out of heaven, and an evil mist sweeps up over all.

So much for Homer. The first attempt at metrical translation here given is meant to be in the manner of Pope:

"Caitiffs!" he cried, "what heaven-directed blight
Involves each countenance with clouds of night!
What pearly drop the ashen cheek bedews!
Why do the walls with gouts ensanguined ooze?
The court is thronged with ghosts that 'neath the gloom
Seek Pluto's realm, and Dis's awful doom;
In ebon curtains Phœbus hides his head,
And sable mist creeps upward from the dead."

This appears pretty bad, and nearly as un-Homeric as a translation could possibly be. But Pope, aided by Broome and Fenton, managed to be much less Homeric, much more absurd, and infinitely more "classical" in the sense in which Pope is classical:

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O race to death devote! with Stygian shade
Each destined peer impending fates invade;
With tears your wan distorted cheeks are drowned;
With sanguine drops the walls are rubied round:
Thick swarms the spacious hall with howling ghosts,
To people Orcus and the burning coasts!
Nor gives the sun his golden orb to roll,
But universal night usurps the pole.

Who could have conjectured that even Pope would wander away so far from his matchless original? "Wretches!" cried Theoclymenus, the seer; and that becomes, "O race to death devote!" "Your heads are swathed in night," turns into "With Stygian shade each destined peer" (peer is good!) "impending fates invade," where Homer says nothing about Styx nor peers. The Latin Orcus takes the place of Erebus, and "the burning coasts" are derived from modern popular theology. The very grammar detains or defies the reader; is it the sun that does not give his golden orb to roll, or who, or what?

The only place where the latter-day Broome or Fenton can flatter himself that he rivals Pope at his own game is—

What pearly drop the ashen cheek bedews!

This is, if possible, *more* classical than Pope's own—

With tears your wan distorted cheeks are drowned.

But Pope nobly revindicates his unparalleled power of translating funnily, when, in place of "the walls drip with blood," he writes—

With sanguine drops the walls are rubied round.

Homer does not appear to have been acquainted with rubies; but what of that? And how noble, how eminently worthy of Pope it is to add that the ghosts "howl"! I tried to make them gibber, but ghosts *do* gibber in Homer (though not in this passage), so Pope, Fenton, Broome, and Co. make them howl.

No, Pope is not lightly to be rivaled by a modern translator. The following example, a far-off following of a noted contemporary poet, may be left unsigned—

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Wretches, the bane hath befallen, the night and the blight of your sin
Sweeps like a shroud o'er the faces and limbs that were gladsome therein;
And the dirge of the dead breaketh forth, and the faces of all men are wet,
And the walls are besprinkled with blood, and the ghosts in the gateway are met,
Ghosts in the court and the gateway are gathered, Hell opens her lips,
And the sun in his splendor is shrouded, and sickens in spasm of eclipse.

The next is longer and slower: the poet has a difficulty in telling his story:

"Wretches," he cried, "what doom is this? what night
Clings like a face-cloth to the face of each,—
Sweeps like a shroud o'er knees and head? for lo!
The windy wail of death is up, and tears
On every cheek are wet; each shining wall
And beauteous interspace of beam and beam
Weeps tears of blood, and shadows in the door
Flicker, and fill the portals and the court—
Shadows of men that hellwards yearn—and now
The sun himself hath perished out of heaven,
And all the land is darkened with a mist."

That could never be mistaken for a version by the Laureate, as perhaps any contemporary hack's work might have been taken for Pope's. The difficulty, perhaps, lies here: anyone knows where to have Pope, anyone knows that he will evade the *mot propre*, though the precise evasion he may select is hard to guess. But the Laureate would keep close to his text, and yet would write like himself, very beautifully, but not with an Homeric swiftness and strength. Who is to imitate him? As to Mr. William Morris, he might be fabled to render Ἀ δειλοί "niddering wights," but beyond that, conjecture is baffled.[1] Or is *this* the kind of thing?—

Niddering wights, what a bane do ye bear, for your knees in the night,
And your heads and your faces, are shrouded, and clamor that knows not delight
Rings, and your cheeks are begrutten, and blood is besprent on the walls,
Blood on the tapestry fair woven, and barrow-wights walk in the halls.

[1] Conjecture may cease, as Mr. Morris has translated the Odyssey.

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Fetches and wraiths of the chosen of the Norns, and the sun from the lift
Shudders, and over the midgarth and swan's bath the cloud-shadows
drift.

It may be argued that, though this is perhaps a translation, it is not English, never was, and never will be. But it is quite as like Homer as the performance of Pope.

Such as these, or not so very much better than these as might be wished, are our efforts to translate Homer. From Chapman to Avia, or Mr. William Morris, they are all eminently conscientious, and erroneous, and futile. Chapman makes Homer a fanciful, euphuistic, obscure, and garrulous Elizabethan, but Chapman has fire. Pope makes him a wit, spirited, occasionally noble, full of points, and epigrams, and queer rococo conventionalisms. Cowper makes him slow, lumbering, a Milton without the music. Maginn makes him pipe an Irish jig:

Scarcely had she begun to wash
When she was aware of the grisly gash!

Lord Derby makes him respectable and ponderous. Lord Tennyson makes him not less, but certainly not more, than Tennysonian. Homer, in the Laureate's few fragments of experiment, is still a poet, but he is not Homer. Mr. Morris, and Avia, make him Icelandic, and archaistic, and hard to scan, though vigorous in his fetters for all that. Bohn makes him a crib; and of other translators in prose it has been said with a humor which one of them appreciates, that they render Homer into a likeness of the Book of Mormon.

Homer is untranslatable. None of us can bend the bow of Eurytus, and make the bow-string "ring sweetly at the touch, like the swallow's song." The adventure is never to be achieved; and, if Greek is to be dismissed from education, not the least of the sorrows that will ensue is English ignorance of Homer.

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HOMER AND HUMBUG[1]

AN ACADEMIC DISCUSSION

STEPHEN LEACOCK

The following discussion is of course only of interest to scholars. But, as the public school returns show that in the United States there are now over a million colored scholars alone, the appeal is wide enough.

I do not mind confessing that for a long time past I have been very sceptical about the classics. I was myself trained as a classical scholar. It seemed the only thing to do with me. I acquired such a singular facility in handling Latin and Greek that I could take a page of either of them, distinguish which it was by merely glancing at it, and, with the help of a dictionary and a pair of compasses, whip off a translation of it in less than three hours.

But I never got any pleasure from it. I lied about it. At first, perhaps, I lied through vanity. Any colored scholar will understand the feeling. Later on I lied through habit; later still because, after all, the classics were all that I had and so I valued them. I have seen thus a deceived dog value a pup with a broken leg, and a pauper child nurse a dead doll with the sawdust out of it. So I nursed my dead Homer and my broken Demosthenes though I knew in my heart that there was more sawdust in the stomach of one modern author than in the whole lot of them. Observe, I am not saying which it is that has it full of it.

So, as I say, I began to lie about the classics. I said to people who knew no Greek that there was a sublimity, a majesty about Homer which they could never hope to grasp. I said it was like the sound of the sea beating against the granite cliffs of the Ionian Esophagus: or words to that effect. As for the truth of it, I might as well have said that it was like the sound of a rum

[1] From *Behind the Beyond*, 1913, by permission of Dodd, Mead & Company and the author.

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distillery running a night shift on half time. At any rate this is what I said about Homer, and when I spoke of Pindar,—the dainty grace of his strophes,—and Aristophanes, the delicious sallies of his wit, sally after sally, each sally explained in a note calling it a sally—I managed to suffuse my face with an animation which made it almost beautiful.

I admitted of course that Virgil in spite of his genius had a hardness and a cold glitter which resembled rather the brilliance of a cut diamond than the soft grace of a flower. Certainly I admitted this: the mere admission of it would knock the breath out of anyone who was arguing.

From such talks my friends went away sad. The conclusion was too cruel. It had all the cold logic of a syllogism (like that almost brutal form of argument so much admired in the Paraphernalia of Socrates). For if:—

Virgil and Homer and Pindar had all this grace and pith and these sallies,—
And if I read Virgil and Homer and Pindar,
And if they only read Mrs. Wharton and Mrs. Humphry Ward
Then where were they?

So continued lying brought its own reward in the sense of superiority and I lied more.

When I reflect that I have openly expressed regret, as a personal matter, even in the presence of women, for the missing books of Tacitus, and the entire loss of the Abracadabra of Polyphemus of Syracuse, I can find no words in which to beg for pardon. In reality I was just as much worried over the loss of the ichthyosaurus. More, indeed: I'd like to have seen it: but if the books Tacitus lost were like those he didn't, I wouldn't.

I believe all scholars lie like this. An ancient friend of mine, a clergyman, tells me that in Hesiod he finds a peculiar grace that he doesn't find elsewhere. He's a liar. That's all. Another man, in politics and in the legislature, tells me that every night before going to bed he reads over a page or two of Thucydides to keep his mind fresh. Either he never goes to bed or he's a liar. Doubly so: no one could read Greek at that frantic rate: and

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anyway his mind isn't fresh. How could it be, he's in the legislature. I don't object to this man talking freely of the classics, but he ought to keep it for the voters. My own opinion is that before he goes to bed he takes whiskey: why call it Thucydides?

I know there are solid arguments advanced in favor of the classics. I often hear them from my colleagues. My friend the professor of Greek tells me that he truly believes the classics have made him what he is. This is a very grave statement, if well founded. Indeed I have heard the same argument from a great many Latin and Greek scholars. They all claim, with some heat, that Latin and Greek have practically made them what they are. This damaging charge against the classics should not be too readily accepted. In my opinion some of these men would have been what they are, no matter what they were.

Be this as it may, I for my part bitterly regret the lies I have told about my appreciation of Latin and Greek literature. I am anxious to do what I can to set things right. I am therefore engaged on, indeed have nearly completed, a work which will enable all readers to judge the matter for themselves. What I have done is a translation of all the great classics, not in the usual literal way but on a design that brings them into harmony with modern life. I will explain what I mean in a minute.

The translation is intended to be within reach of everybody. It is so designed that the entire set of volumes can go on a shelf twenty-seven feet long, or even longer. The first edition will be an *édition de luxe* bound in vellum, or perhaps in buckskin, and sold at five hundred dollars. It will be limited to five hundred copies and, of course, sold only to the feeble minded. The next edition will be the Literary Edition, sold to artists, authors, actors, and contractors. After that will come the Boarding House Edition, bound in board and paid for in the same way.

My plan is to so transpose the classical writers as to give, not the literal translation word for word, but what is really the modern equivalent. Let me give an odd sample or two to show what I mean. Take the passage in the First Book of Homer that describes Ajax the Greek dashing into the battle in front of Troy.

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Here is the way it runs (as nearly as I remember), in the usual word for word translation of the classroom, as done by the very best professor, his spectacles glittering with the literary rapture of it.

Then he too Ajax on the one hand leaped (or possibly jumped) into the fight wearing on the other hand, yes certainly a steel corselet (or possibly a bronze under tunic) and on his head of course, yes without doubt he had a helmet with a tossing plume taken from the mane (or perhaps extracted from the tail) of some horse which once fed along the banks of the Scamander (and it sees the herd and raises its head and paws the ground) and in his hand a shield worth a hundred oxen and on his knees too especially in particular greaves made by some cunning artificer (or perhaps blacksmith) and he blows the fire and it is hot. Thus Ajax leapt (or, better, was propelled from behind), into the fight.

Now that's grand stuff. There is no doubt of it. There's a wonderful movement and force to it. You can almost see it move, it goes so fast. But the modern reader can't get it. It won't mean to him what it meant to the early Greek. The setting, the costume, the scene has all got to be changed in order to let the reader have a real equivalent to judge just how good the Greek verse is. In my translation I alter it just a little, not much but just enough to give the passage a form that reproduces the proper literary value of the verses, without losing anything of the majesty. It describes, I may say, the Directors of the American Industrial Stocks rushing into the Balkan War Cloud.—

Then there came rushing to the shock of war
Mr. McNicoll of the C. P. R.
He wore suspenders and about his throat
High rose the collar of a sealskin coat.
He had on gaiters and he wore a tie,
He had his trousers buttoned good and high;
About his waist a woollen undervest
Bought from a sad-eyed farmer of the West.
(And every time he clips a sheep he sees
Some bloated plutocrat who ought to freeze),
Thus in the Stock Exchange he burst to view,
Leaped to the post, and shouted, "Ninety-two!"

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There! That's Homer, the real thing! Just as it sounded to the rude crowd of Greek peasants who sat in a ring and guffawed at the rhymes and watched the minstrel stamp it out into "feet" as he recited it!

Or let me take another example from the so-called Catalogue of the Ships that fills up nearly an entire book of Homer. This famous passage names all the ships, one by one, and names the chiefs who sailed on them, and names the particular town or hill or valley that they came from. It has been much admired. It has that same majesty of style that has been brought to an even loftier pitch in the New York Business Directory and the City Telephone Book. It runs along, as I recall it, something like this,—

> And first, indeed, oh yes, was the ship of Homistogetes the Spartan, long and swift, having both its masts covered with cowhide and two rows of oars. And he, Homistogetes, was born of Hermogenes and Ophthalmia and was at home in Syncope beside the fast flowing Paresis. And after him came the ship of Preposterus the Eurasian, son of Oasis and Hysteria, . . .

and so on endlessly.

Instead of this I substitute, with the permission of the New York Central Railway, the official catalogue of their locomotives taken almost word for word from the list compiled by their superintendent of works. I admit that he wrote in hot weather. Part of it runs:

> Out in the yard and steaming in the sun
> Stands locomotive engine number forty-one;
> Seated beside the windows of the cab
> Are Pat McGaw and Peter James McNab.
> Pat comes from Troy and Peter from Cohoes,
> And when they pull the throttle off she goes;
> And as she vanishes there comes to view
> Steam locomotive engine number forty-two.
> Observe her mighty wheels, her easy roll,
> With William J. Macarthy in control.
> They say her engineer some time ago
> Lived on a farm outside of Buffalo

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Whereas his fireman, Henry Edward Foy,
Attended School in Springfield, Illinois.
Thus does the race of man decay or rot—
Some men can hold their jobs and some can not.

Please observe that if Homer had actually written that last line it would have been quoted for a thousand years as one of the deepest sayings ever said. Orators would have rounded out their speeches with the majestic phrase, quoted in sonorous and unintelligible Greek verse, "some men can hold their jobs and some can not": essayists would have begun their most scholarly dissertations with the words,—"It has been finely said by Homer that (in Greek) 'some men can hold their jobs'": and the clergy in mid-pathos of a funeral sermon would have raised their eyes aloft and echoed, "Some men can not"!

This is what I should like to do. I'd like to take a large stone and write on it in very plain writing,—

"The classics are only primitive literature. They belong in the same class as primitive machinery and primitive music and primitive medicine,"—and then throw it through the windows of a University and hide behind a fence to see the professors buzz!!

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SUBSTITUTES FOR WAR

[Six years before James wrote "The Moral Equivalent of War" he said at the Universal Peace Conference in Boston:

> Organize in every conceivable way the practical machinery for making each successive chance of war abortive. . . . Seize every pretext, however small, for arbitration methods, and multiply the precedents; foster rival excitements, and invent new outlets for heroic energy.

James had long held, therefore, that war, in spite of its palpable evil, was a school of energy and hardihood and could be abolished only by substituting some equivalent discipline. That he would have been wholeheartedly for the League of Nations is evident. But he is here thinking not so much about stopping war as about the necessity of salvaging its virtues, of putting something else in its place, so that individual and national character may suffer no deterioration.

Three thousand years ago Isaiah and Micah saw in vision an equivalent more practicable, I think, than that outlined by James or Mr. MacKaye: "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." The sword and the spear were not to be thrown away; they were to be beaten into the service of agriculture. Energy was to be re-dedicated: the most destructive agency was to be molded into the most productive. In modern phrase the vast governmental outlays for war would be devoted to agricultural improvement. In James's view our gilded youth would be drafted off into the cotton fields of the South, the wheat fields of the West, the truck gardens of the East, as well as to the un-agricultural destinations mentioned on page 302.

Longfellow, you remember, found in education his preferred substitute:

> Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
> Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
> Given to redeem the human mind from error,
> There were no need of arsenals or forts.

Mr. MacKaye seeks to supplement James's view. He thinks that the lure of war lies in its spectacular appeal. He finds his text in a striking sentence from Woodrow Wilson: "When peace is made as handsome as

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war, there will be hope of war's passing." It was this phase of war, its appeal to ear and eye, that Othello found it hardest to part with:

> Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
> The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
> The royal banner, and all quality,
> Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war.

It is this appeal of war that Mr. MacKaye would replace by an equivalent pomp and pageantry devoted to civic ends. He would introduce a rich and colorful symbolism through which war would be "self-purged and self-subdued to the functions of social service."

Which of the four methods here mentioned seems to you the wisest? After all, are they not powerless to stop war? But with war once stopped by international coöperation, may not these four collective activities contribute to the enrichment or entertainment of nations?]

THE MORAL EQUIVALENT OF WAR[1]

William James

The war against war is going to be no holiday excursion or camping party. The military feelings are too deeply grounded to abdicate their place among our ideals until better substitutes are offered than the glory and shame that come to nations as well as to individuals from the ups and downs of politics and the vicissitudes of trade. There is something highly paradoxical in the modern man's relation to war. Ask all our millions, north and south, whether they would vote now (were such a thing possible) to have our war for the Union expunged from history, and the record of a peaceful transition to the present time substituted for that of its marches and battles, and probably hardly a handful of eccentrics would say yes. Those ancestors, those efforts, those memories and legends, are the most ideal part of what we now own together, a sacred spiritual possession worth more than all the blood poured out. Yet ask those same people whether they would be willing in cold blood

[1] First published by the American Association for International Conciliation and later in *Memories and Studies*, 1911, from which it is reproduced here by permission of Longmans, Green & Co.

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to start another civil war now to gain another similar possession, and not one man or woman would vote for the proposition. In modern eyes, precious though wars may be, they must not be waged solely for the sake of the ideal harvest. Only when forced upon one, only when an enemy's injustice leaves us no alternative, is a war now thought permissible.

It was not thus in ancient times. The earlier men were hunting men, and to hunt a neighboring tribe, kill the males, loot the village and possess the females, was the most profitable, as well as the most exciting, way of living. Thus were the more martial tribes selected, and in chiefs and peoples a pure pugnacity and love of glory came to mingle with the more fundamental appetite for plunder.

Modern war is so expensive that we feel trade to be a better avenue to plunder; but modern man inherits all the innate pugnacity and all the love of glory of his ancestors. Showing war's irrationality and horror is of no effect upon him. The horrors make the fascination. War is the *strong* life; it is life *in extremis*; war-taxes are the only ones men never hesitate to pay, as the budgets of all nations show us.

History is a bath of blood. The Iliad is one long recital of how Diomedes and Ajax, Sarpedon and Hector *killed*. No detail of the wounds they made is spared us, and the Greek mind fed upon the story. Greek history is a panorama of jingoism and imperialism—war for war's sake, all the citizens being warriors. It is horrible reading, because of the irrationality of it all—save for the purpose of making "history"—and the history is that of the utter ruin of a civilization in intellectual respects perhaps the highest the earth has ever seen.

Those wars were purely piratical. Pride, gold, women, slaves, excitement, were their only motives. In the Peloponnesian war, for example, the Athenians ask the inhabitants of Melos (the island where the "Venus of Milo" was found), hitherto neutral, to own their lordship. The envoys meet, and hold a debate which Thucydides gives in full, and which, for sweet reasonableness of form, would have satisfied Matthew Arnold. "The

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powerful exact what they can," said the Athenians, "and the weak grant what they must." When the Meleans say that sooner than be slaves they will appeal to the gods, the Athenians reply: "Of the gods we believe and of men we know that, by a law of their nature, wherever they can rule they will. This law was not made by us, and we are not the first to have acted upon it; we did but inherit it, and we know that you and all mankind, if you were as strong as we are, would do as we do. So much for the gods; we have told you why we expect to stand as high in their good opinion as you." Well, the Meleans still refused, and their town was taken. "The Athenians," Thucydides quietly says, "thereupon put to death all who were of military age and made slaves of the women and children. They then colonized the island, sending thither five hundred settlers of their own."

Alexander's career was piracy pure and simple, nothing but an orgy of power and plunder, made romantic by the character of the hero. There was no rational principle in it, and the moment he died his generals and governors attacked one another. The cruelty of those times is incredible. When Rome finally conquered Greece, Paulus Æmilius was told by the Roman Senate to reward his soldiers for their toil by "giving" them the old kingdom of Epirus. They sacked seventy cities and carried off a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants as slaves. How many they killed I know not; but in Etolia they killed all the senators, five hundred and fifty in number. Brutus was "the noblest Roman of them all," but to reanimate his soldiers on the eve of Philippi he similarly promises to give them the cities of Sparta and Thessalonica to ravage, if they win the fight.

Such was the gory nurse that trained societies to cohesiveness. We inherit the warlike type; and for most of the capacities of heroism that the human race is full of we have to thank this cruel history. Dead men tell no tales, and if there were any tribes of other type than this they have left no survivors. Our ancestors have bred pugnacity into our bone and marrow, and thousands of years of peace won't breed it out of us. The

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popular imagination fairly fattens on the thought of wars. Let public opinion once reach a certain fighting pitch, and no ruler can withstand it. In the Boer war both governments began with bluff but couldn't stay there, the military tension was too much for them. In 1898 our people had read the word "war" in letters three inches high for three months in every newspaper. The pliant politician McKinley was swept away by their eagerness, and our squalid war with Spain became a necessity.

At the present day, civilized opinion is a curious mental mixture. The military instincts and ideals are as strong as ever, but are confronted by reflective criticisms which sorely curb their ancient freedom. Innumerable writers are showing up the bestial side of military service. Pure loot and mastery seem no longer morally avowable motives, and pretexts must be found for attributing them solely to the enemy. England and we, our army and navy authorities repeat without ceasing, arm solely for "peace," Germany and Japan it is who are bent on loot and glory. "Peace" in military mouths today is a synonym for "war expected." The word has become a pure provocative, and no government wishing peace sincerely should allow it ever to be printed in a newspaper. Every up-to-date dictionary should say that "peace" and "war" mean the same thing, now *in posse*, now *in actu*. It may even reasonably be said that the intensely sharp competitive *preparation* for war by the nations *is the real war*, permanent, unceasing; and that the battles are only a sort of public verification of the mastery gained during the "peace"-interval.

It is plain that on this subject civilized man has developed a sort of double personality. If we take European nations, no legitimate interest of any one of them would seem to justify the tremendous destructions which a war to compass it would necessarily entail. It would seem as though common sense and reason ought to find a way to reach agreement in every conflict of honest interests. I myself think it our bounden duty to believe in such international rationality as possible. But, as things stand, I see how desperately hard it is to bring the peace-

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party and the war-party together, and I believe that the difficulty is due to certain deficiencies in the program of pacificism which set the militarist imagination strongly, and to a certain extent justifiably, against it. In the whole discussion both sides are on imaginative and sentimental ground. It is but one utopia against another, and everything one says must be abstract and hypothetical. Subject to this criticism and caution, I will try to characterize in abstract strokes the opposite imaginative forces, and point out what to my own very fallible mind seems the best utopian hypothesis, the most promising line of conciliation.

In my remarks, pacificist though I am, I will refuse to speak of the bestial side of the war-*régime* (already done justice to by many writers) and consider only the higher aspects of militaristic sentiment. Patriotism no one thinks discreditable; nor does anyone deny that war is the romance of history. But inordinate ambitions are the soul of every patriotism, and the possibility of violent death the soul of all romance. The militarily patriotic and romantic-minded everywhere, and especially the professional military class, refuse to admit for a moment that war may be a transitory phenomenon in social evolution. The notion of a sheep's paradise like that revolts, they say, our higher imagination. Where then would be the steeps of life? If war had ever stopped, we should have to re-invent it, on this view, to redeem life from flat degeneration.

Reflective apologists for war at the present day all take it religiously. It is a sort of sacrament. Its profits are to the vanquished as well as to the victor; and quite apart from any question of profit, it is an absolute good, we are told, for it is human nature at its highest dynamic. Its "horrors" are a cheap price to pay for rescue from the only alternative supposed, of a world of clerks and teachers, of co-education and zo-ophily, of "consumer's leagues" and "associated charities," of industrialism unlimited, and femininism unabashed. No scorn, no hardness, no valor any more! Fie upon such a cattleyard of a planet!

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So far as the central essence of this feeling goes, no healthy-minded person, it seems to me, can help to some degree partaking of it. Militarism is the great preserver of our ideals of hardihood, and human life with no use for hardihood would be contemptible. Without risks or prizes for the darer, history would be insipid indeed; and there is a type of military character which everyone feels that the race should never cease to breed, for everyone is sensitive to its superiority. The duty is incumbent on mankind, of keeping military characters in stock—of keeping them, if not for use, then as ends in themselves and as pure pieces of perfection,—so that Roosevelt's weaklings and mollycoddles may not end by making everything else disappear from the face of nature.

This natural sort of feeling forms, I think, the innermost soul of army-writings. Without any exception known to me, militarist authors take a highly mystical view of their subject, and regard war as a biological or sociological necessity, uncontrolled by ordinary psychological checks and motives. When the time of development is ripe the war must come, reason or no reason, for the justifications pleaded are invariably fictitious. War is, in short, a permanent human *obligation.* General Homer Lea, in his recent book *The Valor of Ignorance*, plants himself squarely on this ground. Readiness for war is for him the essence of nationality, and ability in it the supreme measure of the health of nations.

Nations, General Lea says, are never stationary—they must necessarily expand or shrink, according to their vitality or decrepitude. Japan now is culminating; and by the fatal law in question it is impossible that her statesmen should not long since have entered, with extraordinary foresight, upon a vast policy of conquest—the game in which the first moves were her wars with China and Russia and her treaty with England, and of which the final objective is the capture of the Philippines, the Hawaiian Islands, Alaska, and the whole of our coast west of the Sierra Passes. This will give Japan what her ineluctable vocation as a state absolutely forces her to claim, the possession

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of the entire Pacific Ocean; and to oppose these deep designs we Americans have, according to our author, nothing but our conceit, our ignorance, our commercialism, our corruption, and our feminism. General Lea makes a minute technical comparison of the military strength which we at present could oppose to the strength of Japan, and concludes that the islands, Alaska, Oregon, and Southern California, would fall almost without resistance, that San Francisco must surrender in a fortnight to a Japanese investment, that in three or four months the war would be over, and our republic, unable to regain what it had heedlessly neglected to protect sufficiently, would then "disintegrate," until perhaps some Cæsar should arise to weld us again into a nation.

A dismal forecast indeed! Yet not unplausible, if the mentality of Japan's statesmen be of the Cæsarian type of which history shows so many examples, and which is all that General Lea seems able to imagine. But there is no reason to think that women can no longer be the mothers of Napoleonic or Alexandrian characters; and if these come in Japan and find their opportunity, just such surprises as *The Valor of Ignorance* paints may lurk in ambush for us. Ignorant as we still are of the innermost recesses of Japanese mentality, we may be foolhardy to disregard such possibilities.

Other militarists are more complex and more moral in their considerations. The *Philosophie des Krieges*, by S. R. Steinmetz, is a good example. War, according to this author, is an ordeal instituted by God, who weighs the nations in its balance. It is the essential form of the State, and the only function in which peoples can employ all their powers at once and convergently. No victory is possible save as the resultant of a totality of virtues, no defeat for which some vice or weakness is not responsible. Fidelity, cohesiveness, tenacity, heroism, conscience, education, inventiveness, economy, wealth, physical health and vigor—there isn't a moral or intellectual point of superiority that doesn't tell, when God holds his assizes and hurls the peoples upon one another. *Die Weltgeschichte ist das*

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Weltgericht; and Dr. Steinmetz does not believe that in the long run chance and luck play any part in apportioning the issues.

The virtues that prevail, it must be noted, are virtues anyhow, superiorities that count in peaceful as well as in military competition; but the strain on them, being infinitely intenser in the latter case, makes war infinitely more searching as a trial. No ordeal is comparable to its winnowings. Its dread hammer is the welder of men into cohesive states, and nowhere but in such states can human nature adequately develop its capacity. The only alternative is "degeneration."

Dr. Steinmetz is a conscientious thinker, and his book, short as it is, takes much into account. Its upshot can, it seems to me, be summed up in Simon Patten's word, that mankind was nursed in pain and fear, and that the transition to a "pleasure-economy" may be fatal to a being wielding no powers of defence against its disintegrative influences. If we speak of the *fear of emancipation from the fear-régime*, we put the whole situation into a single phrase; fear regarding ourselves now taking the place of the ancient fear of the enemy.

Turn the fear over as I will in my mind, it all seems to lead back to two unwillingnesses of the imagination, one æsthetic, and the other moral; unwillingness, first to envisage a future in which army-life, with its many elements of charm, shall be forever impossible, and in which the destinies of peoples shall nevermore be decided quickly, thrillingly, and tragically, by force, but only gradually and insipidly by "evolution"; and, secondly, unwillingness to see the supreme theater of human strenuousness closed, and the splendid military aptitudes of men doomed to keep always in a state of latency and never show themselves in action. These insistent unwillingnesses, no less than other æsthetic and ethical insistencies, have, it seems to me, to be listened to and respected. One cannot meet them effectively by mere counter-insistency on war's expensiveness and horror. The horror makes the thrill; and when the question is of geting the extremest and supremest out of human nature, talk of

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expense sounds ignominious. The weakness of so much merely negative criticism is evident—pacificism makes no converts from the military party. The military party denies neither the bestiality nor the horror, nor the expense; it only says that these things tell but half the story. It only says that war is *worth* them; that, taking human nature as a whole, its wars are its best protection against its weaker and more cowardly self, and that mankind cannot *afford* to adopt a peace-economy.

Pacificists ought to enter more deeply into the æsthetical and ethical point of view of their opponents. Do that first in any controversy, says J. J. Chapman, *then move the point*, and your opponent will follow. So long as antimilitarists propose no substitute for war's disciplinary function, no *moral equivalent* of war, analogous, as one might say, to the mechanical equivalent of heat, so long they fail to realize the full inwardness of the situation. And as a rule they do fail. The duties, penalties, and sanctions pictured in the utopias they paint are all too weak and tame to touch the military-minded. Tolstoi's pacificism is the only exception to this rule, for it is profoundly pessimistic as regards all this world's values, and makes the fear of the Lord furnish the moral spur provided elsewhere by the fear of the enemy. But our socialistic peace-advocates all believe absolutely in this world's values; and instead of the fear of the Lord and the fear of the enemy, the only fear they reckon with is the fear of poverty if one be lazy. This weakness pervades all the socialistic literature with which I am acquainted. Even in Lowes Dickinson's exquisite dialogue,[1] high wages and short hours are the only forces invoked for overcoming man's distaste for repulsive kinds of labor. Meanwhile men at large still live as they always have lived, under a pain-and-fear economy—for those of us who live in an ease-economy are but an island in the stormy ocean—and the whole atmosphere of present-day utopian literature tastes mawkish and dishwatery to people who still keep a sense for life's more bitter flavors. It suggests, in truth, ubiquitous inferiority.

[1] *Justice and Liberty*, New York, 1909.

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Inferiority is always with us, and merciless scorn of it is the keynote of the military temper. "Dogs, would you live forever?" shouted Frederick the Great. "Yes," say our utopians, "let us live forever, and raise our level gradually." The best thing about our "inferiors" today is that they are as tough as nails, and physically and morally almost as insensitive. Utopianism would see them soft and squeamish, while militarism would keep their callousness, but transfigure it into a meritorious characteristic, needed by "the service," and redeemed by that from the suspicion of inferiority. All the qualities of a man acquire dignity when he knows that the service of the collectivity that owns him needs them. If proud of the collectivity, his own pride rises in proportion. No collectivity is like an army for nourishing such pride; but it has to be confessed that the only sentiment which the image of pacific cosmopolitan industrialism is capable of arousing in countless worthy breasts is shame at the idea of belonging to *such* a collectivity. It is obvious that the United States of America as they exist today impress a mind like General Lea's as so much human blubber. Where is the sharpness and precipitousness, the contempt for life, whether one's own, or another's? Where is the savage "yes" and "no," the unconditional duty? Where is the conscription? Where is the blood-tax? Where is anything that one feels honored by belonging to?

Having said thus much in preparation, I will now confess my own utopia. I devoutly believe in the reign of peace and in the gradual advent of some sort of a socialistic equilibrium. The fatalistic view of the war-function is to me nonsense, for I know that war-making is due to definite motives and subject to prudential checks and reasonable criticisms, just like any other form of enterprise. And when whole nations are the armies, and the science of destruction vies in intellectual refinement with the sciences of production, I see that war becomes absurd and impossible from its own monstrosity. Extravagant ambitions will have to be replaced by reasonable claims, and nations must make common cause against them. I see no reason why

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all this should not apply to yellow as well as to white countries, and I look forward to a future when acts of war shall be formally outlawed as between civilized peoples.

All these beliefs of mine put me squarely into the anti-militarist party. But I do not believe that peace either ought to be or will be permanent on this globe, unless the states pacifically organized preserve some of the old elements of army-discipline. A permanently successful peace-economy cannot be a simple pleasure-economy. In the more or less socialistic future towards which mankind seems drifting we must still subject ourselves collectively to those severities which answer to our real position upon this only partly hospitable globe. We must make new energies and hardihood continue the manliness to which the military mind so faithfully clings. Martial virtues must be the enduring cement; intrepidity, contempt of softness, surrender of private interest, obedience to command, must still remain the rock upon which states are built—unless, indeed, we wish for dangerous reactions against commonwealths fit only for contempt, and liable to invite attack whenever a center of crystallization for military-minded enterprise gets formed anywhere in their neighborhood.

The war-party is assuredly right in affirming and reaffirming that the martial virtues, although originally gained by the race through war, are absolute and permanent human goods. Patriotic pride and ambition in their military form are, after all, only specifications of a more general competitive passion. They are its first form, but that is no reason for supposing them to be its last form. Men now are proud of belonging to a conquering nation, and without a murmur they lay down their persons and their wealth, if by so doing they may fend off subjection. But who can be sure that *other aspects of one's country* may not, with time and education and suggestion enough, come to be regarded with similarly effective feelings of pride and shame? Why should men not some day feel that it is worth a blood-tax to belong to a collectivity superior in *any* ideal respect? Why should they not blush with indignant shame

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if the community that owns them is vile in any way whatsoever? Individuals, daily more numerous, now feel this civic passion. It is only a question of blowing on the spark till the whole population gets incandescent, and on the ruins of the old morals of military honor, a stable system of morals of civic honor builds itself up. What the whole community comes to believe in grasps the individual as in a vise. The war-function has grasped us so far; but constructive interests may some day seem no less imperative, and impose on the individual a hardly lighter burden.

Let me illustrate my idea more concretely. There is nothing to make one indignant in the mere fact that life is hard, that men should toil and suffer pain. The planetary conditions once for all are such, and we can stand it. But that so many men, by mere accidents of birth and opportunity, should have a life of *nothing else* but toil and pain and hardness and inferiority imposed upon them, should have *no* vacation, while others natively no more deserving never get any taste of this campaigning life at all,—*this* is capable of arousing indignation in reflective minds. It may end by seeming shameful to all of us that some of us have nothing but campaigning, and others nothing but unmanly ease. If now—and this is my idea—there were, instead of military conscription a conscription of the whole youthful population to form for a certain number of years a part of the army enlisted against *Nature*, the injustice would tend to be evened out, and numerous other goods to the commonwealth would follow. The military ideals of hardihood and discipline would be wrought into the growing fiber of the people; no one would remain blind as the luxurious classes now are blind, to man's relations to the globe he lives on, and to the permanently sour and hard foundations of his higher life. To coal and iron mines, to freight trains, to fishing fleets in December, to dish-washing, clothes-washing, and window-washing, to road-building and tunnel-making, to foundries and stoke-holes, and to the frames of skyscrapers, would our gilded youths be drafted off, according to their choice, to get the childishness knocked

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out of them, and to come back into society with healthier sympathies and soberer ideas. They would have paid their blood-tax, done their own part in the immemorial human warfare against nature; they would tread the earth more proudly, the women would value them more highly, they would be better fathers and teachers of the following generation.

Such a conscription, with the state of public opinion that would have required it, and the many moral fruits it would bear, would preserve in the midst of a pacific civilization the manly virtues which the military party is so afraid of seeing disappear in peace. We should get toughness without callousness, authority with as little criminal cruelty as possible, and painful work done cheerily because the duty is temporary, and threatens not, as now, to degrade the whole remainder of one's life. I spoke of the "moral equivalent" of war. So far, war has been the only force that can discipline a whole community, and until an equivalent discipline is organized, I believe that war must have its way. But I have no serious doubt that the ordinary prides and shames of social man, once developed to a certain intensity, are capable of organizing such a moral equivalent as I have sketched, or some other just as effective for preserving manliness of type. It is but a question of time, of skillful propagandism, and of opinion-making men seizing historic opportunities.

The martial type of character can be bred without war. Strenuous honor and disinterestedness abound elsewhere. Priests and medical men are in a fashion educated to it, and we should all feel some degree of it imperative if we were conscious of our work as an obligatory service to the state. We should be *owned*, as soldiers are by the army, and our pride would rise accordingly. We could be poor, then, without humiliation, as army officers now are. The only thing needed henceforward is to inflame the civic temper as past history has inflamed the military temper. H. G. Wells, as usual, sees the center of the situation. "In many ways," he says, "military organization is the most peaceful of activities. When the contemporary man steps from

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the street of clamorous, insincere advertisement, push, adulteration, underselling, and intermittent employment into the barrack-yard, he steps on to a higher social plane, into an atmosphere of service and coöperation and of infinitely more honorable emulations. Here at least men are not flung out of employment to degenerate because there is no immediate work for them to do. They are fed and drilled and trained for better services. Here at least a man is supposed to win promotion by self-forgetfulness and not by self-seeking. And beside the feeble and irregular endowment of research by commercialism, its little short-sighted snatches at profit by innovation and scientific economy, see how remarkable is the steady and rapid development of method and appliances in naval and military affairs! Nothing is more striking than to compare the progress of civil conveniences which has been left almost entirely to the trader, to the progress in military apparatus during the last few decades. The house-appliances of today, for example, are little better than they were fifty years ago. A house of today is still almost as ill-ventilated, badly heated by wasteful fires, clumsily arranged and furnished as the house of 1858. Houses a couple of hundred years old are still satisfactory places of residence, so little have our standards risen. But the rifle or battleship of fifty years ago was beyond all comparison inferior to those we possess; in power, in speed, in convenience alike. No one has a use now for such superannuated things."[1]

Wells adds[2] that he thinks that the conceptions of order and discipline, the tradition of service and devotion, of physical fitness, unstinted exertion, and universal responsibility, which universal military duty is now teaching European nations, will remain a permanent acquisition, when the last ammunition has been used in the fireworks that celebrate the final peace. I believe as he does. It would be simply preposterous if the only force that could work ideals of honor and standards of efficiency into English or American natures should be the fear of being killed by the Germans or the Japanese. Great indeed is Fear;

[1] *First and Last Things*, 1908, p. 215. [2] Ibid. p. 226.

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but it is not, as our military enthusiasts believe and try to make us believe, the only stimulus known for awakening the higher ranges of men's spiritual energy. The amount of alteration in public opinion which my utopia postulates is vastly less than the difference between the mentality of those black warriors who pursued Stanley's party on the Congo with their cannibal war-cry of "Meat! Meat!" and that of the "general-staff" of any civilized nation. History has seen the latter interval bridged over: the former one can be bridged over much more easily.

A POTENTIAL SUBSTITUTE FOR WAR[1]

PERCY MACKAYE

On a battlefield of northern France the sun had just set. After hours of bloody fighting, the enemy had retreated. Except for the dead and dying, the field was almost deserted.

Seated on a round, stumplike object, one lonely figure, huge and forlorn, loomed in the crimson glow.

He was dressed in gorgeous regalia, almost unscotched by the grime of battle. His big shoulders drooped. In one hand he held a little rod of dark wood. He stared at it dumbly.

Suddenly out of the dusk a detachment of French troopers approached and surrounded him.

"Surrender, or be shot!"

The figure stirred with slow dignity, but deigned no reply. Instead, he raised the little rod to his bearded face and kissed it.

Struck with curiosity, the Frenchmen—who were peasants—examined their prisoner more closely: Scarlet, blue, gold, orange—a superb uniform; the breast and shoulders gleaming with decorations, badges, and prismatic emblems!

Here was no common soldier in gray field-clothes. Not so; unmistakably he had the air of a commander—a dreamy pathos, a disdainful scorn of their presence.

[1] First printed in *The North American Review*, May, 1915. Reproduced by permission.

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Their Gallic imaginations took fire. They whispered together.

Whom could they have captured: a general?—a prince?

He carried no weapons, but—that little black rod: he had kissed it!

Might it be—? (They had heard of scepters.) Might this really be—a king?—or the war-lord of some imperial principality, scornful of flight, grandly stoical in defeat?

Their peasant hearts fluttered.

"Who are you?" their leader asked in German.

"Who *I* am!" retorted the huge figure with melancholy disdain. "My God! I am the Imperial Band-master."

This anecdote—cabled last autumn from the front to the American press—whether it be truth or fiction, conveys an apt symbol for the theme of this article.

Those French peasants showed a subtle intuition in their awed estimate of their prize. They had caught—not King nor Kaiser, to be sure, but a far mightier personage.

Throned on a drum and sceptered with a baton, clothed in the gorgeous habiliments of pageantry, the Imperial Band-master—today as ever—is overlord of the battlefields of Europe, the master director of all belligerents. Whoever wins, his throne is not shaken; though Czar or Kaiser fall, his scepter remains unchallenged. Empires and democracies alike are his domain, where he has lorded it over millions of loyal subjects for ten thousands of years. "*Vivat Imperator!*" "*Hoch der Kaiser!*" "*Vive la République!*" "God save the King!"—to the vast encore of those world plaudits he responds with perennial baton, and bows his smiling acknowledgments. For his domain, as old and elemental as man, is the empire of Art—the realm of music, color, dance, symbolism, pageantry, where his imperial palace is the theater.

Throughout human history this monarch of art has never been dethroned. He can never be dethroned, for he alone reigns by divine right—the might of imagination. Master director of his theater (in the soul of man), he has even sought his most

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vital expression in dramatic conflict, wherein his most grandly executed compositions have been *wars*.

Yet must this ever be so? May not the growth of his art develop forms of dramatic conflict which shall be more gloriously expressible in beauty and joy than in blood and suffering?

This question (which involves the uses of the art of the theater) is probably the most important question today for the world to answer:

Is there a substitute for war?

"When peace is made as handsome as war," said the President of the United States in a recent speech, "there will be hope of war's passing." This pregnant phrase was but a fleeting remark of the President, not elaborated nor urged further upon the thought of our people, yet it involves an idea of deepest public importance.

It is hardly conceivable, in short, that human beings should for ages have endured the organized waste and torture of war if the magician Art had not hypnotized their imaginations and led them by glorious visions to the charnels of battlefields.

For let us remember it is art—the colorful art of the theater, its music, spectacle, and symbolism put to war's purposes—which has exerted this hypnotism toward destruction. In this time of world havoc, therefore, shall we not ask ourselves:

How may the glorious visions of dramatic art lure the imaginations of men away from war to peace?

How may peace be made "as handsome as war," and as compelling?

Let us consider some of the "handsomeness" of war and some of the ugliness of peace, as these exist.

War is made splendid by noble human attributes: by self-sacrifice, courage, patience, enkindled will-power; it creates out of petty dissensions, as by magic, the majestic solidarity of a people; within national boundaries, it exalts social service.

For these valid attributes and incentives, the devisers of war create magnificent symbols. Under their expert control, the

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chaotic, drifting, meanly competitive life of everyday peace becomes transfigured by order, discipline, organization, imbued with a majestic unity of design: *the enacting of a national drama in which the people themselves participate.*

Statesmen and military leaders—recognizing what the disciples of peace ignore—utilize the full potency of the imaginative arts born of the theater, and employ for their ends the ecstasy and pomp of music and pageantry with a perfection of "stage management" that would stagger a Reinhardt. Symbolism they call to their aid, to provide for Patriotism her radiant flags and uniforms. The art of the music-maker peals in brass to the multitude. Poetry and Dance stride forth, like strange colossi, in the public squares, exhorting the populace with rhythms of marching regiments, that leap forth like glorious stanzas on the breath of a rhapsodist. A choral shout—as old as the chanting of Homer—invokes and unifies the nation.

Yes, the designers of war are masters of imaginative appeal. Of the realism of war—of death, mutilation, hate, hunger, rape, stench, disease, bonded generations, and national debt—they are purposely uneloquent. Instead—and wisely, for their ends—they exalt war's self-sacrifice, heroism, solidarity; and for these they create impassioned symbols of color and grandeur.

In rivalry with these radiant appeals the artless disciples of peace present—what? Their meek symbol—a dove.

Now nothing may be more potent to the multitude than a symbol. The flaming colors of a flag have set cities on fire; the refrain of a song has wrought revolution. The cartoonist interprets the vast social forces of his time almost wholly through symbols. In appealing to the popular imagination, therefore, it is of prime importance to a cause whether its symbols are dynamic or sedative.

Of all causes in history the cause of international peace is probably the noblest, yet—of all symbols appealing to the world's imagination—its symbol, the dove, is probably the most anæmic. Some other, more compelling, must take its place before its cause can plead effectually against that of its rival.

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The Dove is no match for the Devil. If war is ever to be vanquished, it will be by St. George or Raphael, not by the bird of Noah. In brief, it is only Peace Militant, not Peace Dormant, that can supplant the heroic figure of War in the hearts of nations.

But by Peace Militant I do not mean Peace panoplied upon dreadnaughts, glaring at her image in two oceans through Krupp-steel binoculars: for such is that false peace, no other than war disguised, which betrayed the world in August, 1914.

No; I mean by Peace Militant—not War disguised as a hypocritical time-server, but War self-purged and self-subdued to the functions of social service: not Peace armed with a sword, but Peace armed with *the symbol of a sword*—that "moral equivalent of war" of which William James has written with wise eloquence.

But the mere existence of a moral equivalent is not enough; it must be made effectual. Social service exists among all peoples, but it is not made to appeal sufficiently to popular imagination.

My object, then, in this article is to suggest that *the "moral equivalent of war" can be made fascinating and effectual by utilizing (and perhaps only by utilizing) the dynamic arts of the theater to give it symbolical expression.*

Thus a practical substitute for the dramatic conflict of war would be its moral equivalent expressed through the manifold forms of dramatic art.

James urged the doctrine of his "moral equivalent" as a philosopher, and his philosophy is sound. But the people are not persuaded by philosophers, however masterful in ideas; they are only persuaded by artists, masterful in art.

The people themselves hardly realize this, yet daily by the millions they are conjured by their artists of the theater as by magicians. (For an example, in passing, let anyone observe what popular conjuring is performed by a master of motion-picture art like Griffith with the perniciously unsound philosophy of Dixon's "Birth of a Nation.") Therefore it greatly

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behooves our artists to build upon sound philosophy; but, above all, it behooves our people, if they believe in self-government, to recognize the overwhelming power of dramatic art and their own susceptibility to it.

In seeking, then, a moral equivalent for war, what moral equivalents do we find under the conditions of peace?

In business, the prevailing conditions of peace are drab and selfish; its dramatic conflicts are sordid, petty, when individualistic; and when they are corporate they are no less sordid on their vaster scale. Industrialism is so contaminated by suffering, disease, injustice, ugliness, ennui, death, hatred, and dulled despair that to millions of laborers the conditions of war seem hopeful and visionary in comparison.

These are fundamental facts which all workers for permanent peace must face in their problem. The conditions of industrialism, in short, *are* war, stripped of its dignity and national solidarity.

As superstructure upon this sordid base rises the dwelling of conventional calm we call "peace," wherein the minority thousands pass their lives in comparative satisfaction and leisure.

These drab, chaotic, suffering conditions of our "peace," however, are transfigured by the ever-growing numbers of those who are working to make them lovelier and more just.

Among these are dedicated groups—workers in settlements, workers for public health, for the conservation of nature, for scientific inventions, for popular education, for solidarity in labor, for emancipation of women and children, and for scores of other civilized objects. These, separately banded together, constitute separate armies of social service. In each we find at work the moral equivalents of war—self-sacrifice, energized will, solidarity, courageous fighting, devotion to a cause deemed holy.

Here, then, in our midst, the moral equivalents of war are actively at work for social regeneration. But are they effectual? What is wrong with the working of these equivalents that they are unable to supplant their monstrous pseudotype that now ravages all Europe?

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They are armies of social service, yes; but they are not yet *the* army: they are not coördinated, harmonized: they lack mutual relationship—solidarity. But social service is *one* cause, not many. It has many banners, but only one valid flag—the flag of brotherhood.

But now we are speaking figuratively; for *actually* these armies of peace have, with few exceptions, no adequate symbols of their service—no banners, uniforms, fighting hymns, rhythmic marches, pageantry of spiritual meanings made sensuous. Instead, their officers meet in drab committees, their constituents read dry pamphlets in separate homes, or in offices to the clicking of typewriters; or, at best they gather chaotically together in a rented hall, listening to drab-coated talkers from a platform, or waving dry hand-bills for rallying banners.

Drab—that is their disease.

Their dreams are more glorious than the dreams of war: their dreams are incarnadine, flushed with fighting angels; but they clothe them—and they *stifle* them—in drab. That is their dire heritage from the Puritan.

War's ministers are wiser. They acknowledge the eternal pagan in mankind and utilize it.[1] Even Cromwell marched to rhythmic drums. So—to cope with war—the organizers of peace must acknowledge man's paganism, and exalt it.

Such is the basic appeal of the Salvation Army; and such, in a subtler sense, is the secret of the extraordinary growth of the Boy Scouts organization and of the Camp Fire Girls.

In the appeal of each, idealism adopts its special symbolism.

General Booth, Baden-Powell, Luther Gulick—each in his own way—seeks to popularize William James.

The moral equivalents of war, then, are ineffectual in our prevailing society from two chief causes:

[1] The modern use of khaki for uniforms is a *concession* to drab, under compulsion of the practical expediencies of field fighting; but it is an exception which does not always hold in the martial dress-parades of peace, and in France not yet on the battlefield. Khaki, moreover, though drab, remains a symbol romantic to the popular imagination.

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First, the fighting armies of peace are not properly organized; and, secondly, their functions are not properly symbolized.

To achieve these two great objects, mutually related, may well become the function of a new profession of the twentieth century—the profession of Civic Engineering. For the problems involved are so large and various that their solution takes on the dignity and efficiency of an expert science, essentially related to that which has solved so grandly problems like the building of the Panama Canal.

To achieve the first object, organization, will require the directive insight of one who may aptly be called the Political Engineer; to achieve the second object, symbolism, will require the Dramatic Engineer.

In his latest volume, *The Happiness of Nations*, James MacKaye has contributed the constructive outline of "a beginning in political engineering," based on the clear-reasoned philosophy of his larger work, *The Economy of Happiness*. In an organization of society such as he there suggests, the armies of peace might permanently establish the moral equivalents of war. To our present time, when the happiness of nations was never more crucially at stake, the reasonings of his volume are deeply pertinent. As related to this article they apply directly to the realization of the first object above referred to, organization.

Concerning the second object, dramatic symbolism, I may perhaps appropriately close these suggestions by reference to recent practical observation and experience of my own.

In May, 1914, the *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis* (the Pageant written by Thomas Wood Stevens, the Masque written by myself and produced in association with Joseph Lindon Smith, with music by Frederick S. Converse) was given out of doors at four performances by more than seven thousand citizens of Saint Louis before audiences aggregating half a million people.

The task of that production, successfully achieved by the coöperation and participation of a great modern community,

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was one which truly involved the art of the theater as an expert form of civic engineering. During its preparation, its vast-scale activities leavened the people with the moral equivalents of war: self-sacrifice, solidarity, energized will, militant devotion to a civic cause—these were truly attained, and have partially been retained during the months which have followed.

These objects, moreover, were truly and splendidly symbolized to the people by means of the color, music, pageantry, dramatic conflict, and architectural harmony created by the many-sided art of the theater there put to civic uses.

The theme itself of the Masque—the socialization of community life—was expressed not by a superimposed show, but by the dramatic revelation of a reality it had helped to create; an actual regeneration of community life, from which have directly resulted—as practical acquisitions to Saint Louis—a new progressive city charter, the completion of a municipal bridge, a city choral society, and the hopeful assurance of a great outdoor theater of the people in their public park.

The great experiment there consummated so successfully may well lead not only to its emulation elsewhere, but to the national consideration of the art of the theater in a new light—the light of a practical science, akin to engineering.

The present time is peculiarly auspicious for this widened civic scope of the theater's art. On the one hand, that art itself—rekindled from within by the constructive discoveries of its creative artists in production, architecture, music, and the dance—stands at the threshold of a splendid renascence. On the other hand—stirred from within by the portentous menace of world war—civic ardor has never been more deeply roused than now to discover effectual means for combating the enemies of society—poverty, disease, unemployment, political corruption, and all the hosts of embattled ignorance. To this war against all social and economic causes of war dramatic art offers a popular symbolism of magnificent scope and variety: it offers a new method of social science.

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Thus, developed as an expert profession, this potential science of dramatic engineering may yet become a powerful national factor in organizing militant social service as an effectual substitute for war.

If so—conversely—our "Imperial Band-master" may yet supplant the "Dove" by our troubled waters, and dedicate his baton to the councils and cabinets of peace.

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THE NEW HISTORY

[From Herodotus to H. G. Wells writers and readers of history have proposed innumerable methods by which the great recital might be made more interesting, more helpful, or more scientific. These methods, however, may be subsumed under two main heads. They relate to the content of history or to the style in which history should be written. Some of the disputants, in other words, argue that many things included in our traditional histories ought to be omitted and many neglected things put in; others hold that selection and rejection are not so important as a vividly appealing style, that instead of merely recording the past the true historian should vitalize it.

Mr. Robinson devotes his chapter almost exclusively to content. Three kinds of content, he thinks, have been given too much space and too great emphasis; no definite objective has been aimed at; the result is a medley of continuity and discontinuity, of historical facts that burden the memory but do not develop historical-mindedness. History should aim, he holds, at *a perfect comprehension of existing conditions.* It should be an enlarged memory. Just as you feel at home in your native place because memory enables you to make the proper adjustments, so history, a gloriously expanded memory, should make you feel at home not only in every place but in every crisis of conduct.

Roosevelt does not omit content, but his address is an eloquent plea for vision and reconstructive imagination in the writing of history. "It is a shallow criticism to assert," he says in a preceding part of his address, "that imagination tends to inaccuracy. Only a distorted imagination tends to inaccuracy. Vast and fundamental truths can be discerned and interpreted only by one whose imagination is as lofty as the soul of a Hebrew prophet." In the paragraph beginning "The true historian will bring the past before our eyes as if it were the present" (p. 331), Roosevelt not only outlines the task of the future historian but illustrates his contention with equal breadth and brilliancy. The passage belongs to literature.

Mr. Wells returns to content. His view may be illustrated as follows: Suppose that you wished to give a child an idea of the shape of the earth. It's a sphere, but too big to be handled or seen around. You would illustrate, therefore, by a smaller sphere. But you would not use a part

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of a sphere, for that would have a different shape. You must preserve sphericity. Human history, according to Mr. Wells, is one. There is no history except universal history, because there has been no intermission of cause and effect. However small the country that you are treating, you must begin at the beginning; otherwise universality will be lacking, just as sphericity would be lacking if you illustrated the shape of the earth by a piece of an orange. An invigorating conclusion from Mr. Wells's theory is that there can be no war but a world war, no peace but a world peace, no prosperity but a world prosperity.

Turn quickly the pages of the history of the United States that you know best. Do you find in it now defects or excellences that you did not recognize before? Which of our three authors has helped you most in your new estimate?]

THE NEW HISTORY[1]

JAMES HARVEY ROBINSON

In its amplest meaning history includes every trace and vestige of everything that man has done or thought since first he appeared on the earth. It may aspire to follow the fate of nations or it may depict the habits and emotions of the most obscure individual. Its sources of information extend from the rude flint hatches of Chelles to this morning's newspaper. It is the vague and comprehensive science of past human affairs. We are within its bounds whether we decipher a mortgage on an Assyrian tile, estimate the value of the Diamond Necklace, or describe the over-short pastry to which Charles V was addicted to his undoing. The tragic reflections of Eli's daughter-in-law when she learned of the discomfiture of her people at Ebenezer are history; so are the provisions of Magna Charta, the origin of the doctrine of transubstantiation, the fall of Santiago, the difference between a black friar and a white friar, and the certified circulation of the *New York World* upon February 1 of the current year. Each fact has its interest and importance; all have been carefully recorded.

[1] Reprinted from Chapter I of *The New History*, 1911, by permission of The Macmillan Company and Mr. Robinson.

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Now, when a writer opens and begins to peruse the thick, closely written volume of human experience, with a view of making an abstract of it for those who have no time to study the original work, he is immediately forced to ask himself what he shall select to present to his readers' attention. He finds that the great book from which he gains his information is grotesquely out of perspective, for it was compiled by many different hands and by those widely separated in time and in sentiment—by Herodotus, Machiavelli, Eusebius, St. Simon, Otto of Freising, Pepys, St. Luke, the Duchess of Abrantès, Sallust, Cotton Mather. The portentously serious alternates with the lightest gossip. A dissipated courtier may be allotted a chapter and the destruction of a race be left unrecorded. It is clear that in treating history for the general reader the question of selection and proportion is momentous. Yet when we turn to our more popular treatises on the subject, the obvious and pressing need of picking and choosing, of selecting, reselecting, and selecting again, would seem to have escaped most writers. They appear to be the victims of tradition in dealing with the past. They exhibit but little appreciation of the vast resources upon which they might draw, and unconsciously follow, for the most part, an established routine in their selection of facts. When we consider the vast range of human interests, our histories furnish us with a sadly inadequate and misleading review of the past, and it might almost seem as if historians had joined in a conspiracy to foster a narrow and relatively unedifying conception of the true scope and intent of historical study. This is apparent if we examine any of the older standard outlines or handbooks from which a great part of the public has derived its notions of the past, either in school or later in life. . . .

It is, however, often urged that even the hastiest and driest chronicle of the "chief events" in the world's history is a good thing,—that we get at least a chronological outline which we carry about with us as a guide, which enables us to put our future knowledge in its proper relations. We learn important dates so as to read intelligently later of events of which in

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school we learn only the names. We prepare ourselves to place our contingent knowledge of literature, philosophy, institutions, and art in what is called an "historic setting." Many of us have, however, come to suspect that such an outline amounts to very little. It recommends itself, it is true, as the easiest kind of history to teach, since it requires no thought,—only memory. I once had occasion to ask a college professor of great erudition and culture, who resided several years in the Orient, the date of the Hegira, which, with that of Marathon and the battle of Crécy, is generally regarded as part of the equipment of every educated gentleman. He did not know the date, however, any better than I did, so we looked it up in a dictionary. We might, indeed, have saved a minute or two if we had had the information at our tongue's end, but we had never missed it before.

A sensible carpenter or plumber does not constantly carry a saw in his hip pocket, or a coil of lead pipe over his shoulder, in order to be ready for a distant emergency. He very properly goes to his shop and his tool chest for his tools and materials. No more, in these days of cheap and convenient books of reference, need the student of history go heavy-armed for intellectual encounters. Of course all knowledge, even that which is well forgotten, may beget a certain habit of accuracy and sense of proportion, but formulas should follow knowledge, as they do in our best mathematical textbooks; in historical instruction we have ordinarily given our formulas first. . . .

The winning or losing of a bit of territory by a Louis or a Frederick; the laborious piecing together of a puny duchy destined to speedy disintegration upon the downfall of a Cæsar Borgia; struggles between rival dynasties; the ambitions of young kings' uncles; the turning of an enemy's flank a thousand years ago,—have not such things been given an unmerited prominence? Man is more than a warrior, a subject, or a princely ruler; the State is by no means his sole interest. In the Middle Ages he organized a church more permanent, more penetratingly powerful, by all accounts, than any civil govern-

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ment ever seen, even that of Rome itself. He has, through the ages, made voyages, extended commerce, founded cities, established great universities, written books, built glorious cathedrals, painted pictures, and sought out many inventions. The propriety of including these human interests in our historical manuals is being more and more widely recognized, but political history still retains its supreme position, and past political events are still looked upon by the public as history *par excellence*.

In contrast, and even in seeming contradiction, to the tradition which gives prominence to political events and personages, there is a curious element of the sensational in our popular histories. There is a kind of history which does not concern itself with the normal conduct and serious achievements of mankind in the past, but, like melodrama, purposely selects the picturesque and lurid as its theme. . . .

There would be less objection to perpetuating the conception of history as a chronicle of heroic persons and romantic occurrences were it not that the craving for the dramatic can be better met by confessed fiction, and that those who see in history an epic poem give us very imperfect and erroneous notions of the past. In no other subject of study except history is fortuitous prominence accepted as a measure of importance. The teacher of chemistry does not confine himself to pretty experiments, but conscientiously chooses those that are most typical and instructive. Metallic potassium and liquefied air are less common in the laboratory than water, lime, and sulphuric acid. What would be the opinion in regard to a clinical lecturer who dwelt upon leprosy and the bubonic plague for fear his students might be bored by a description of the symptoms of measles and typhoid? In every study except history the teacher seeks to make the important and normal clear at any cost. All his expedients are directed to that one end. The rule, not the exception, is his object.

It is noteworthy, too, that we generally recognize the misleading character of descriptions of contemporaneous conditions

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in which only the sensational events are narrated. Romantic marriages and tragic deaths; the doings of poisoners, adulterers, and lunatics; the cases of those who have swallowed needles to find them coming out at unexpected places years after, who have taken laudanum for paregoric or been run over by beer wagons, —even the fullest account of such matters furnishes, after all, but a partial picture of the life of a great city today. . . . To make true statements is not necessarily to tell the truth. We may, like the "yellow" journalist, narrate facts, but with such reckless disregard of perspective and with such a consistent anxiety to startle the reader that unvarnished fiction would be preferable. . . .

The partiality exhibited by our popular writers for certain classes of historical facts is obviously no proof that other and more pertinent facts should not be brought to the reader's attention. For it may be, as we have seen, either that events are narrated simply because they are pleasing or dramatic or highly exceptional, or that they are mentioned because it is deemed proper that an educated man should know that Philip Augustus became king in 1180 and that the battle of the Boyne was fought in 1690. But a writer who is governed by these motives in his selection of material will naturally produce a book in which famous episodes and mildly diverting anecdotes are given a didactic seriousness by a proper admixture of dry, traditional information.

We are, further, ordinarily taught to view mankind as in a periodic state of turmoil. Historical writers do all they can, by studied neglect, to disguise the importance of the lucid intervals during which the greater part of human progress has taken place. They skip lightly from one commotion to another. They have not time to explain what the French Revolution was by rationally describing the *Ancien régime*, which can alone give it any meaning, but after the quotation from La Bruyère, regarding certain fierce animals, "black, livid, and burnt by the sun," and a repetition of that careless phrase, "After us, the deluge," they hasten on to the Reign of Terror as the be-all and end-all

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of the bloody affair. And in this way they make a second St. Bartholomew's of one of the grandest and, in its essential reforms, most peaceful of changes which ever overtook France or Europe. Obviously the real significance of a revolution is to be measured by the extent to which general conditions were changed and new things substituted for the old. The old must therefore be studied quite as carefully as the new—more carefully, indeed, since our sympathies are usually with the new, and our knowledge of the more recent is fuller than that of the more remote. Hence we might far better busy ourselves with the reasons why arbitrary imprisonments, the guilds, the sale of offices, and so forth were defended by many thoughtful, well-intentioned citizens than waste time in a gratuitous denunciation of them.

I know that at this point the perfectly natural objection may be raised, that while institutions and gradual developments may be very legitimate objects of study for those already trained in historical work, they are not proper subjects for anyone except a university student or an occasional serious-minded and long-suffering general reader. Only conspicuous events and striking crises are, it is ordinarily assumed, within the scope of natural human interest; and the influence of the personal element must, it is urged, be exaggerated, simply because the general trend of development and progress offers nothing which the mind can easily grasp. We therefore substitute for the real historical continuity a factitious continuity and string our narrative upon a line of kings—Magnus VI (1263–1281), followed by Erick II (1281–1299), followed by Hakon V (1299–1320), followed by Magnus VII (1320–1365). No one will deny, however, that most of the names in even the best-known dynasties remain mere names; and even if we learn that Emperor Rudolph II was a learned man and an astrologer, and his contemporary, Henry III of France, "a debauched weakling," this knowledge in no way aids us in grasping the most fundamental and valuable truth which the past has to teach us—that of historical continuity.

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Those, therefore, who would view with distrust any attempt radically to alter our current methods of presenting general history would probably withdraw their opposition to a change if some scheme could be devised by which conditions and institutions could be made interesting and comprehensible, and a real continuity be substituted for the kingly *nexus* with which we now bind the past together. Now I firmly believe that "institutions" (which are after all only national habits) can be made interesting. I use the word "institutions" in a very broad sense to include the ways in which people have thought and acted in the past, their tastes and their achievements in many fields besides the political. Events are the more or less clear expression of "institutions" in this sense, and the events properly selected will serve to make the "institutions" clear.

Hitherto writers have been prone to deal with events for their own sake; a deeper insight will surely lead us, as time goes on, to reject the anomalous and seemingly accidental occurrences and dwell rather upon those which illustrate some profound historical truth. And there is a very simple principle by which the relevant and useful may be determined and the irrelevant rejected. Is the fact or occurrence one which will aid the reader to grasp the meaning of any great period of human development or the true nature of any momentous institution? It should then be cherished as a precious means to an end, and the more engaging it is, the better; its inherent interest will only facilitate our work, not embarrass it. On the other hand, is an event seemingly fortuitous, isolated, and anomalous—like the story of Rienzi, the September massacres, or the murder of Marat? We should then hesitate to include it on its own merits,—at least in a brief historical manual,—for, interesting as it may be as an heroic or terrible incident, it may mislead the reader and divert his attention from the prevailing interests, preoccupations, and permanent achievements of the past.

If we have not been unfair in our review of the more striking peculiarities of popular historiography, we find them to be as follows:

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1. A careless inclusion of mere names which can scarcely have any meaning for the reader and which, instead of stimulating thought and interest, merely weigh down the spirit.

2. A penchant more or less irresistible to recite political events to the exclusion of other matters often of far greater moment.

3. The old habit of narrating extraordinary episodes, not because they illustrate the general trend of affairs or the prevailing conditions of a particular time but simply because they are conspicuous in the annals of the past. This results in a ludicrous disregard of perspective which assigns more importance to a demented journalist like Marat than to so influential a writer as Erasmus. . . .

History is doubtless

An orchard bearing several trees
And fruits of different tastes.

It may please our fancy, gratify our serious or idle curiosity, test our memories, and, as Bolingbroke says, contribute to "a creditable kind of ignorance." But the one thing that it ought to do, and has not yet effectively done, is to help us to understand ourselves and our fellows and the problems and prospects of mankind. It is this most significant form of history's usefulness that has been most commonly neglected.

It is true that it has long been held that certain lessons could be derived from the past—precedents for the statesman and the warrior, moral guidance and consoling instances of providential interference for the commonalty. But there is a growing suspicion, which has reached conviction in the minds of most modern historians, that this type of usefulness is purely illusory. The present writer is anxious to avoid any risk of being regarded as an advocate of these supposed advantages of historical study. Their value rests on the assumption that conditions remain sufficiently uniform to give precedents a perpetual value, while, as a matter of fact, conditions, at least in our own time, are so rapidly altering that for the most part it would be dan-

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gerous indeed to attempt to apply past experience to the solution of current problems. Moreover, we rarely have sufficient reliable information in regard to the supposed analogous situation in the past to enable us to apply it to present needs. Most of the appeals of inexpensive oratory to "what history teaches" belong to this class of assumed analogies which will not bear close scrutiny. When I speak of history enabling us to understand ourselves and the problems and prospects of mankind, I have something quite different in mind, which I will try to make plain by calling the reader's attention to the use that he makes of his own personal history.

We are almost entirely dependent upon our memory of our past thoughts and experiences for an understanding of the situation in which we find ourselves at any given moment. To take the nearest example, the reader will have to consult his own history to understand why his eyes are fixed upon this particular page. If he should fall into a sound sleep and be suddenly awakened, his memory might for the moment be paralyzed, and he would gaze in astonishment about the room, with no realization of his whereabouts. The fact that all the familiar objects about him presented themselves plainly to his view would not be sufficient to make him feel at home until his memory had come to his aid and enabled him to recall a certain portion of the past. The momentary suspension of memory's functions as one recovers from a fainting fit or emerges from the effects of an anæsthetic is sometimes so distressing as to amount to a sort of intellectual agony. In its normal state the mind selects automatically, from the almost infinite mass of memories, just those things in our past which make us feel at home in the present. It works so easily and efficiently that we are unconscious of what it is doing for us and of how dependent we are upon it. It supplies so promptly and so precisely what we need from the past in order to make the present intelligible that we are beguiled into the mistaken notion that the present is self-explanatory and quite able to take care of itself, and that the past is largely

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dead and irrelevant except when we have to make a conscious effort to recall some elusive fact.

What we call history is not so different from our more intimate personal memories as at first sight it seems to be, for very many of the useful and essential elements in our recollections are not personal experiences at all, but include a multitude of things which we have been told or have read; and these play a very important part in our life. Should the reader of this page stop to reflect, he would perceive a long succession of historical antecedents leading up to his presence in a particular room, his ability to read the English language, his momentary freedom from pressing cares, and his inclination to center his attention upon a discussion of the nature and value of historical study. Were he not vaguely conscious of these historical antecedents, he would be in the bewildered condition spoken of above. Some of the memories necessary to save him from his bewilderment are parts of his own past experience, but many of them belong to the realm of history, namely, to what he has been told or what he has read of the past.

I could have no hope that this line of argument would make the slightest impression upon the reader were he confined either to the immediate impressions of the moment or to his personal experiences. It gives one something of a shock, indeed, to consider what a very small part of our guiding convictions are in any way connected with our personal experience. The date of our own birth is quite as strictly historical a fact as that of Artaphernes or of Innocent III; we are forced to a helpless reliance upon the evidence of others for both events.

So it comes about that our personal recollections insensibly merge into history in the ordinary sense of the word. History, from this point of view, may be regarded as an artificial extension and broadening of our memories and may be used to overcome the natural bewilderment of all unfamiliar situations. Could we suddenly be endowed with a Godlike and exhaustive knowledge of the whole history of mankind, far more complete

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than the combined knowledge of all the histories ever written, we should gain forthwith a Godlike appreciation of the world in which we live and a Godlike insight into the evils which mankind now suffers, as well as into the most promising methods for alleviating them, *not because the past would furnish precedents of conduct but because our conduct would be based upon a perfect comprehension of existing conditions founded upon a perfect knowledge of the past.* As yet we are not in a position to interrogate the past with a view to gaining light on great social, political, economic, religious, and educational questions in the manner in which we settle the personal problems which face us,—for example, whether we should make such and such a visit or investment or read such and such a book,—by unconsciously judging the situation in the light of our recollections. Historians have not as yet set themselves to furnish us with what lies behind our great contemporaneous task of human betterment. They have hitherto had other notions of their functions, and were they asked to furnish answers to the questions that a person *au courant* with the problems of the day would most naturally put to them, they would with one accord begin to make excuses. One would say that it had long been recognized that it was the historian's business to deal with kings, parliaments, constitutions, wars, treaties, and territorial changes; another would declare that recent history cannot be adequately written and that, therefore, we can never hope to bring the past into relation with the present, but must always leave a fitting interval between ourselves and the nearest point to which the historian should venture to extend his researches; a third will urge that to have a purpose in historical study is to endanger those principles of objectivity upon which all sound and scientific research must be based. So it comes about that our books are like very bad memories which insist upon recalling facts that have no assignable relation to our needs, and this is the reason why the practical value of history has so long been obscured.

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In order to make still clearer our dependence upon history in dealing with the present, let the reader remember that we owe most of our institutions to a rather remote past, which alone can explain their origin. The conditions which produced the Holy Roman Apostolic Church, trial by jury, the Privy Council, the degree of LL.D., the Book of Common Prayer, "the liberal arts," were very different from those that exist today. Contemporaneous religious, educational, and legal ideals are not the immediate product of existing circumstances, but were developed in great part during periods when man knew far less than he now does. Curiously enough our habits of thought change much more slowly than our environment and are usually far in arrears. Our respect for a given institution or social convention may be purely traditional and have little relation to its value, as judged by existing conditions. We are therefore in constant danger of viewing present problems with obsolete emotions and of attempting to settle them by obsolete reasoning. This is one of the chief reasons why we are never by any means perfectly adjusted to our environment.

Our notions of a church and its proper function in society, of a capitalist, of a liberal education, of paying taxes, of Sunday observance, of poverty, of war, are determined only to a slight extent by what is happening today. The belief on which I was reared, that God ordained the observance of Sunday from the clouds of Sinai, is an anachronism which could not spontaneously have developed in the United States in the nineteenth century; nevertheless, it still continues to influence the conduct of many persons. We pay our taxes as grudgingly as if they were still the extortions of feudal barons or absolute monarchs for their personal gratification, although they are now a contribution to our common expenses fixed by our own representatives. Few have outgrown the emotions connected with war at a time when personal prowess played a much greater part than the Steel Trust. Conservative college presidents still feel obliged to defend the "liberal arts" and the "humanities" without any very

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clear understanding of how the task came to be imposed upon them. To do justice to the anachronisms in conservative economic and legal reasoning would require a whole volume.

Society is today engaged in a tremendous and unprecedented effort to better itself in manifold ways. Never has our knowledge of the world and of man been so great as it now is; never before has there been so much general good will and so much intelligent social activity as now prevails. The part that each of us can play in forwarding some phase of this reform will depend upon our understanding of existing conditions and opinion, and these can only be explained, as has been shown, by following more or less carefully the processes that produced them. We must develop historical-mindedness upon a far more generous scale than hitherto, for this will add a still deficient element in our intellectual equipment and will promote rational progress as nothing else can do. The present has hitherto been the willing victim of the past; the time has now come when it should turn on the past and exploit it in the interests of advance.

The "New History" is escaping from the limitations formerly imposed upon the study of the past. It will come in time consciously to meet our daily needs; it will avail itself of all those discoveries that are being made about mankind by anthropologists, economists, psychologists, and sociologists—discoveries which during the past fifty years have served to revolutionize our ideas of the origin, progress, and prospects of our race. There is no branch of organic or inorganic science which has not undergone the most remarkable changes during the last half century, and many new branches of social science, even the names of which would have been unknown to historians in the middle of the nineteenth century, have been added to the long list. It is inevitable that history should be involved in this revolutionary process, but since it must be confessed that this necessity has escaped many contemporaneous writers, it is no wonder that the intelligent public continues to accept somewhat archaic ideas of the scope and character of history.

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THE HISTORIAN OF THE FUTURE[1]

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

If great events lack a great historian, and a great poet writes about them, it is the poet who fixes them in the mind of mankind, so that in after-time importance the real has become the shadow and the shadow the reality. Shakespeare has definitely fixed the character of the Richard III of whom ordinary men think and speak. Keats forgot even the right name of the man who first saw the Pacific Ocean; yet it is his lines which leap to our minds when we think of the "wild surmise" felt by the indomitable explorer-conqueror from Spain when the vast new sea burst on his vision.

When, however, the great historian has spoken, his work will never be undone. No poet can ever supersede what Napier wrote of the storming of Badajoz, of the British infantry at Albuera, and of the light artillery at Fuentes d'Oñoro. After Parkman had written of Montcalm and Wolfe there was left for other writers only what Fitzgerald left for other translators of Omar Khayyam. Much new light has been thrown on the history of the Byzantine Empire by the many men who have studied it of recent years; we read each new writer with pleasure and profit; and after reading each we take down a volume of Gibbon, with renewed thankfulness that a great writer was moved to do a great task.

The greatest of future archæologists will be the great historian who instead of being a mere antiquarian delver in dust heaps has the genius to reconstruct for us the immense panorama of the past. He must possess knowledge. He must possess that without which knowledge is of so little use, wisdom. What he brings from the charnel-house he must use with such potent wizardry that we shall see the life that was and not the death

[1] From *History as Literature*, annual address of the president of the American Historical Association, delivered at Boston, December 27, 1912. Reprinted from *History as Literature and Other Essays*, 1913, by arrangement with Charles Scribner's Sons.

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that is. For remember that the past was life just as much as the present is life. Whether it be Egypt, or Mesopotamia, or Scandinavia with which he deals, the great historian, if the facts permit him, will put before us the men and women as they actually lived so that we shall recognize them for what they were, living beings. Men like Maspero, Breasted, and Weigall have already begun this work for the countries of the Nile and the Euphrates. For Scandinavia the groundwork was laid long ago in the *Heimskringla* and in such sagas as those of Burnt Njal and Gisli Soursop. Minute descriptions of mummies and of the furniture of tombs help us as little to understand the Egypt of the mighty days, as to sit inside the tomb of Mount Vernon would help us to see Washington the soldier leading to battle his scarred and tattered veterans, or Washington the statesman, by his serene strength of character, rendering it possible for his countrymen to establish themselves as one great nation.

The great historian must be able to paint for us the life of the plain people, the ordinary men and women, of the time of which he writes. He can do this only if he possesses the highest kind of imagination. Collections of figures no more give us a picture of the past than the reading of a tariff report on hides or woolens gives us an idea of the actual lives of the men and women who live on ranches or work in factories. The great historian will in as full measure as possible present to us the every-day life of the men and women of the age which he describes. Nothing that tells of this life will come amiss to him. The instruments of their labor and the weapons of their warfare, the wills that they wrote, the bargains that they made, and the songs that they sang when they feasted and made love; he must use them all. He must tell us of the toil of the ordinary man in ordinary times, and of the play by which that ordinary toil was broken. He must never forget that no event stands out entirely isolated. He must trace from its obscure and humble beginnings each of the movements that in its hour of triumph has shaken the world.

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Yet he must not forget that the times that are extraordinary need especial portrayal. In the revolt against the old tendency of historians to deal exclusively with the spectacular and the exceptional, to treat only of war and oratory and government, many modern writers have gone to the opposite extreme. They fail to realize that in the lives of nations as in the lives of men there are hours so fraught with weighty achievement, with triumph or defeat, with joy or sorrow, that each such hour may determine all the years that are to come thereafter, or may outweigh all the years that have gone before. In the writings of our historians, as in the lives of our ordinary citizens, we can neither afford to forget that it is the ordinary every-day life which counts most; nor yet that seasons come when ordinary qualities count for but little in the face of great contending forces of good and of evil, the outcome of whose strife determines whether the nation shall walk in the glory of the morning or in the gloom of spiritual death.

The historian must deal with the days of common things, and deal with them so that they shall interest us in reading of them as our own common things interest us as we live among them. He must trace the changes that come almost unseen, the slow and gradual growth that transforms for good or for evil the children and grandchildren so that they stand high above or far below the level on which their forefathers stood. He must also trace the great cataclysms that interrupt and divert this gradual development. He can no more afford to be blind to one class of phenomena than to the other. He must ever remember that while the worst offense of which he can be guilty is to write vividly and inaccurately, yet that unless he writes vividly he cannot write truthfully; for no amount of dull, painstaking detail will sum up as the whole truth unless the genius is there to paint the truth. . . .

The true historian will bring the past before our eyes as if it were the present. He will make us see as living men the hard-faced archers of Agincourt, and the war-worn spearmen who followed Alexander down beyond the rim of the known world.

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We shall hear grate on the coast of Britain the keels of the Low-Dutch sea-thieves whose children's children were to inherit unknown continents. We shall thrill to the triumphs of Hannibal. Gorgeous in our sight will rise the splendor of dead cities, and the might of the elder empires of which the very ruins crumbled to dust ages ago. Along ancient trade routes, across the world's waste spaces, the caravans shall move; and the admirals of uncharted seas shall furrow the oceans with their lonely prows. Beyond the dim centuries we shall see the banners float above armed hosts. We shall see conquerors riding forward to victories that have changed the course of time. We shall listen to the prophecies of forgotten seers. Ours shall be the dreams of dreamers who dreamed greatly, who saw in their vision peaks so lofty that never yet have they been reached by the sons and daughters of men. Dead poets shall sing to us the deeds of men of might and the love and the beauty of women. We shall see the dancing girls of Memphis. The scent of the flowers in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon will be heavy to our senses. We shall sit at feast with the kings of Nineveh when they drink from ivory and gold. With Queen Maeve in her sun parlor we shall watch the nearing chariots of the champions. For us the war-horns of King Olaf shall wail across the flood, and the harps sound high at festivals in forgotten halls. The frowning strongholds of the barons of old shall rise before us, and the white palace-castles from whose windows Syrian princes once looked across the blue Ægean. We shall know the valor of the two-sworded Samurai. Ours shall be the hoary wisdom and the strange, crooked folly of the immemorial civilizations which tottered to a living death in India and in China. We shall see the terrible horsemen of Timur the Lame ride over the roof of the world; we shall hear the drums beat as the armies of Gustavus and Frederick and Napoleon drive forward to victory. Ours shall be the woe of burgher and peasant, and ours the stern joy when freemen triumph and justice comes to her own. The agony of the galley-slaves shall be ours, and the rejoicing when the wicked are brought low and the men of evil days have

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their reward. We shall see the glory of triumphant violence, and the revel of those who do wrong in high places; and the broken-hearted despair that lies beneath the glory and the revel. We shall also see the supreme righteousness of the wars for freedom and justice, and know that the men who fell in these wars made all mankind their debtors.

Some day the historians will tell us of these things. Some day, too, they will tell our children of the age and the land in which we now live. They will portray the conquest of the continent. They will show the slow beginnings of settlement, the growth of the fishing and trading towns on the seacoast, the hesitating early ventures into the Indian-haunted forest. Then they will show the backwoodsmen, with their long rifles and their light axes, making their way with labor and peril through the wooded wilderness to the Mississippi; and then the endless march of the white-topped wagon-trains across plain and mountain to the coast of the greatest of the five great oceans. They will show how the land which the pioneers won slowly and with incredible hardship was filled in two generations by the overflow from the countries of western and central Europe. The portentous growth of the cities will be shown, and the change from a nation of farmers to a nation of business men and artisans, and all the far-reaching consequences of the rise of the new industrialism. The formation of a new ethnic type in this melting-pot of the nations will be told. The hard materialism of our age will appear, and also the strange capacity for lofty idealism which must be reckoned with by all who would understand the American character. A people whose heroes are Washington and Lincoln, a peaceful people who fought to a finish one of the bloodiest of wars, waged solely for the sake of a great principle and a noble idea, surely possess an emergency standard far above mere money-getting.

Those who tell the Americans of the future what the Americans of today and of yesterday have done, will perforce tell much that is unpleasant. This is but saying that they will describe the arch-typical civilization of this age. Nevertheless

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when the tale is finally told, I believe that it will show that the forces working for good in our national life outweigh the forces working for evil, and that, with many blunders and shortcomings, with much halting and turning aside from the path, we shall yet in the end prove our faith by our works, and show in our lives our belief that righteousness exalteth a nation.

HISTORY IS ONE[1]

H. G. Wells

One hears nowadays a considerable criticism of the teaching of history in schools and colleges and numerous and various suggestions for its improvement. History, we are told, is made uninteresting or it is made gossipy or it feeds the national and racial hostilities of our fallen nature or fails to throw any light upon the current politics of the world. For most of such criticism a good case is to be made. Nearly all these troubles spring from one root: History is taught by sample and not as a whole.

The attention of the student is concentrated from the first upon the story of his own country, and often upon only a period in the history of his own country, to the more or less complete exclusion of all other aspects of the human story. But a portion of the life of our race is not to be detached in this way without serious consequences. Take, for example, English history as it is taught in an English school. It begins with Celtic Britain. Enter Cæsar and a Roman host. From where? We never learn. Who is this Cæsar, and why did he come? Why did he go? Why did the Romans not come again for the better part of a century? Evidently something much more important was going on elsewhere. A little way on in the story certain Angles, Jutes, and Saxons rush in—as inexplicably. Whence? Why? Later come the Danes. The history of England has the effect of something going on upon a doormat in a passage out-

[1] Reprinted from *The Saturday Evening Post*, May 3, 1919, by permission.

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side a room full of events, a room with several other doors. The door opens, the Norman kings rush out of the room, conquer the country hastily, say something about some novelty of which we have learned nothing hitherto,—the Crusades,—and exit to room again.

From which presently King Richard returns dejected. He has been fighting the Saracens. Who are the Saracens? We never learn. What becomes of them? We are never told. Some Emperor has made him prisoner. Somewhere. So it goes on. The broad back of history is turned to England throughout. It is looking out of the window at unseen things. Its face and hands are hidden, and we make what we can of the wriggling of its heels.

WHY AND HOW?

The American story is still more incomprehensible. An innocent continent is suddenly inundated by Spanish, Portuguese, French, Dutch, and British, who proceed at once to pick up the thread of various conflicts—initiated elsewhere. Someone called the Pope is seen to be dividing the new continent among the European Powers. Colonies are formed. What are colonies? These colonies, in what is apparently a strenuous attempt to simplify history, break off from their unknown countries of origin. A stream of immigration begins from west and east. The American mind establishes a sort of intellectual Monroe Doctrine and declares that America has no past, only a future. From which sublime dream it is presently roused to find something called European imperialism wrecking the world. What is this imperialism? How did it begin?

The teaching of history in most other countries is after the same fashion. Everywhere the teachers present more or less similar histories of passages and doormats. Great events—the Crusades, the Reformation, the Industrial Revolution—come in with a bang and go out with a slam, leaving no clue, leaving our poor heads spinning. Is it any wonder if history falls back for a little human touch upon childish anecdotes about Alfred and

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the cakes, about the peerless beauty of Mary Queen of Scots, and about King Charles and his spaniels?

The chief excuse offered for teaching history by a separate sample in this way is that otherwise there would be too much to teach.

Kant held that we ought to teach universal and not special history—teach, that is, the whole history of man; but he confessed that he quailed before the task. Lord Bryce, too, in an introduction to Helmont's *Universal History* has supported this idea that universal history is too vast a job to attempt. But is it really too vast a job to attempt?

Suppose other subjects were taught in the same fashion that we adopt for history; suppose we taught human physiology by just sitting down to the story of the liver, only alluding distantly at times to the stomach or to the diaphragm or the rest of the body. Would students make anything of physiology?

Suppose we taught chemistry by seizing upon some special group of substances—elastic substances, shall we say, or coal-tar products, or feldspar minerals—and drummed away at them, did them thoroughly. The student would get to just the sort of thing the ordinary student of history gets today, and that is a jumble of special knowledge with no general ideas at all. He would never get down to anything simple, and he would never get out to anything broad. He would never get a vision of his subject.

After all, may it not be possible to get something, something we may call the elements of history, into such a shape and form that it could be taught in schools in the place of the indigestible broken-off lump of laws and events that is now the substance of school history?

Of course one thing must be understood clearly: If we propose to study history extensively we must not expect to study it so intensively; if our youth is to know something about the Greeks and Assyrians and Indians we may have to relinquish some of the minor dates in the Wars of the Roses or some

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of the finer points in the claims of Queen Matilda—was it?—to the crown of France.

Let us consider what the broad outline of a universal history might be. In effect let us sketch out a syllabus of historical study on the assumption that history is really one study, only to be properly understood as a whole. We will begin with the beginning and go to the end, and plan out the shape of what an intelligent citizen in a modern country ought to know of the past of mankind. We do not suggest that the teaching of this outline of history should come in precisely the order in which we have arranged it, but we do suggest that the body of historical knowledge in the mind of an ordinary young man or woman of seventeen or eighteen could and ought to fall into this order, and that it ought to be there as one coherent and consecutive train of events.

BEFORE MAN PEOPLED THE WORLD

To begin with, we submit, there ought to be an account, broad but true, of the past history of the earth. We cannot see human history in its proper perspective unless we have that. There should be a clear idea of the world's probable origin, its relationship to the moon, its gradual cooling from incandescence, and some realization of the vast ages through which it spun before its crust was cool enough for the first hot rain to trickle over its surface and form the first puddle that became the ocean.

For scores and perhaps hundreds of millions of years the early rocks were forming without any trace of life.

Then life began. Of its origin and nature we have still to learn, but of its early beginnings it is now possible to tell a plain story. Scientific men have now disentangled the process of the slow creeping up of life upon the land from its first beginnings in the shallow seas of that ancient time, and it is a very curious and fascinating process to relate. Until at last when the world was perhaps three quarters of its present age, there were creeping amphibians among the swamp forests and dragon flies in the air.

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All this is now a tellable story, and so, too, is the story of the spread of life to the hillsides in the Age of Reptiles, and how as the great cycles of climate changed from an equable warmth to extremer conditions the reptiles made way for the mammals and birds of the forests and grassy plains that followed. This is no catalogue of incoherent marvels nowadays; it has been worked out far beyond that; it is a prelude of astonishing depth and beauty to the entrance of man upon the scene, and the mind that has not apprehended it sees history flatly and poorly for the need of it.

Much has been learned now of the ancestry of man. But it is only by casual articles in the magazines that people know anything of those interesting sub-races of men—men who were not quite men, who made the first eoliths—and of the nearly human creatures who chipped flints and built fires half a million years ago. So vague are popular ideas in these matters that most of us are disposed to believe the suggestion of the creator of Prehistoric Peeps, that the early men of a hundred thousand years ago were chased about the world by the great reptiles which had vanished twenty or thirty million years before their time.

The long struggle of our flesh and blood to articulate life is still no more to most of us than matter for such burlesque. It has never been made real to us. It seems not to signify. But it does signify, and we do not grasp the values of life fully until that struggle has become a reality in our thoughts about the past.

Much of the early history of the sub-men and men which was confused and controversial and difficult to disentangle thirty years ago has now been so cleared up that it can be put into an orderly and teachable narrative. It is ready for the use of schools. For growing youth there could be nothing more interesting than the evidence of slowly unfolding skill and knowledge, the first implements and the first weapons, the first fires and the earliest habitations, the beginnings of art, the super-

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session of the hunting and fishing life of the paleolithic savage by the life of the neolithic herdsman and agriculturist.

And here again, when we come to the neolithic peoples, the philology and archæology of the last quarter of a century have pieced things together until now they are in a comprehensible order. We really have an outline history of the beginnings of civilization. We really have sound ideas that are more than guesses at the origin and relationship of the broad racial divisions of mankind. We can tell a definite story of the pre-Aryan peoples of the Mediterranean Basin and western Europe and of the pre-Semitic people of Sumeria. But our sons and daughters are not learning these things. They are picking up loose and inaccurate ideas about them from casual reading or they are learning nothing about them at all.

It is possible now to draw a map of the world of twelve or fifteen thousand years ago, when southern Arabia was a land of plenty and the Black Sea stretched across the southern steppes of Russia and was one with the Caspian, and when the Red Sea mingled its waters with the Mediterranean. It is possible now to tell how agriculture and irrigation arose and how the first cities with their priest kings grew around the first temples. We can trace the clash of the early civilizations with the nomadic populations about them, see the first beginnings of social classes and the elementary and embryonic forms of all these institutions and all those struggles of class and interest in which we live today.

A BIG, BROAD STORY

Still more possible and still more necessary for a proper comprehension of our world is an understanding of the way in which writing rose out of pictorial record and made possible the extension of social and political relations beyond the range of the early city states. Much is known now, but it is not so generally known as it should be known, of the slow transition of men's thoughts from tribal gods and city gods to the idea of one God,

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the Father and Judge of all mankind. It is a process that went on concurrently with the growth of kingdoms into empires and with the break-up of little states and peoples; the growth of the double idea of a world dominion on the part of the rulers and of a world brotherhood on the part of driven and distressed and uprooted peoples.

This broad story, broadly told, is of far more educational value than particulars of the court life of Henry VIII and fine points about the Conventicle Act. Our public today would be a wiser public and better able to face the vast necessities of the time if it had even an outline knowledge of the story of the Assyrian and Chaldean and Persian empires and some idea of what the career of Alexander the Great signified to the world of men, even if it had acquired that knowledge at the cost of never having heard of William Rufus.

Still more important is the history of the rise and development of the Roman Empire, the backbone of the modern historical record. Our national histories signify nothing until they are studied in relation to that. It is not so crowded a subject as people are apt to think. It is bad teaching that crowds history. All the history sketched so far could be put plainly and inspiringly, with the help of thirty or forty straightforward maps and a few time diagrams and illustrations, into the compass of an ordinary school history.

But "History is one," and a modern citizen should also know something of the great world beyond the world of the early empires—the world of the Turkish and Hunnish people of central Asia that spread across the Old World between the distant and separate civilization of China, the walled-in triangle of India, and the western civilizations. While a larger and larger portion of Europe, North Africa, and Southwest Asia was being brought together into one system of civilization the nomadic life of these regions of Central Asia accumulated energy, which rolled now westward across Russia to shatter the Roman Empire, now eastward to subjugate China, now into India, and at last in its most fatal raid, in the beginning of the twelfth cen-

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tury, to wreck and destroy the irrigation and so the settled population of Babylonia—Babylonia, which had endured as a populous and civilized land from the very beginnings of civilization.

Until people understand the true meaning of that destruction they will never fully grasp the need for one universal world polity; they will still be prone to cuddle to themselves the silly idea that in the same world it is possible to go on with hunger and savagery in one part and a secure and happy civilization in another. If universal history had no other value at all, it would still be worth teaching because of the convincing way in which it demonstrates from case after case the hopelessness of any dreams of partial prosperity and partial security in the same world with misery. Human history is one history and human welfare is one whole.

THE GREAT FIGURES OF HISTORY

So, too, it is preposterous that we should expect voters to understand the foreign intelligence in their newspapers when they have no idea or only the vaguest idea of the rise of Islam and the share it took in the shattering of the Byzantine system and the way in which it has since developed and seems likely to develop.

National history since the time of Cæsar to the present day, read by itself, is like reading one part in a play with all the other parts left out. The play itself is the drama of the great necessities for human unity struggling with the narrow purposes and egotisms of mankind; the plot of the play is the long struggle through the Middle Ages and to our own time of the idea of the Roman Empire to adapt and reëstablish itself as a form of universal human coöperation. The English schoolboy learns the list of his island kings, with dates; and very dull kings most of them were. The significant figures of history are not these very parochial personages at all, but such monarchs as Charlemagne, Otto III, Frederick Barbarossa, Charles V, and Napoleon. Until the student of history knows something

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about these central characters in European affairs, the proceedings of the kings of England or France, the wars they made, and the expeditions upon which they embarked are totally incomprehensible.

In the fifteenth century came the phase of exploration that the use of the mariner's compass had made possible, and the stage of history broadened to admit America and to join up India and China at last into an effective reaction upon European affairs. In the close atmosphere of our English histories those great events are masked altogether by the stories of the wives of Henry VIII and the contemplation of Queen Elizabeth's tight lacing and of King James's slobbering over his "dear Steenie." (How that unpleasant weakness perplexed and bored our youth!) Yet one might have acquired a very broad and sound knowledge of history and never heard a word about this favorite. He was gossip, he was scandal, a mere transitory pimple on the face of events.

And still more completely not taught today is the story of the great revolution in human affairs that followed the large-scale production of iron and steel and the use of steam and electricity. Mostly this is left out of our school courses altogether in favor of Mrs. Masham—was it?—and the tea parties of Queen Anne's bed-chamber women. Yet can there be any doubt not only of which is the more important but of which is the more interesting and wholesome subject for boys and girls—the story of machinery or the story of the jealousies and intrigues of these old ladies?

In the case of many English people history ends with Queen Anne; with others it gets as far as George III, who is left wondering how the apple got into the dumpling. For this sort of thing, we gather, our fathers died at Blenheim or Waterloo. Not only are English people, so far as their school and college work goes, totally ignorant of the past of history and the general shape of history, but they know practically nothing at all of the last and most eventful century of human experience. They know nothing of the settlement of Europe after Napoleon;

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nothing of the unification of Germany and of Italy; nothing of the liberation of North and South America from Europe; nothing of the exploration and division of Africa; nothing of the modernization of Japan; and nothing of the history of the British Empire.

It is not that they know no history at all and that nothing has been put before them, but that they have had their minds concentrated upon local and trivial matters and dates, to the exclusion of the outline facts. They have, for example, in many cases quite a full knowledge of the controversy about transubstantiation at the time of the Reformation or about the Lollards or John Ball, but they have never heard in school or college of Marx, individualism, socialism, anarchism, syndicalism, trusts, tariffs, or trade unions.

One might imagine that every ten years or so the educational authorities of a civilized democracy such as ours would at least revise the syllabus and curriculum of national history taught in its schools and colleges and bring it up to contemporary interests, but no syllabus of history-teaching in Great Britain seems to have been touched for the last century or more. Partly this is the result of our laziness at the mere mention of things educational; partly it is due to the levity, illiteracy, and want of personal weight or of any sense of responsibility of nearly every education minister Great Britain had before Mr. Fisher; partly it is through the dread of bringing the school work within range of "controversial topics"; but largely it is to be connected up with the failure to understand the supreme need in this modern world for a world-wide common knowledge of the main facts in the history of mankind.

EASILY MADE CHANGES

The political worth of a people is necessarily shaped and limited by the limitations of that people's historical knowledge, and there is no country in the world where the general body of the people has more than a contemptible knowledge of history. The teacher of history teaches his subject not as a subject

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vitally important in the mental structure of the community but as a curious and entertaining collection of side lights upon life. And so most of us are left to pick up in our crowded after-school years knowledge that should have been woven from the beginning into the very substance of our thoughts.

There are, of course, mechanical difficulties in the way of such a rational expansion of the teaching of history in our schools and colleges as we have been suggesting here. The teachers, it will be argued, know the old stuff by heart and very fully; the world is full of convenient textbooks of nationalist history; the traditions of examining are all on the old lines. But, on the other hand, it will be a very delightful release and an interesting adventure for all the more active-minded teachers of history to broaden their scope in this fashion, and it is not true that there are no schoolbooks upon universal history. We have, for instance, Marvin's *The Living Past*, and two American writers, Breasted and Robinson, have produced a very useful universal history in two volumes. The material is all available now for any number of textbooks; it needs but a change in the requirements of a few big examining authorities to cover the land with a mushroom growth of books and wall maps suited to a saner teaching of history. And a saner teaching of history means a better understanding of international problems, a saner national policy, and a happier world.

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THE NEW BIOGRAPHY

[The emphasis in the new biography is on one word—personality. If you write the life of a man or woman and say little about dates or events, but catch and transmit the personality of your subject, you have achieved in the highest sense a biography. Sir Sidney Lee's definition seems almost final: "Biography aims at satisfying the commemorative instinct by exercise of its power to transmit personality." It is this that makes Boswell's *Johnson* (1791) the unchallenged model of biographic excellence. Though Boswell does not use the word "personality," that was plainly his goal. "I am absolutely certain," he wrote to Temple, "that my mode of biography, which gives not only a history of Johnson's visible progress through the world, and of his publications, but a view of his mind in his letters and conversations, is the most perfect that can be conceived, and will be more of a Life than any work that has yet appeared."

Plutarch (A.D. 46–120), in his *Parallel Lives*, had the same ideal. "Nor is it always," he says, "in the most distinguished achievements that men's vices or virtues may be best discerned; but very often an action of small note, a short saying, or a jest, shall distinguish a person's real character more than the greatest sieges or the most important battles." When Boswell speaks of "a view of his [Johnson's] mind" and Plutarch of "a person's real character," the connection shows that they are thinking of that elusive but all-embracing complex that today we call personality.

Dr. Dunn sums up concisely the main problems and the leading tendencies that the contemporary biographer must take note of. When he mentions the present-day demand for "a truthful picture of life, of life's tangled skein, good and ill together," he is adverting to the tendency that Dr. Crothers amplifies in "Satan among the Biographers." It is not a new tendency: Plutarch and Boswell dwell on faults and foibles as well as on virtues. But Dr. Crothers finds that of the two kinds of biography, the "eulogistic" and the "penetrating," the latter is annexing the larger territory. That is because personality is becoming more and more the ultimate quest. But is Dr. Crothers's concluding definition of biography as accurate as Sir Sidney Lee's?

According to Mr. Bradford we need a new term. Biography is too inclusive. He projects the word "psychography," the revelation of a soul rather than the record of a life. "The psychographer's business,"

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he says, "is to deal with qualities of character." This seems only another way of saying that the peak of psychography is personality. When Mr. Bradford adds that "psychography does not pretend to be new; simply to carry further and to carry out more definitely processes familiar to literature for two thousand years," he allies himself with the tradition of the greatest biographers (or psychographers) from Plutarch through Boswell and Sainte-Beuve to Mr. Strachey.

But can psychography afford to dispense with chronology? In *Lee, the American* chronology is accurately observed. In *Damaged Souls* each psychograph is prefaced by a detailed chronological summary. "For the purposes of the psychographer," says Mr. Bradford, "there is nothing equal to a man's own words." But can you get the full import of a man's words unless you know at what period in his life they were spoken?

Turn to your favorite biography and re-appraise it in the light of these three essays. Which essayist has helped you most?]

PROBLEMS AND TENDENCIES OF THE PRESENT[1]

WALDO H. DUNN

Along with its rich contribution, the past has bequeathed many problems. Some of these are persistent, and seem to defy positive solution. After centuries of experimentation, there emerges, for instance, no best order of arrangement. What Isaac Watts wrote in 1725 in regard to methods of procedure employed by biographers applies as truly today as when it was first written: "So in writing the Lives of men, which is called biography," the words are from the *Logic*,[2] "some authors follow the track of their years and place everything in the precise order of time when it occurred; others throw the temper and character of the persons, their private life, their public stations, their personal occurrences, their domestic conduct, their speeches, their books or writings, their sickness and death, into so many distinct chapters." By some writers of the eighteenth century the problems were passed over lightly. "The biographer and historian," we are quoting from the Rev. Samuel Burdy, "have

[1] Chapter IX of *English Biography*, 1916, by permission of the author and of the English and American publishers, J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., and E. P. Dutton & Company.

[2] Pages 516–517.

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materials provided for them; their business then is only to arrange with skill and express with perspicuity."[1] The "*only*" so easily and casually inserted by Mr. Burdy does not lessen the difficulties; biographers still find that efforts to arrange with skill and to execute with perspicuity require all the power and ability that can be summoned.

Apart from these technical problems, perhaps the greatest is to differentiate history from biography. This is a very old problem, arising out of the fact that biography was for so long considered merely a branch of history. From the days of George Cavendish, most biographers have had occasion to refer to their difficulties in dealing with this problem. "Many writers have divided the *reign* of a prince from his *life*, and so have given the *actions* without the *man*; the political occurrences without the genius that gave a rise and a turn to them." In these words the line of demarcation is clearly drawn; the danger of failure resulting from such division is as clearly suggested. A solution seems necessary, and to the writer in question the solution lay along the path of compromise: "It shall be the present design to write the life as well as the reign of this unfortunate prince [Charles I], and give all the true characters of his person along with a relation of all the affairs of his government."[2] Attempts to arrive at a better or a different solution have been many.

The theoretical elements of the problem have been well stated by the Rev. Edward Edwards. Mr. Edwards was not alone a theorist, however; in his *Life of Sir Walter Raleigh* he was face to face with the difficulties which he sets forth.[3] He was, in

[1] *Life of Philip Skelton* (1792), p. 71, of the Oxford University Press edition, in which the work is now easily accessible.

[2] Kennet's *History of England*, Anonymous *Life and Reign of Charles I.*

[3] Students of biography will be interested in this *Life of Raleigh.* In it, Mr. Edwards made the attempt to refrain from the delineation of "great national transactions . . . even by way of giving an historical background to his own humble theme." He also printed Raleigh's letters in a volume separate from the *Life.* Thus, remarks the author, "readers will find in it a twofold departure from methods which, of late years, have become very common in English biography." The work was published in 1868.

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addition, a careful and enthusiastic student of biography in general. We quote his statements at length:

Part of the enduring charm of biographical literature seems to be close akin to the charms of dramatic art. And that resemblance might, perhaps, be made the basis of a somewhat more sharply defined distinction between the proper province of "biography" and that of "history," than is given in the current definitions. It has been said that "biography" is the life of a man; "history" the life of a nation. There is truth, as well as point, in the saying. But plainly, the definition does not carry all the truth. A good biography has a dramatic interest (though not a dramatic completeness) about it, to which the best history of a nation can never attain. In the well-told story of any energetic and individual life there is always an undercurrent of tragedy, so to speak. We cannot feel for the fortunes of a crowd of men, as we feel for the fortunes of one particular man. Very few, perhaps, of those that read attentively the story of a really memorable life, are insensible to the temptation, as they reach the closing pages, of turning back again to the opening pages. Whether or not the writer may have tried to "sum up" the life he has been narrating, most thoughtful readers feel constrained to make a summary and an estimate of their own. They are led to compare the early promise with the late performance; the long toils of the seed-time with the hurried joys of harvest. They strive to realize, within their own minds, some of those many personal retrospections which they are sure must have given color—bright or somber—to the last days, and to the latest thoughts, of the man they have been reading about. Such readers get to feel, as with the vividness of personal experience, that the most successful and best-rounded life is always incomplete, and almost always, in a measure, tragic. They see that the man who has been, in appearance, most thoroughly enabled by an Almighty Overruler, to do with his life what, in his youthful and best moments, he planned to do with it, has yet fallen far short of his aspirations; and that his life is fragmentary. They ask themselves, "Is this, in truth, *the end*?"—"Is it not, rather, a beginning?" Such questions as these do not so readily arise in our minds as we read of the revolutions of empires, or the vicissitudes of nations. . . .

We commonly speak, indeed, of the "national mind"—the "national responsibilities"—the "national life." And there is neither vagueness nor strain in such language. A people has continuity of spirit beneath change of form, not less truly—though diversely—than has a nation.

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The historian who fails to bring out the collective life of a nation, as well as its outward story, misses his function as certainly as does the biographer who tells the sayings and doings of his subject from cradle to grave, but tells them in a way that throws no ray of light on the growth of his intellect, or the life of his soul. With spiritual life (in the truest sense of the term) the historian is not concerned. The collective life of a nation has its boundaries and its term. That national life has very far-reaching issues. But they are all finite. . . .

When one man has for a time almost embodied the collective life of a nation, how ought the mere biographer to deal—or attempt to deal—with the individual and personal career of the man as distinguished from the career of the monarch or temporary leader of a people? Does such a man belong to biography at all? . . .

In the most ordinary lives—if they be worth telling at all—the biographer has a two-columned story to tell, or to interweave. There is the column of outward incidents, and also the column of that intellectual and spiritual growth which is being continually evolved beneath them. Must the biographer in these exceptional cases [such as those of Napoleon and Frederick the Great] attempt to fill three columns in parallel fulness—the third of them being hardly less than the story of a nation? The biographer who should attempt *that* would as surely destroy the proper unity of his work as such an unity has been, many times, destroyed by some painters of battle-pieces. The too-ambitious artist has occasionally striven to depict a battle by exhibiting upon his canvas the muster-rolls of two armies. The result has been a vast crowd of figures which only depict "a battle" in the unfortunate sense that they are mutually destructive. The prudent biographer will, perhaps, be inclined to solve the difficulty by handing over much of his second column, and nearly all of the third, to the historian—whenever he has to deal with the Napoleons and the Fredericks. To chronicle the doings of men of that class is the historian's province. To make some roughly effective summary of these doings, in the way of epitome or extract, will be all that can fairly come within the province of biography. The real biographer cannot, indeed, conceive of a Napoleon whose inmost mental and spiritual history has not been shaped by that wonderful life-itinerary which began at Ajaccio to end at Longwood. He cannot sever, even in thought, the plastic working of the studious days at Auxonne, or of the conversations at Beaucaire, from that of the exultant moments of Austerlitz, or the bitter hours of Waterloo. But he will not, on that account, incur the danger of becoming a mere annalist in a vain attempt to unite

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two several functions, each of which is arduous enough to put a strain on mental power at its best.[1]

In the light of the quotations just given it is well to consider the actual practice of a number of biographers who have found themselves confronted by this problem in its strongest aspects. Few modern biographers have shirked the difficulty; most have attempted a solution. "To enter the domain of history by the pathway of biography," observes Sir Henry Craik, "is a task beset with peculiar doubts and difficulties. How far is it permissible to stray from the narrow pathway we have chosen, and expatiate upon aspects of the time, which do not fall within the personal experience of him whose life we attempt to portray? If we restrict ourselves too much, we move blindfolded along an obscure track; if we range too freely, we lose the identity of the single stream we seek to follow amidst a multitude of devious channels. In writing a biography—above all, in writing the biography of one who has played a large part in the leading transactions of his time—we must build up for ourselves a structure of general history; and having done so, we must then knock ruthlessly away, like temporary scaffolding, all that is not essential to the personal figure which we attempt to present. . . . I am aware that, by some, the biographical aspects of history may be esteemed as but a subsidiary matter, falling beneath the dignity of its more severe domain, and of its larger theories, and foreign to what, in modern jargon, is called the science of history. But in the general, and not unsound, judgment of mankind, these aspects can never lose their permanent interest."[2]

"In what we are to say," writes Walter Sichel at the beginning of his *Bolingbroke and his Times*, "we shall try to avoid

[1] In *A Handbook to the Literature of General Biography*, pp. 13–22. This work, by the Rev. Edward Edwards in collaboration with the Rev. Charles Hole, was projected in eight parts, of which only the first, "General Biography extending over all Ages," was printed, in pamphlet form, at Ventnor, Isle of Wight, 1885. The edition consisted of only 250 copies. The most interesting and illuminative paragraphs are reprinted in the present work.

[2] *The Life of Edward Earl of Clarendon*, Preface.

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the error which mistakes a sequence of dates for an intelligence of energies—the style which is a mere *nuntia vetustatis*, as well as that second-hand repetition of prejudice which, in Bolingbroke's own words, 'converts history into authorized romance.' Character even more than achievement will be our study. To interpret events by character and not character by events, is the true historical method. For, indeed, the peruser of chronicles is too often reminded of an auction in some ancient manor. The garniture is dispersed in order and catalogued for sale. The inventories are tritely truthful and superficially solid. But the mainspring of memories, the intimacies of association are wanting; the ghosts that haunt the whispering corridors are invisible and neglected. It is a sale of dead lumber."[1]

To no one, perhaps, was the problem presented in more serious form than to John Morley. "Every reader will perceive," such are Mr. Morley's words, "that perhaps the sharpest of all the many difficulties of my task has been to draw the line between history and biography—between the fortunes of the community and the exploits, thoughts, and purposes of the individual who had so marked a share in them. In the case of men of letters, in whose lives our literature is admirably rich, this difficulty, happily for their authors and for our delight, does not arise. But where the subject is a man who was four times at the head of the government—no phantom, but dictator—and who held this office of first minister for a longer time than any other statesman in the reign of the Queen, how can we tell the story of his works and days without reference, and ample reference, to the course of events over whose unrolling he presided, and out of which he made history? . . . Assuredly I am not presumptuous enough to suppose that this difficulty of fixing the precise scale between history and biography has been successfully overcome by me. It may be that Hercules himself would have succeeded little better."[2]

"For a thing so commonly attempted," the words are from the Preface of Winston Spencer Churchill's *Lord Randolph*

[1] Vol. i. p. 10. [2] *The Life of William Ewart Gladstone*, vol. i. pp. 1–2.

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Churchill, "political biography is difficult. The style and ideas of the writer must throughout be subordinated to the necessity of embracing in the text those documentary proofs upon which the story depends. Letters, memoranda, and extracts from speeches, which inevitably and rightly interrupt the sequence of his narrative, must be pieced together upon some consistent and harmonious plan. It is not by the soft touches of a picture, but in hard mosaic or tessellated pavement, that a man's life and fortunes must be presented in all their reality and romance. I have thought it my duty, so far as possible, to assemble once and for all the whole body of historical evidence required for the understanding of Lord Randolph Churchill's career."

Arthur Christopher Benson had before him a difficult problem in ecclesiastical history in writing the life of his father, Edward White Benson, Archbishop of Canterbury. "There appeared no choice," says Mr. Benson in the Preface, "between slowly and gradually evolving an elaborate work, which should be a minute contribution to the ecclesiastical history of the time —and for that my professional life as well as my own capacity afforded me little opportunity—and sketching in broad outlines and rapid strokes, with as much living detail as possible, a biographical portrait. . . . It seemed better to attempt to draw as careful a picture of my father's life and character as possible, and to touch on events through the medium of personality rather than reveal personality through events. . . ."

In concluding a discussion of this problem we may bear in mind the opinions of two modern writers qualified to speak as well by study of the subject as by actual practice in writing biography. "Broad views," in the opinion of Edmund Gosse, "are entirely out of place in biography, and there is no greater literary mistake than to attempt what is called the 'Life and Times' of a man. . . . History deals with fragments of the vast roll of events; it must always begin abruptly and close in the middle of affairs; it must always deal, impartially, with a vast number of persons. Biography is a study sharply defined by two definite events, birth and death. It fills its canvas with

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one figure, and other characters, however great in themselves, must always be subsidiary to the central hero."[1] Leslie Stephen offers a solution:

> The provinces of the historian and the biographer are curiously distinct, although they are closely related. History is of course related to biography inasmuch as most events are connected with some particular person. . . . And, on the other hand, every individual life is to some extent an indication of the historical conditions of the time. . . . And yet, the curious thing is the degree in which this fact can be ignored on both sides. If we look at any of the ordinary collections of biographical material, we shall constantly be struck by the writer's unconsciousness of the most obvious inferences. . . . Thus, I have sometimes noticed that a man may be in one sense a most accomplished biographer; that is, he can tell you offhand a vast number of facts, genealogical, official, and so forth, and yet has never, as we say, put two and two together. I have read lives giving minute details about the careers of authors, which yet prove unmistakably that the writers had no general knowledge of the literature of the period. A man will know every fact about all the people mentioned, say, in Boswell, and yet have no conception of the general position of Johnson, or Burke, or Goldsmith in English literature. . . . Now the first office of the biographer is to facilitate what I may call the proper reaction between biography and history; to make each study throw all possible light on the other; and so to give fresh vitality to two different lines of study, which, though their mutual dependence is obvious, can yet be divorced so effectually by the mere Dryasdust.[2]

The problem, however, yet remains; in the practical solution of it, biographers of the present and the future will find full scope for their energies, and the manner of its solution will no doubt constitute the chief contribution yet to be made to the development of biography.

It would seem that biographers, in the toils of such material as they are frequently called upon to struggle with, are not free to work as they choose. We witness their painful endeavors; we listen to their complaints; we accept their apologies. In the face of such struggles, such complaints, such apologies, we come to feel that there must be such a thing as *pure biography*,

[1] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, article "Biography."
[2] *Studies of a Biographer*, vol. i. pp. 12–15.

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and that it is for the attainment of this that every true biographer is panting. Trevelyan telling us that in the *Life of Macaulay* he touches politics only "in order to show to what extent Macaulay was a politician, and for how long," or avoiding criticism of Macaulay's literary labors in the expressed belief that "it is not the province of biography to dilate upon works which are already before the world"; Morley openly passing over "the detailed history of Mr. Gladstone as theologian and churchman"; Edmund Gosse discussing the scientific labors of his father, Philip Henry Gosse, only in so far as they throw light upon the personality of the man; Benson explaining that he will not attempt to write the full story of his father's ecclesiastical career; Robert S. Rait affirming, "If I have written a defence of the General whose life I have attempted to tell, it is because my materials made such a defence the only possible form that a biography of Lord Gough could take"—in these typical examples we have ample testimony to the feeling of limitation—the hampering influence of a difficulty hard to surmount. All would evidently like to avoid the problems involved and write only of the man. Perhaps to do so is not entirely possible. In the case of literary men there would seem to be most possibility of attaining to pure biography.

The problem of dealing with genealogical details confronts the biographer of the present. Since the publication of Oldys' *Life of Raleigh*, there has been a growing tendency to go into ancestral details, a tendency that has been greatly strengthened by the elaborate research methods so characteristic of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There is arising in the minds of many the question whether such long and detailed treatment of genealogy is necessary for biography. Boswell gets along very well without introducing much of ancestral record in the *Life of Johnson*; it is a question whether Lockhart's *Life of Scott* is the better for the length of such record. "The interest in our ancestors," comments Andrew Lang, "'without whose life we had not been,' may be regarded as a foible, and was made matter of reproach, both to Scott and his biographer. . . .

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Scott was anxious to realize his own ancestry to his imagination; . . . whatever he had in himself he would fain have made out a hereditary claim for. In this taste there is not wanting a domestic piety; and science, since Sir Walter's day, has approved of his theory, that the past of our race revives in each of us."[1] We must take into consideration, also, the statement of Carlyle that "the history of a man's childhood is the description of his parents and environment."[2] In the face of all this, however, there is evidence that many will follow Froude's biographer: "In reading biographies," admits Mr. Paul, "I always skip the genealogical details. To be born obscure and to die famous has been described as the acme of human felicity. However that may be, whether fame has anything to do with happiness or no, it is a man himself, and not his ancestors, whose life deserves, if it does deserve, to be written. Such was Froude's own opinion, and it is the opinion of most sensible people."[3] From the point of view of science, the details of a man's ancestry may be highly valuable, and for such purpose may be duly set forth in a scientific work. On the other hand, there is not much doubt that hereafter the canon of unity will rule out of biography proper the most of genealogical detail. We may look, in the future, to see all save the strictly relevant genealogical details relegated to an appendix.

Ever since the value of correspondence became evident to biographers, letters have been made use of freely. The problem of the proper method of adapting correspondence to the uses of biography yet confronts writers; it has been given careful consideration, and there is a growing conviction that instead of lessening the difficulties of a biographer, a vast quantity of correspondence only increases them:

> To correspondence, biography is so much indebted that its subtraction would devastate that section of our libraries. Many a huge and precious volume would shrivel into the mere husk of what it was, if deprived of the letters which gave it both substance and vitality. But none the less is

[1] *Life and Letters of Lockhart*, vol. i. pp. 1–2. [2] *Life of Sterling*.
[3] *Life of Froude*, p. 1.

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it true that the best letters that were ever written in fullest series, are a wretched substitute for a real biography. A correspondence worth preserving should be preserved apart. What the true biographer has to do with it is to use it. The more he can extract of its purport; the more he can absorb of its spirit; the better will be his book. The more he thrusts it in bodily—how admirable so ever in itself—the more will his book be a thing of shreds and patches. To depict worthily and enduringly any human life really deserving to be depicted, is a task which was never yet achieved without a strain on all the faculty the writer could upgather for the occasion. That fact should suffice, one imagines, to convince a man that letter-copying can go but a little way. Any penman can transcribe letters—or without even inking his fingers—can put them together, scissors-and-paste fashion, much quicker than any printer can put them into type.[1]

William Winter remarks that "the unjustifiable use of private letters, as an element in the biography of deceased persons, has been severely and rightly condemned." He then tells us that "a judicious and correct use of such documents, however, can neither do injustice to the dead nor give offence to the living."[2] He thus leaves the problem where he found it. Every biographer must, in the end, arrive at his own solution of just what constitutes "a judicious and correct use" of private letters.

The problem of length is one which biographers of the present and the future must face unflinchingly. It is not a new problem: it has been before the public since the days of Boswell's *Johnson* and Lockhart's *Scott*. It is, however, more vital than ever before: in this day of details, when every possible scrap of information in regard to a man's life is fondly treasured, when significant are in danger of being buried beneath insignificant facts, we may well take pause. "Most modern biographies are too large," the words are those of the Rev. Thomas Davidson—"they err by not selecting merely the significant."[3] In this connection we may well bear in mind, also, another of Mr. Davidson's thoughtful statements: "If, as has been said, every man's life is worth telling for something that there was in

[1] Edwards and Hole, *A Handbook to the Literature of General Biography*, pp. 24–25.
[2] *Old Friends*, p. 206.
[3] *Chambers's Encyclopædia*, article "Biography."

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it of unique interest, it may be equally true that all the life save this particular part was not worth telling at all, and had better have been left untold."[1] Leslie Stephen deprecated the increasing length of biographies in no uncertain terms:

> Lives are really becoming overpowering. Old Pusey—the smallest of human beings—has, I think, four monstrous volumes, discussing baptismal regeneration and the like. It makes one ashamed of the intellect of the race. . . . There are two volumes about Dean Stanley, principally to show that he acted as personal conductor to the Prince of Wales.[2]

A realization of the full import of the problem and a proper application of well-merited ridicule may have the effect of bringing the biographies of the future within reasonable compass.

Herbert Spencer has called attention to a defect necessarily arising out of omission for purposes of compression:

> A biographer or autobiographer is obliged to omit from his narrative the commonplaces of daily life, and to limit himself almost exclusively to salient events, action, and traits. The writing and the reading of the bulky volumes otherwise required would be alike impossible. But by leaving out the humdrum part of life, forming that immensely larger part which it had in common with other lives, and by setting forth only the striking things, he produces the impression that it differed from other lives more than it really did. This defect is inevitable.[3]

It is true that in great degree a biographer "is obliged to omit from his narrative the commonplaces of daily life"—for the simple reason that biography is an art—and it is likewise true that the defect to which Mr. Spencer calls attention is less noticeable in the works of those biographers who possess the highest artistic ability.

Turning from problems to tendencies, we may remark first that there is no decline in the amount of biography that is being written and published; rather, it seems to be on the increase. Life-narrative is still dividing attention well with fiction. It is pleasing to note that "a good biography has a chance amid the

[1] *Chambers's Encyclopædia*, article "Biography."

[2] In letter (Dec. 23, 1904) to Charles Eliot Norton, quoted in Maitland's *Life of Stephen*, p. 420.

[3] *Autobiography*, vol. ii. pp. 326–327.

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welter of war."[1] With the good, there are, of course, great numbers of worthless biographies published. We must simply submit to the output, and, as in the past, allow the worthless ones to disappear. We may, perhaps, and rightly find fault with those biographers who profess merely "to submit materials for others to work up"—professions which amount to confessions of biographical incompetence. These incompetents, however, may also be performing a service, and on their failures more skillful writers may erect successes.

Lives of the type of Johnson's *Savage* and Carlyle's *Sterling* seem to be increasing in number, although in quality few can approach these great models. Although Ruskin probably went too far in saying that "Lives in which the public are interested are scarcely ever worth writing," there is no evidence that Carlyle's statement that "a true delineation of the smallest man, and his scene of pilgrimage through life, is capable of interesting the greatest man," is in any sense exaggerated. It may not be true that the life of a comparatively insignificant, unknown person is of value only when told and interpreted by a writer of the deepest insight and greatest artistic ability; yet so much depends, in such a case, upon the interpretation that successful biographies of this type are likely to remain scarcest in the language. Few, indeed, since Carlyle's *Sterling* have risen to the height of Charles William Eliot's brief sketch, *John Gilley, Maine Farmer and Fisherman*.

Redivival biography continues to flourish. No pains are being spared to reproduce from the dusty records of the past some semblance of a man. In certain instances such biographies are clearly fulfilling a purpose, as, for example, in the case of Laurence Sterne, who waited almost a century for a biographer. The success of such attempts can be but approximate; it is not possible for such biographies to attain to anything like the truth and fidelity of those written by contemporaries. "Some have affected to write the lives of persons long since dead and

[1] In article "War and Books," by James Milne, literary editor of *The Daily Chronicle*, July 27, 1915.

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gone, and their names preserved only by some formal remains, and (ever) dubious traditions," wrote Roger North near the middle of the eighteenth century. "So," he continues, "painters copy from obscure draughts half obliterated, whereof no member, much less the entire resemblance, is to be found. But fiction, supported upon seeming probability, must fill up the blanks and supply all defects. In this manner some lives have become redivival, but with partial views, tending either to panegyric, the advance of some favorite opinions, or factious intrigues; which are fiercely pursued, while the life-scraps come out very thin and meager. And, after great length of time, how should it come off better?"[1] Yet not for this reason should we dismiss earnest attempts to produce such narratives, or deny ourselves such information and pleasure as they may give us. There is always a place for such a scholarly effort as that recently made by Professor Charles Mills Gayley, to fashion for us from most difficult materials some semblance of the personality of Francis Beaumont.[2] One could scarcely set before oneself a more difficult biographical task than to distinguish clearly between Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher—to eliminate the "and" which has so long united the "heavenly twins."

The shadowy border-land between biography and fiction was never more clearly evident than it is at the present. In autobiography, especially, is there danger of wandering too far from actual fact. The danger is, perhaps, unavoidable: for most of us the past is the land of romance, and from our experience in that golden realm all unpleasantness has disappeared, or has been, at least, softened. It is difficult to write of past experiences from the point of view of the past. Such novels as *David Copperfield* and the *Mill on the Floss* are full of personal reminiscences, and go to show how easy it is for autobiography to be turned in the direction of fiction. In his recent book, *Father and Son*, which was crowned in 1913 by the French Academy, Edmund Gosse remarks that "at the present hour, when fiction

[1] *Lives of the Norths*, vol. iii. pp. 273–274.
[2] In his *Beaumont the Dramatist*.

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takes forms so ingenious and so specious, it is perhaps necessary to say that the . . . narrative, in all its parts, and so far as the punctilious attention of the writer has been able to keep it so, is scrupulously true." The volume has much of the charm and much of the method of fiction; it was put forth anonymously, and with the names of persons altered. The narrative constitutes a biography of the father (Philip Henry Gosse) and an autobiography of the son (Edmund) from birth to his twenty-first year. Thus, however careful Mr. Gosse has been to write what is "scrupulously true," the reader feels that over the entire narrative there hangs a veil—the blue haze of the past—and that between the story of *Father and Son* and fiction that is fashioned out of fact, there lies but a step. The book is wrought out of such stuff "as dreams are made on." In William Henry Venable's *A Buckeye Boyhood*, America has produced a somewhat similar veiled autobiography, which, though perhaps following Mr. Gosse's work at a distance, is yet worthy to be named with it. Read in connection with such matter-of-fact works as the autobiographies of Franklin, Hume, and Gibbon, the tendency illustrated by such books as these of Mr. Gosse and Mr. Venable will stand forth clearly.

Mr. Gosse, in the Preface to *Father and Son*, says that the book "is offered . . . as a record of educational and religious conditions which, having passed away, will never return. In this respect, as the diagnosis of a dying Puritanism, it is hoped that the narrative will not be altogether without significance." One cannot help wondering, after reading these words, whether Mr. Gosse, during the period of writing his narrative, ever thought of a certain New England novel; for long before, in his *Doctor Johns: Being a Narrative of Certain Events in the Life of an Orthodox Minister of Connecticut*, Donald Grant Mitchell also diagnosed phases of "a dying Puritanism." There are many points of likeness between honest, fervid Doctor Johns and Philip Henry Gosse; young Reuben Johns chafed under his father's restraints as bitterly as ever Edmund Gosse did. Both books show the results—somewhat different to be sure—

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of an unyielding, but mistaken religious educational régime. Although it professes to be simply fiction Mr. Mitchell's novel is full of autobiographical touches. These two works should be read in conjunction by those who wish to study the manner in which fact and fiction blend in autobiography—the manner in which fact readily and easily shades into pure fiction. The one book is the complement of the other.

The long-growing tendency to avoid panegyric has been steadily strengthened and confirmed; we no longer demand idealized biography. We have grown very far away from the opinions expressed by William Wordsworth in 1816, in his letter to James Gray concerning biographies of Robert Burns. Wordsworth would have us shrink from the truth; he would have us shield the life of authors from close inspection; he would have us accept the works as apart from the workers:

"Your feelings, I trust," writes Wordsworth to Gray, "go along with mine; and rising from this individual case [Robert Burns] to a general view of the subject, you will probably agree with me in opinion that biography, though differing in some essentials from works of fiction, is nevertheless, like them, an *art*—an art, the laws of which are determined by the imperfections of our nature, and the constitution of society. Truth is not here, as in the sciences, and in natural philosophy, to be sought without scruple, and promulgated for its own sake, upon the mere chance of its being serviceable; but only for obviously justifying purposes, moral or intellectual.

"Silence is a privilege of the grave, a right of the departed: let him, therefore, who infringes that right, by speaking publicly of, for, or against, those who cannot speak for themselves, take heed that he opens not his mouth without a sufficient sanction. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, is a rule in which these sentiments have been pushed to an extreme that proves how deeply humanity is interested in maintaining them. . . .

"The general obligation upon which I have insisted, is especially binding upon those who undertake the biography of *authors*. Assuredly, there is no cause why the lives of that class of men should be pried into with the same diligent curiosity, and laid open with the same disregard of reserve, which may sometimes be expedient in composing the history of men who have borne an active part in the world. Such thorough knowledge of the good and bad qualities of these latter, as can only be obtained by a scrutiny of their private lives, conduces to explain not

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only their public conduct, but that of those with whom they have acted. Nothing of this applies to authors, considered merely as authors. Our business is with their books—to understand and to enjoy them. And, of poets more especially, it is true—that, if their works be good, they contain within themselves all that is necessary to their being comprehended and relished. It should seem that the ancients thought in this manner; for of the eminent Greek and Roman poets, few and scanty memorials were, I believe, ever prepared; and fewer still are preserved. It is delightful to read what, in the happy exercise of his own genius, Horace chooses to communicate of himself and his friends; but I confess I am not so much a lover of knowledge, independent of its quality, as to make it likely that it would much rejoice me, were I to hear that records of the Sabine poet and his contemporaries, composed upon the Boswellian plan, had been unearthed among the ruins of Herculaneum. You will interpret what I am writing, *liberally*. With respect to the light which such a discovery might throw upon Roman manners, there would be reasons to desire it: but I should dread to disfigure the beautiful ideal of the memories of those illustrious persons with incongruous features, and to sully the imaginative purity of their classical works with gross and trivial recollections. The least weighty objection to heterogeneous details, is that they are mainly superfluous, and therefore an incumbrance.

"But you will perhaps accuse me of refining too much; and it is, I own, comparatively of little importance, while we are engaged in reading the *Iliad*, the *Eneid*, the tragedies of *Othello* and *King Lear*, whether the authors of those poems were good or bad men; whether they lived happily or miserably."[1]

While we are simply engaged in *reading* great works it may, indeed, be a matter of "comparatively little importance whether the authors were good or bad men; whether they lived happily or miserably"; but when we turn to a consideration of an author's life—in other words, when we turn to the *biography* of an author—it *is* a matter of importance that we have the truth. Biography, in short, has come to be regarded as "a truthful picture of life, of life's tangled skein, good and ill together. Biography prejudices its chances of success when it is consciously designed as an ethical guide of life."[2] While there is a present-day demand for truth, there is at the same time no de-

[1] *Prose Works of Wordsworth*, edited by William Knight, vol. ii. pp. 259–277.

[2] Lee, *Principles of Biography*, p. 20.

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mand that the faults of a man's life should be exaggerated: a due sense of proportion is all that is asked for.[1] Wordsworth speaks of the "poetic character which Burns reared on the basis of his actual character," and would have us consider this "airy fabric" alone, forgetting that branch cannot be separated from root. Wordsworth's method, followed to its logical conclusion, would soon result in myth; in fact he seemed to prefer that details of a poet's life should recede more and more into the mythical past.

"Now, there's Abraham Lincoln," remarked Walt Whitman one day to Horace Traubel, and his words may well be set down in contrast to those of Wordsworth—

> Now, there's Abraham Lincoln: people get to know his traits, his habits of life, some of his characteristics set off in the most positive relief; soon all sorts of stories are fathered on him—some of them true, some of them apocryphal—volumes of stories (stories decent and indecent) fathered on him: legitimate stories, illegitimate: and so Lincoln comes to us more or less falsified. Yet I know that the hero is after all greater than any idealization. Undoubtedly—just as the man is greater than his portrait—the landscape than the picture of it—the fact than anything we can know about the fact. While I accept the records I think we know very little of the actual. I often reflect, how very different every fellow must have been from the fellow we come upon in the myths—with the surroundings, the incidents, the push and pull of the concrete moment, all left out or wrongly set forth. It is hard to extract a man's real self—any man—from such a chaotic mass—from such historic débris.[2]

Later, Traubel records:

> W. said to me tonight again as he has before: "Some day you will be writing about me: be sure to write about me honest: whatever you do do not prettify me: include all the hells and damns." Adding: "I have hated so much of the biography in literature because it is so untrue: look at our national figures how they are spoiled by liars: by the people who think they can improve on God Almighty's work—who put on an extra touch here, there, here again, there again, until the real man is no longer recognizable."[3]

[1] As a statement of one point of view, Mrs. Oliphant's article on "The Ethics of Biography," in the *Contemporary Review*, July, 1883, is interesting.

[2] *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, vol. i. p. 108.

[3] Ibid. p. 398.

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We may safely conclude that the tendency of the present is towards the truth; that hereafter men's faults will be set forth in proper proportion. In America, the *True Series* of biographies bears testimony to an honest—if not always successful—endeavor to write biography that is not deformed panegyric or refined myth.

The Boswell-autobiographical method has become firmly established. Its persistence in all great biography of the present is evidence that it will dominate the future. It is worth while to record that one of the most recent (1915) biographies, *The Life and Work of Edward Rowland Sill*, achieves a successful delineation of its subject, perhaps because its author, William Belmont Parker, abandoned his original design—although he had half completed his task—and, acting upon a hint expressed in Leslie Stephen's essay on Autobiography, turned back to make the book, so far as possible, an autobiography of Sill. Modern biographies differ, of course, very much from Boswell's model; almost all of them, as is well-nigh inevitable, contain far less of conversation. The present has produced, however, one work that approaches Boswell's. Mr. Horace Traubel has thus far given in his *With Walt Whitman in Camden* a minute record of Whitman's life from March 28, 1888, until January 20, 1889. The 1614 pages of this three-volume record contain an amount of conversation equaling, if not surpassing, that of Johnson's gathered by Boswell. Mr. Traubel has not, unfortunately, written a biography of Whitman, he has merely published the record which he made day by day. "I do not want to re-shape those years," he writes. "I want them left as they were. I keep them forever contemporary. I trust in the spontaneity of first impressions. . . . So I have let Whitman alone. I have let him remain the chief figure in his own story. . . . I do not come to conclusions. I provide that which may lead to conclusions. I provoke conclusions."[1] Thus it is that Mr. Traubel has preferred to remain a recorder rather than attempted to become a biographer.

[1] In his foreword, "To Readers."

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Although problems are being faced and solutions attempted, although certain tendencies stand forth clearly, it remains true that the end of the experimental stage has not yet been reached.

The mode of treatment, especially in modern times, is far from uniform. In some cases biography approaches the sphere of philosophy; in others, that of history; while in the majority it assumes, to a large extent, the character of analytic or descriptive criticism. To none of these modes, theoretically considered, can there be any valid objection; everything depends on the judiciousness of the biographer.[1]

While the methods may not be uniform, the aim of biography has become fixed and definite.

The aim of biography is, in general terms, to hand down to a future age the history of individual men and women, to transmit enduringly their character and exploits. Character and exploits are for biographical purposes inseparable. Character which does not translate itself into exploit is for the biographer a mere phantasm. The exploit may range from mere talk, as in the case of Johnson, to empire-building and military conquest, as in the case of Julius Cæsar or Napoleon. But character and exploit jointly constitute biographic personality. Biography aims at satisfying the commemorative instinct by exercise of its power to transmit personality.[2]

There is practical unanimity of belief that the biographer "must keep perpetually in view . . . the personality and characteristics of his subject. If these are buried under a load of digressive dissertations, his book, however valuable or interesting, ceases to be a biography except in name.[3]

We have no reason to deplore either the course of the best modern biography, or the tendencies of the first quarter of the twentieth century. Already we may point with pride to such works as Allen's *Life of Phillips Brooks*, Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, Palmer's *Alice Freeman Palmer*, and Cook's *Life of Ruskin*. The very length of three of these biographies

[1] *New International Encyclopædia*, article "Biography."
[2] Lee, *Principles of Biography*, pp. 8–9.
[3] *New International Encyclopædia*, article "Biography."

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impresses upon us, however, the necessity of emphasizing the admonition of Sir Sidney Lee:

> More than ever at the present day is there imperative need of winnowing biographic information, of dismissing the voluminous chaff while conserving the grain. . . . The biographer's labors will hereafter be immensely increased; but they will be labors lost, unless principles of discrimination be rigorously applied.[1]

SATAN AMONG THE BIOGRAPHERS[2]

Samuel McChord Crothers

By Satan I do not mean the evil spirit who goes about like a roaring lion. I have in mind the Satan who appears in the prologue to the Book of Job. He is the adversary, the one who presents the other side. When the sons of God came together, then came the adversary among them. He belonged to the assembly, but he sat on the opposition bench. He introduced questions which had occurred to him as he walked up and down upon the earth. His function was to challenge generally received opinions. There was Job. Every one looked upon him as a man who was as righteous as he was prosperous. But was he? Satan suggested that his character should be analyzed. Take away Job's prosperity and let us see what becomes of his righteousness.

Now, that critical spirit has entered into the biographers and influenced their attitude toward what they used to call the subject of their sketch. It used to be taken for granted that the tone of biography should be eulogistic. "Let us praise famous men and the fathers who begat us." This indicates how closely biography is related to genealogy. The text is often transformed into "Let us praise the fathers who begat us, and if we have sufficient literary skill we may make them famous."

[1] *Principles of Biography*, pp. 41–42.

[2] From *The Cheerful Giver*, 1923, by permission of the author and the publishers, Houghton Mifflin Company.

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The lives of the saints have a great sameness, for it is necessary that they should be saintly. Even when their adventures are of the most astonishing character, the chronicler must throw in a word now and then to show that they are not acting out of character. Thus that wild Irish saint, Saint Brandan, who went careering over the Western Sea like another Sindbad the Sailor, must have a religious motive for his voyage. The chronicler declares, "seven years on the back of a whale he rode, which was a difficult mode of piety." Had Brandan been a layman, we might have admired him for his acrobatic gifts. Being a saint, we must see him balancing himself on the back of a whale as a pious exercise.

Biographers on the whole have been a rather modest folk and have had scant recognition in academic circles. Thus there are numberless professors of history—ancient and modern—but when recently a Minnesota college established a professorship of biography, the title seemed a strange one. The educational world has followed the example of Nature—so careful of the type, so careless of the single life.

But a new school of biography has arisen, and it is of interest to compare it with the old. The great difference is in the attitude of the biographer toward his subject. The attitude of the old biographer was that of a painter who was commissioned to paint the portrait of a great man. He wished to make a likeness and to make it as lifelike as possible; but he had to recognize the proprieties. The painter is frankly on the outside, and can give only so much of character as is revealed in the countenance. So the biographer was dealing frankly with externals. What the great man did or said could be recorded, but what he meant could only be guessed. Every man's mind was his castle, and there were private rooms into which the public had no right to intrude. If a person were very inquisitive, he might, if he got the chance, peep in through the windows of the soul; but that was as far as he could go. He was necessarily an outsider.

But of late the biographer has become bolder and, instead of peeping in, has taken to breaking and entering. His method is

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described as "penetrating." We see him not only prowling in the consciousness, but penetrating into the most remote portions of the subconsciousness. We see him throwing his flashlight upon motives concealed from nearest friends. It is the era of the X-ray, and human character cannot escape the methods of research. The biographer attempts to show us a man's mind as viewed from the inside. How he gets inside is his business—not ours.

Let us compare John Morley's *Gladstone* with Mr. Strachey's *Queen Victoria*. Morley takes his subject very seriously. Gladstone was a great man, and knew it, and so did every one else. He lived in a great period and was an important part of it. Morley was a friend who followed his career with respectful but discriminating interest. He was in a position to know a great many facts. But he did not intrude. A vast number of details are given, but the result of it all is that we feel that we are looking *at* Gladstone and not through him. We know what he did and what he said, and we know what interpretations his friend Morley put upon his words and actions; but we can only guess at his ulterior motives. We see the conclusions to which he came, but not all the mental processes by which they were reached. Mr. Gladstone always appears to us clothed and in his right mind. If he had any unlucid intervals, they are not a part of the record. As for exploring Gladstone's subconscious mind, his friend would as soon have thought of poking about in his host's pantry without asking leave. What did Gladstone think when he wasn't addressing the public or preparing to address it? The biographer would say, "That is none of your business, nor is it mine."

The same impression is made by Trevelyan's *John Bright*. We feel that we know John Bright as well as his constituents knew him. It never occurs to us that we know him better.

Turn to Mr. Strachey's delightful biography of Queen Victoria. We have a surprise. We are conscious of a new sensation. To say that the book is stimulating is faint praise. It is intoxicating. Here is biography with its crudenesses and irrelevancies distilled away. We get the essential spirit.

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It is not that we are behind the scenes as an ordinary playgoer who is allowed this novel experience, that he may see how things look on that side of the curtain. We are behind the scenes as a playwright who is also his own stage manager may be behind the scenes. We feel that somehow we have an intimate knowledge of how the lights should be arranged to produce the best effects. We have no illusions ourselves, but this allows us to watch the production of the play with keener intellectual interest.

We see Queen Victoria, not as her admiring subjects, with superstitious ideas about royalty, saw her, but as she would have seen herself, had she been as clever as we are. The revelation has all the charm that an autobiography would have if a person would speak about himself without vanity and without self-consciousness.

In reading the *Confessions* of Saint Augustine or Rousseau, we feel that they are trying to tell the whole truth about themselves, but we are not convinced that they have succeeded. They confess certain sins that attract their attention; but what of those failings which Saint Paul describes as "the sins that so easily beset us"? Some of these beset a person so closely that he doesn't know that they are there. There are certain commonplace faults which are seldom confessed by the most conscientious. I have never come across an autobiography in which the writer drew attention to the fact that his friends often found him a little wearing.

Mr. Strachey gives us Victoria's autobiography written by somebody else who saw through her. There is an awareness of all her limitations and a cool appreciation of her middle-class virtues. We sympathize with her efforts to live up to her station in life. We see her successes and admire her pluck. When she makes mistakes, we recognize that she is thoroughly conscientious. Her judgments are often shrewd. She is rather muddle-headed in regard to the new problems of the day, but not more so than her constitutional advisers. She is a real character, and we know her in the same way that we know

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Becky Sharp and Mrs. Proudie. We feel that we not only know what she did, but we know the moving why she did it. We know also why she did not do more. It was because it wasn't in her to do more. And her environment was exactly fitted to her personality. We feel that it was no mere coincidence that she lived in the Victorian Age.

In *Eminent Victorians*, Mr. Strachey reversed the methods practiced by writers like Walter Scott. They took some well-known historical character and allowed their imagination to play about it. The result was Historical Romance, or Romance founded on fact.

Mr. Strachey takes well-known historical characters of the last generation, like Arnold of Rugby, Cardinal Manning, Chinese Gordon, and Florence Nightingale, and shows us that they have become in a short time little better than noted names of fiction. Every man is his own myth-maker and his friends and enemies collaborate in producing something quite different from the reality. The ordinary biography is, therefore, little more than a collection of facts founded on a fiction. The problem, then, is not simply to reëxamine the facts, but to rearrange them so that they will tell a true story and not a false. The biographer is like a typesetter. He must first distribute the type and then set it up again to form new words and sentences.

No saint in the calendar had a legend more firmly fixed and authenticated than Florence Nightingale. The public not only knew what she did, but was convinced that it knew what kind of person she was. She was the lady with the lamp, the gentle ministering angel who went about through the hospitals in the Crimea. She was the one who brought the feminine touch to war.

Mr. Strachey does not change the outlines of her story. That is a matter of historic record. She did all and more than we have been taught to believe. But he shows Florence Nightingale as an altogether different kind of person.

The feminine gives way to a masterful personality. Florence Nightingale was the stuff that successful politicians and cap-

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tains of industry are made of. She appears as a formidable person, abrupt in manner, often bitter in speech, the terror of evildoers, and still more the terror of incompetent welldoers. She was strong-minded, neurasthenic, intense in her antipathies, and not pleasant to live with; but she got things done.

She was born in a wealthy family. She wanted to have her own way, but was never quite sure what it was to be. This was an endless trouble to her family, who never knew what to do with Florence, or rather what Florence would let them do for her.

When marriage was suggested, she writes:

> The thoughts and feelings I have now I can remember since I was six years old. A profession, a trade, a necessary occupation, something to fill and employ all my faculties I have always felt essential to me. Everything has been tried—foreign travel, kind friends, everything. My God, what is to become of me?

Then came the Crimean War with the breakdown of the hospital service. At last she had won her way, and it proved a gloriously right way. She won immortal fame.

The war ended, and Florence Nightingale had fifty years of invalidism. But she was the same energetic, pugnacious personality. Almost to the end she refused to wear the halo prepared for her by the public which she continued to serve faithfully and acrimoniously. We are made to feel that Florence Nightingale loved her fellow men, but not as an amiable person loves those friends whom he finds congenial. She loved mankind as a thoroughly conscientious person might love his enemies. "Sometimes," says Mr. Strachey, "her rages were terrible. The intolerable futility of mankind obsessed her, and she gnashed her teeth at it."

This is a triumph of biographical reconstruction. We see Florence Nightingale as great and good, though with a very different assortment of virtues.

Yet, after all, Mr. Strachey gives us no facts which Sir Edward Cook had not narrated in his two-volume biography of Florence Nightingale. The only difference is that Sir Edward obscures

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the significance of many of the facts by his uniformly eulogistic comments. Thus he doesn't say that Florence in her girlhood must have been a difficult person to live with, but he says:

> The companionship which Florence had at home was sometimes wearisome to her. . . . Mamma, we may suppose, was busy with housekeeping cares. Papa was fond of reading aloud, and in order to interest his daughters would take them through the whole of the *Times* with many a comment, no doubt, by the way. "Now for Parthe," Miss Nightingale used to say, "the morning's reading did not matter; she went on with her drawing; but for one who had no such cover, the thing was boring to desperation. To be read aloud to is the most miserable exercise of the human intellect. Or rather is it any exercise at all? It is like lying on one's back with one's hands tied, and having liquid poured down one's throat. Worse than that, because suffocation would immediately ensue, and put a stop to the operation. But no suffocation would stop the other."

The comment of Sir Edward on these revelations of the domestic side of his heroine is in the style of the old biography:

> Florence was an affectionate and dutiful daughter. She obeyed and yielded for many years. She strove hard to think that her duty lay at home, and that the trivial round and common task would furnish all that she had any right before God or man to ask.

There is something refreshing in Mr. Strachey's judgment on the facts. Florence Nightingale was not a very affectionate daughter or sister, but she was a glorious benefactor to suffering humanity.

When I turn to Arnold of Rugby and Chinese Gordon, I begin to have misgivings. Mr. Strachey's portraits are marvelously clear, but there is something lacking. Looking through the eyes of Thomas Hughes and Dean Stanley, we see Dr. Arnold as a great man. We cannot expect Mr. Strachey to share their awe, for Dr. Arnold was not his schoolmaster. But we do not feel that he accounts for the impression the Doctor made on those who knew him.

As for General Gordon, we see him not through the eyes of a hero worshiper, but as he appeared to one who had no sympathy with his enthusiasms. That irony which is delightful when

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playing around the figure of Queen Victoria seems out of place when directed toward the hero of Khartum. There was a touch of fanaticism about Gordon, just as there was about Cromwell. But Carlyle's Cromwell stands out against the background of eternity, and is justified. Strachey's Gordon stands condemned against a bleak background of common sense. Even the final tragedy is told without any relenting admiration. The whole thing was so unnecessary. When all was over, we are told of the group of Arabs whom Slatin Pasha saw, one of whom was carrying something wrapped in a cloth. "Then the cloth was lifted and he saw before him Gordon's head. The trophy was taken to the Mahdi; at last the two fanatics met face to face."

Thirteen years after, Kitchener fearfully avenged his death at Omdurman, "after which it was thought proper that a religious ceremony in honor of Gordon should be held at the Palace in Khartum. The service was conducted by four chaplains and concluded with a performance of 'Abide with Me,' General Gordon's favorite hymn. General Gordon, fluttering in some remote Nirvana the pages of a phantasmal Bible, might have ventured a satirical remark. But General Gordon had always been a contradictious person, even a little off his head, perhaps—though a hero; and, besides, he was no longer there to contradict. At any rate, all ended happily in a glorious slaughter of twenty thousand Arabs, a vast addition to the British Empire, and a step in the peerage for Sir Evelyn Baring."

What is it that offends in this? It is the unfairness, not to Gordon, but to his contemporaries. Gordon represented an ideal that belonged to his generation. It was British imperialism touched with a sense of responsibility for the government of the world. We have broken with imperialism, but we ought to be touched by the heroism. In brushing aside the judgment of his contemporaries with a touch of scorn, we feel the kind of unfairness of which Cato complained when, after he had passed his eightieth year, he was compelled to defend himself in the Senate. "It is hard," he said, "to have lived with one generation, and to be tried by another."

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Each generation takes itself seriously. It has its own ideals and its own standards of judgment. One who has made a great place for himself in the hearts of his contemporaries cannot be dismissed lightly because he does not conform to the standards of another period. The visitor to Colorado is taken by his friends for a drive over the high plains in sight of the mountains. Pointing to a slight rise of ground that is little more than a hillock, the Coloradan remarks: "That we call Mount Washington, as it happens to be the exact height of your New Hampshire hill."

The New-Englander recalls, with shame at his provincialism, the time when he thought Mount Washington sublime. When he recovers his self-respect, he remembers that a mountain is as high as it looks. It should be measured, not from the level of the sea, but from the level of its surrounding country. Mount Washington seen from the Glen looks higher than Pikes Peak seen from the window of a Pullman car.

In like manner a great man is one who towers above the level of his own times. He dominates the human situation as the great mountain dominates the landscape of which it is a part.

A very alluring opportunity is offered for the scientific study of personages who have made a great place for themselves in history. They have all of them been more or less ailing, and have had "symptoms" of one kind and another. An American medical man has given us a number of volumes entitled *Biographic Clinics*.

Mr. Frederick Chamberlin has given us a large volume on *The Private Character of Queen Elizabeth*. Elizabeth is defended against the charges made by her enemies, but the defense is damaging to the romance which has gathered around her name. She is treated as if she were an out-patient in the General Hospital. The first thing, of course, is to take her family history. Then we have sixty pages of the medical history of Elizabeth Tudor.

The writer is most conscientious, and says: "Items are numbered consecutively, accompanied by Elizabeth's age and the

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date of each. It is attempted to confine each disease or illness to one group." In her long life she had a number of ailments. We are spared not one detail. Following the itemized health record, there are twenty-five pages of "The Opinions of Medical Experts." Mr. Chamberlin, who is not by profession a medical man, presented the data he had collected to the leading consultants, to get their opinion as to what was the matter with Queen Elizabeth.

Sir William Osler was rather brief in his answers to the questions. While agreeing that, judging from the records, the patient could hardly be said to be in good health, he says, "Apart from the dropsy, which may have been nephritis, and the smallpox, the descriptions are too indefinite to base any opinion of much value." To Question IV—What was her probable health during the years for which there are no data supplied?—Dr. Osler answers, "Impossible to say."

Sir Clifford Allbutt is equally unsatisfactory. "Would it be too much to say that after her fifteenth year she was practically an invalid with the possible exception of the years for which no data are supplied, directly or indirectly?" He answers, "It would be too much."

But Dr. Keith of the Royal College of Surgeons gives an opinion at great length, accompanied by a clinical chart. We learn that she had anæmia, stomach and liver derangements, septic conditions of the teeth, and the pain in her left arm may have been from rheumatism.

The reader's apprehensions, however, are somewhat relieved by the consideration that all these ailments did not come at once but were scattered over a period of sixty-nine years. Dr. Keith adds very justly that the diagnosis would be more complete had the physician had an opportunity personally to examine the patient. "In the case of Queen Elizabeth, the modern physician is separated from his patient by more than three hundred years; he has to attempt a diagnosis on historical data."

By the way, it is interesting to see how the course of history modifies scientific opinion. When she was about eighteen,

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Elizabeth had an illness which Dr. Howard at first diagnosed as the most extreme form of kidney disease. "But," he adds, "it seems hardly possible that the subject of nephritis of so severe a type would live to be nearly seventy." He therefore inclines to the theory that the trouble was "acute endocarditis and mitral regurgitation"; and then he adds, with the fairness characteristic of a scientific man, "The same objection to longevity might be raised to this diagnosis also."

Modern pathology may throw light on some historical characters, but one feels that it has its limitations. Not only do the modern physicians find it difficult to make a complete diagnosis when the patient has been dead for three hundred years, but they find it difficult to keep to the highest standard of professional ethics when speaking of the practitioners of a former day.

Thus Sir Clifford, speaking of the doctors who treated Queen Elizabeth, says:

> My impression is that in the sixteenth century medicine was below contempt: In Queen Elizabeth's time Clowes did somewhat, and, possibly, Lowe; but really all the medicine of value was in Italy; and only by studying in Italy could our doctors then have known anything. Some few did, of course. The rest were hard-shell Galenists and quacks.

This is rather hard, coming from a consultant of the twentieth century who was called into a case that belonged to medical men of the sixteenth century. The fact that these medical men had kept the patient alive for almost seventy years, while the modern diagnosticians would have given her up at twenty, ought to count for something.

I am willing to admit that pathological inquiries may have their uses for the biographer, but there are limits. In this sphere pathology may be a good servant, but it is a bad master. The same may be said of psychology. The psychologist in his own sphere is a modest and hard-working person. The advancement of any science within its own territory is always slow work. If one is to get results he must work for them and share them with others.

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But there is a border line between the sciences which is a fair field for adventure. The bold borderer, with a few merry men, may make a foray and return with booty. The psychiatrists and psychoanalysts have invaded the field of biography in force and are now engaged in consolidating their conquests. Biography is a particularly inviting field. To psychoanalyze a living person takes a great deal of time and patience. But to psychoanalyze historical personages and to point out their various complexes and repressions and conflicts is an inviting pastime. There is no one to contradict.

The old-time theologians in discussing predestination ventured into the recesses of the Divine Mind. Assuming that God both foreknew and foreordained man's fall, they asked which had the priority, foreknowledge or foreordination. Did God foreknow that man would fall and therefore foreordain that he should be punished everlastingly? So said the sub-lapsarians. With more rigid logic the supra-lapsarians contended that foreordination is absolute and independent of all contingencies. God foreordained man's creation, his fall, and his punishment in one decree, and of course he foreknew that the decree would be fulfilled.

Theologians today are modest and are inclined to admit that there are some things which they do not know. But there are biographers whose minds seem to be built on the high supralapsarian plan. When we open the book we feel that everything is foreordained. There are no contingencies. The man's character being determined, the biographer presents us with the incidents which illustrate it. We know the kind of person he is, and his deeds are predetermined.

The clear-cut character sketches in which a man represents a single trait are interesting, but they are most sharply defined when we know only one incident. Some of the most familiar characters of the Bible are known only from a chance word or mere gesture. "Gallio cared for none of these things." Generations of preachers have held up Gallio as an example of the sin of indifference. He was the kind of man who, if he lived now,

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would neglect his religious privileges and forget to register at the primaries. But was Gallio that kind of man? All we know about this Roman magistrate is that he dismissed a case over which he had no jurisdiction, and in regard to which he had little interest. Had we a glimpse of him on another day, we might revise our opinion.

The name of Ananias has been used as a synonym for habitual liar. But in the Book of the Acts it is not said that Ananias *told* a lie: all that is said is that he sold his possessions and laid part of the price at the Apostle's feet. In other words, Ananias did not, on this occasion, make a complete return of his personal property.

When we remember Lot's wife we have a very clear impression of her character. She was a typical reactionary. And yet all we know about her is that on one occasion she looked back. Had we a complete biography we might learn that on other occasions she had been quite progressive.

When this method is applied to persons whose lives are well known, there will always be a great deal of skepticism. How can we be sure that the clever writer has happened on the right clue to the character he undertakes to reveal to us?

In the *Mirrors of Downing Street*, and *Painted Windows*, and *Uncensored Celebrities*, we have interesting studies of character. We have snap-shots of distinguished statesmen and churchmen. But do we really get inside the minds of these persons; and, if we did, should we be as wise as we think we should be?

Take this question in regard to Mr. Lloyd George. The writer, speaking of that statesman's sudden change of front, asks, "How came it that the most pronounced pacifist of a pacifist Liberal Cabinet, who had, six weeks before, begun a passionate crusade against armaments, on the fateful August 4, 1914, gave his voice for war?"

Now, I venture to say that no biographer, furnished with the latest instruments of psychological precision, exploring the recesses of Mr. Lloyd George's mind, but ignoring the tre-

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mendous events of crowded days, could give the right answer to that question.

Why does it happen that a quiet householder in Kansas, who is shingling his kitchen roof on a summer afternoon, is seen the next moment frantically digging himself out of a mass of débris? You cannot understand the sudden change of occupation by an intensive study of the Kansas mind—you have to take into account the nature of a cyclone.

The student of Mr. Lloyd George's mind says:

> He is always readier to experience than to think. To him the present tick of the clock has all the dignity of the Eternal. If thought is a malady, he is of all men most healthy. The more he advocates a policy, the less he can be trusted to carry it through.

This is clever analysis, but the question intrudes, How does the writer know so much about what goes on inside of Mr. Lloyd George's mind? Why may he not be doing a good deal of rapid thinking while he is experiencing so vividly? And why may not this thought directed to the question of the moment be fairly accurate? Granted that he changed his mind rapidly, did he change it any more rapidly than the circumstances with which he had to deal changed? Granted that he didn't bring anything to its logical conclusion. Amid the tremendous forces that were struggling in the world, could anything be brought to its logical conclusion? There is room here for honest doubt.

The biographer may well sharpen his wits by means of psychology, but he must not allow a formula to stand in the way of an individual. From the rigid supra-lapsarians we are always happy to escape to the biographers, ancient or modern, who are of the humanistic school. In their pages we see characters developing unevenly under the stress of circumstances. We cannot tell what a person is capable of doing till he does it; and even then we are not always sure that we have all his reasons. There is no program that is followed. Unexpected things are all the time turning up and bringing into play powers which we had not looked for. We are compelled to revise our first impres-

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sions both of the man and his times. The more the individual is observed, the more individualistic he appears to be. He becomes less significant as a symbol and more interesting as a personality.

There, for example, is Plutarch's Cato. No attempt is made to analyze his character or to account for his idiosyncrasies. We see him just as he happened to be. He doesn't correspond to any formula. He is just Cato.

Cato was gray-eyed and red-headed. He was a self-made man. He worked hard and liked to wear old clothes when he was in the country. He was fond of turnips and of cabbage. He was very thrifty, and when his slaves began to grow old he sold them to save the depreciation in his property. He disliked flatterers, but was not averse to praising himself. He loved sharp jests. He was a popular orator and a good soldier. When he was elected to office, he put a super-tax on articles of luxury; he cut the pipes by which wealthy householders had surreptitiously drawn water from the public fountains; he reduced the rates of interest on loans, and conducted himself with such outrageous rectitude that all the best people turned against him.

All these incidents have to do with the outward life of Cato. Plutarch is content to set them down with the remark, "Whether such things are proof of greatness or of littleness of mind, let each reader judge for himself." Yet somehow they make the red-headed Roman seem very real to us. We know him in the same way that we know a contemporary. If we were to drop into Rome on election day and be told that the paramount issue was "Anything to beat old Cato," we should feel at home. We should probably vote for Cato, and regret it after the election.

We have this sense of complete reality in the characters of statesmen and soldiers which we come upon in the crowded pages of Clarendon. Here is Clarendon's Hampden. It is the portrait of a gentleman drawn by another gentleman who was his enemy. But one would prefer to have Clarendon as an enemy rather than another man as a friend.

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John Hampden "was a gentleman of good family in Buckinghamshire, and born to a fair fortune, and of a most civil and affable deportment. In his entrance into the world he indulged to himself all the license in sports, and exercises, and company, which was used by men of the most jolly conversation. Afterwards he retired to a more reserved and melancholy society, yet preserving his own natural cheerfulness and vivacity, and above all a flowing courtesy to all men. . . . He was of that rare affability and temper in debate, and of that seeming humility and submission of judgment, as if he brought no opinion with him but a desire of information and instruction; but he had so subtle a way of interrogating, and, under the notion of doubts, insinuating his objections, that he left his opinions with those from whom he pretended to learn and receive them. . . . He was indeed a very wise man and of great parts and possessed with the most absolute spirit of popularity, that is, the most absolute faculties to govern the people, of any man I ever knew."

In Clarendon's eyes, John Hampden was a very dangerous man. "He begat many opinions and motions, the education of which he committed to other men." Of one thing we are not left in doubt. He was a very great man, though he fought on the wrong side. "He was very temperate in diet, and a supreme governor over all his passions and affections, and had thereby a great power over other men. He was of an industry and vigilance not to be tired out or wearied by the most laborious; and of parts not to be imposed upon by the most subtle or sharp, and of a personal courage equal to his best parts; so that he was an enemy not to be wished wherever he might have been made a friend." It is after all these qualities have been acknowledged that Clarendon adds: *His death therefore seemed a great deliverance to the nation.*

No psychologist by the most painstaking analysis could produce the effect that these words make upon us. We are conscious of John Hampden's personality as a force against which strong men are contending. We not only see the man himself,

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but we see why some men loved him and others resisted him. He was part of a mighty movement, which he largely directed.

Biography cannot be reduced to a science, but it may rise into the finest of the arts. It is the art of reproducing not merely the incidents of a great man's life, nor the mere elements of his character, but the impression he made on those who knew him best.

THE ART OF PSYCHOGRAPHY[1]

Gamaliel Bradford

When the world is wearied, tormented, deafened by a tempest of words, it takes some boldness to suggest a new one. Fortunately "psychography" is not an invention of my own. When I had devised the term independently, I found it in the Oxford Dictionary, already used by Professor Saintsbury, in connection with Sainte-Beuve, for the excellent reason that no other word would say what was meant.

After all, when one has something not indeed new but of new application and development, it seems justifiable to use a new word for it, instead of blundering and bungling with inadequate periphrases. And there is no other word which will precisely cover what I intend to convey by "psychography." Biography is something quite different. Biography gives a complete, connected narrative of a man's life, in chronological sequence from birth to death, sets it in elaborate surroundings of time and circumstance, which have their fixed order and regular progression. Psychology emphasizes first of all general principles, uses the individual always to establish and illustrate such principles; whereas with psychography the individual is everything, the general principle only subordinate and illustrative. Above all, the term portrait is unsatisfactory. I have used it rather than affront convention with innovation, and because it has the high authority of Sainte-Beuve. But in the first place the transference of

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technical terms from one art to another is always misleading and objectionable, being certain to involve misunderstandings, and, further, the unavoidable limitation of a painted portrait is that it presents a man at one particular period of life. Now, the aim of psychography is quite the contrary of this. It endeavors above all to get rid of the temporary, the epochal, and to distill from a man's whole life the larger, permanent essence of his soul, as it is in its main lineaments from the beginning to the end. Therefore it is that "portrait" fails entirely to convey the psychographical intention.

The case of Sainte-Beuve emphasizes peculiarly the need of some such word as psychography. He himself always insisted that the work he did was criticism. But to the world at large criticism means essentially the discussion of books, and as such appears a rather secondary not to say frivolous matter. In literary criticism proper Sainte-Beuve's place is of course high. But here there are others to rival him. His criticism was confined almost entirely to a few limited periods. And exquisite and subtle as it is, it is often disappointing, especially when he deals with the more established literary figures like Virgil or Dante. Where he is quite unequaled, inexhaustible in insight and sympathy, is as what he himself called "a naturalist of souls." Now, such natural history is largely founded on books and may in a certain sense be called criticism. But the word is unnecessarily narrow and limiting. And such incomparable studies of human nature as the various analyses of women in the second volume of the *Causeries du Lundi* are utterly unrelated to literary criticism in any exact use of the term.

For these reasons it seems excusable and proper to use the name psychography for an art which is certainly not new, since there is nothing new in literature or any other field, but which has been of late more definitely formulated and more elaborately practiced than heretofore.

Let us see, then, something of what psychography is. To begin with, its materials are necessarily those of biography. Whether we are to narrate the story of a man's life or to depict

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his soul, we must base our work on the written or spoken words of the man himself or on the words that others have written about him. And the lamentable defects of this material are as obvious to the psychographer as to the biographer. Spoken words are incorrectly recorded. Written words are incorrectly and dishonestly edited. The more one works with printed documents the more one gets to distrust them. And elaborate edifices of historical theory and of human character are reared upon speeches which criticism too quickly knocks from under them, leaving the edifices to crumble to formless dust.

But all these difficulties and drawbacks with material are even more troublesome to the psychographer than to the biographer. For the essence of psychography, as I conceive it and endeavor to practice it, is condensation and brevity. The biographer has his two ample volumes at his disposal, and in the wide sweep of them he is expected to include everything, big and little, important and unimportant, authentic and dubious. His function is not so much discrimination and selection as inclusion and discovery. But in a world perhaps overcrowded with two-volume biographies the psychographer seeks to save the time of bewildered readers by giving them the essential and only the essential in the briefest possible space. To accomplish this he must use only the telling, vivid, significant bit which in a few crisp words reveals what Sainte-Beuve so powerfully calls "bare soul." In the psychographer's concentrated portrayal everything stands out with such intense significance that before he can venture to use it it must be tried not only by external tests but by the far finer touchstone of spiritual veracity. He must go through an enormous waste of material, investigate widely, explore thoroughly, knowing all the time that he can use only a trifling portion of the supply accumulated. He must go through a volume to put before his reader a single sentence that it will be worth his while to carry away.

In this regard nothing is more striking than the varying significance and value of material in different cases. For the purposes of the psychographer there is nothing equal to a man's

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own words. Where these are lacking or scanty, we are obliged to fall back upon the testimony of others. For example, with Benedict Arnold or with General Hooker or with Grover Cleveland, their own written words are so insufficient that it is necessary to rely almost entirely upon secondary witnesses. But even where a man's own writing is abundant, its varying quality as revealing his soul is astonishing and almost inexplicable. Take the diarists. Mme. d'Arblay writes seven large volumes, and if you know how to look you can find some traces of her soul in them. But the soul of Pepys leaps at you from every page. Take letters. There are twenty thousand of Thomas Jefferson's extant and ten thousand of Voltaire's. But for the psychographer's purpose Jefferson's are almost barren, Voltaire's are alive with mental and spiritual revelation. Or, again, Matthew Arnold wrote many letters and all insignificant. Fitzgerald, the most reserved of men, somehow shows you himself with constant, artless charm. And it is hard for the psychographer to say whether his work is more fascinating done upon those who come to meet him or those who evade him; whether there is more interest in Aaron Burr, who unfolds his heart at every turn, or in General Lee, whose grave, remote dignity forces you to search and delve and probe before you can touch his spirit at all.

Thus, having found and extricated and selected his material, the psychographer has next to interpret it, and here his task is even more difficult. His business is to deal with qualities of character. What are qualities of character? Vague generalizations of speech and action. The honest man is one who does honest things, the foolish man foolish things, the great man great things. Obviously, the difficulty of determination here is extreme. No man is always honest or always foolish or always great. Shades and limitations and reserves have to be made and indicated with the utmost nicety, without being overemphasized. In the last resort everything has to depend upon the judgment of the psychographer, and the better he knows his

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business the more he becomes impressed with his own fallibility. All generalizations are dangerous and none more so than those involving human character. The most glaring defects of this kind appear in the formal characters drawn by masters like Clarendon and Saint-Simon. It is hard to tell whether one is more impressed by the power and depth of these or by their arbitrariness and the willful ease with which a dead soul is made the sport and prey of an artist's genius. The psychographer endeavors to avoid, or at least to mask, the most cruel aspects of such exposure by supporting his portrayal with an elaborate apparatus of quotation and evidence; but he is well aware that his results are often as arbitrary and as cruel, if not so brilliant, as those of an earlier day.

Finally, after the examination of material and the selection and the interpretation comes the process of composition, and it is here that psychography has somewhat more claim to originality than in other points. No doubt the method of psychological development and arrangement has been frequently applied in the past, but the consistent and theoretical application of it is perhaps rather novel. In Sainte-Beuve's soul studies, for instance, a simple chronological narrative is almost always adopted, as in formal biography. The same is true of the brilliant and penetrating portraits of Mr. Strachey. But the psychographer disregards this chronological system altogether and builds his study of each soul upon the essential elements of the soul itself in such a way as to make every possible device of emphasis and climax bring out the peculiarities of that individual character in the most salient fashion. One of the interesting things about the practice of psychography has been the development of this method. It was feared at first that the result would be monotony, that, human qualities and traits being limited, there would be danger of repetition, which might in the end make it necessary to fall back into the old biographical routine. Instead of this, it has been an astonishment to see how, from the writer's point of view at any rate (the reader's may be different), every new subject presented new phases, pre-

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sented, indeed, the same old elements, but in such a new order and with such surprising variety of stress and coloring that it almost came to seem as if the matter of the art of psychography was as plastic and as flexible and as individual as nature itself.

Let me repeat, then, that psychography does not pretend to be new; simply to carry further and to carry out more definitely processes familiar to literature for two thousand years. And certainly psychography does not pretend to be final. It deals with human souls, the most subtle, the most fluid, the most evasive subject in the world: how should it be final? All it aims at is to stimulate, not to settle. But it is the most fascinating of studies and of arts because of this very uncertainty, because of its inexhaustible richness, and because of its absolute necessity in daily life. Some studies we can get along without. The one that is indispensable, in spite of its almost impossible difficulty, is the study of human souls—our own and others. In other words, whether we will it or not, from childhood up we are all amateur psychographers, and the conscious practitioner of the art is content if he can be of some slight assistance to his fellows.

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THE NEW POETRY

[Mr. Untermeyer contends that there has been "a spectacular decline in the stock of *vers libre*"; that the new form culminated in the years 1914 to 1920 and now seems almost antiquarian; that the two most notable backsliders are Hilda Doolittle and Alfred Kreymborg; and that, the facts being indisputable, the only debatable question relates to the cause or causes. Miss Lowell denies the facts. She maintains that the *vers libristes* are merely extending their experimentations so as to include rime and meter, just as at first they experimented chiefly with *vers libre*; that the spirit of experimentation has become more varied and inclusive, but that there has been no real recession of the *vers libre* movement.

Since illustrations of free verse are not given in either article, two well-known samples are here added. These are "Orchard," by H. D. (Hilda Doolittle of Pennsylvania, now Mrs. Richard Aldington of England), and "Cool Tombs," by Carl Sandburg, the Chicago poet. Notice what Miss Lowell says of these two poems.

ORCHARD

I saw the first pear
As it fell.
The honey-seeking, golden-banded,
The yellow swarm,
Was not more fleet than I,
(Spare us from loveliness!)
And I fell prostrate,
Crying,
"You have flayed us with your blossoms;
Spare us the beauty
Of fruit-trees!"

The honey-seeking
Paused not;
The air thundered their song,
And I alone was prostrate.

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O rough-hewn
God of the orchard,
I bring you an offering;
Do you, alone unbeautiful
Son of the god,
Spare us from loveliness.

These fallen hazel-nuts,
Stripped late of their green sheaths;
Grapes, red-purple,
Their berries
Dripping with wine;
Pomegranates already broken,
And shrunken figs,
And quinces untouched,
I bring you as offering.

COOL TOMBS

When Abraham Lincoln was shoveled into the tombs, he forgot the copper-heads and the assassin . . . in the dust, in the cool tombs.
And Ulysses Grant lost all thought of con men and Wall Street, cash and collateral turned ashes . . . in the dust, in the cool tombs.
Pocahontas' body, lovely as a poplar, sweet as a red haw in November or a pawpaw in May—did she wonder? does she remember? . . . in the dust, in the cool tombs?
Take any streetful of people buying clothes and groceries, cheering a hero or throwing confetti and blowing tin horns . . . tell me if the lovers are losers . . . tell me if any get more than the lovers . . . in the dust . . . in the cool tombs.

Mr. Huxley treats another aspect of the new poetry, its subject matter. He takes issue with the insurgents who claim to have widened the boundaries of poetry by the introduction of new themes. Have they done so? They may have written about new topics, but have they made poetry out of them? The area of poetry is enlarged not by selecting new or old topics but by making the new seem old and the old seem new. "At bottom," said Goethe, "no real object is unpoetical if the poet knows how to use it properly." Keats stresses the same thought when he says that the subject chosen by the poet is only the twig to which the spider attaches her web. The twig is not of primal importance—the web woven from the inside of the spider is the main thing. "The Well," for example, is a new topic so far as my reading goes; but when John

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Gould Fletcher tells us no more than that when a man went down to clean the well,

> He found it very cold and deep
> With a queer niche in one of its sides
> From which he hauled forth buckets of brick and dirt,

I do not feel that the boundaries of poetic subject matter have been noticeably extended. Do you? Mr. Huxley thinks that the new science furnishes the best opportunity for new themes for the new poetry.]

RETURN OF THE *VERS LIBRETINE*[1]

Louis Untermeyer

There are many explanations for the recent, spectacular decline in the stock of *vers libre*. To some of its most ardent supporters it seems a *volte face* that smacks of betrayal, a retrograde movement for which there is no excuse but the age of the turn-coats who have reached the senility of the thirties. To others—and particularly those less concerned in the manufacture of this erstwhile commodity—it appears to be a natural progression, a return, after a period of liberal promiscuity, to poetic first principles. Both of these theories are capable of elaborate expansion, but both of them, after all the variations on either theme, must remain theories. Let the facts have precedence.

For six years—from 1914 to 1920, to be coldly statistical—*vers libre* was the fashion in these otherwise conservative States. Not only did the leaders of the style adapt their tropes and figures to this form but whole regiments of amateurs, imitators, and young men-about-literature cut their patterns along its attenuated lines. The three Imagist anthologies appeared in 1915, 1916, 1917, and, except for an occasional poem by D. H. Lawrence and the polyphonic-prose pieces by Amy Lowell, one searched them in vain for a regular rhythm or even an irregular rhyme. John Gould Fletcher's *Goblins and Pagodas* and H. D.'s

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Sea Garden appeared; both volumes illustrating, in program and practice, a verse-form based upon "cadence" instead of meter. Amy Lowell went further than Ezra Pound in her staccato idiom. Masters published that triumph of free verse, *Spoon River Anthology.* Arturo Giovannitti and Clement Wood borrowed the "polyrhythmical" loquacity of Whitman for their own insurgent purposes. Orrick Johns offered his suspicious-looking olives in *Others.* Maxwell Bodenheim performed his morganatic marriages of unhappily mated nouns and adjectives without benefit of rhyme or an orthodox ritual. And Alfred Kreymborg, surpassing them all in metrical heresy, perfected a *vers libre* so tenuous and brittle that melodic comments (performed by Kreymborg on his famous mandolute) were required to hold it together.

So remote are these phenomena that, in the light of the new radicalism, they seem like musty fragments from the files of an antiquarian. For, with the exception of a few inflexible veterans like Pound and Sandburg, scarcely anyone is left to defend the once commanding fort. The list of deserters grows with every announcement of a publisher's spring list or a prize contest. Masters is writing almost entirely in conventional blank verse. Giovannitti's rhythms grow increasingly proper; Wood's are almost prim. Johns is writing poignant country-rhymes in the prescribed manner. Amy Lowell does not hesitate to express herself in Chaucerian stanzas, strict ballad measures, starched and polished tercets. Fletcher, discarding Imagism, is using not only rhyme but a much more balanced verse-structure. Bodenheim's poetry has become rigidly, almost contemptuously, formal, parading its pattern with an acrid nonchalance.

But the two most notable backsliders are H. D. and Alfred Kreymborg. H. D. was not merely the only true Imagist but the surest worker in unrhymed cadence. She had achieved that rare clarity and concision which (like the condensed epitaphs of *Spoon River Anthology*) gave free verse, ordinarily so flabby, a dignity and distinction of form. In her chiseled strophes

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there was a crystallization that more than compensated for the absence of rhyme and regularity. Yet it does not seem to have reconciled its author to the loss. In her recently published volume *Hymen*, rhyme is introduced with more than tentative effect; certain parts of the extended marriage ritual are so dexterously woven as to seem like the lyrics of a belated Elizabethan. And here is a dirge called "Lethe," not yet printed in any of her collected works, which adds a gravely formal music without arresting the author's individual gestures:

> Nor skin nor hide nor fleece
> Shall cover you,
> Nor curtain of crimson nor fine
> Shelter of cedar-wood be over you,
> Nor the fir-tree
> Nor the pine.
>
> Nor sight of whin nor gorse
> Nor river-yew,
> Nor fragrance of flowering bush,
> Nor wailing of reed-bird to waken you.
> Nor of linnet
> Nor of thrush.
>
> Nor word nor touch nor sight
> Of lover, you
> Shall long through the night but for this:
> The roll of the full tide to cover you
> Without question
> Without kiss.

The case of Kreymborg is even more significant. When he left America a year ago, his lines, growing more and more jagged, were almost monosyllabic in their brusque brevity. Eight months in Italy, and Kreymborg, in his search for more adequate forms, discovers a fresh utterance in—heart-breaking though it may be to his frantic colleagues—sonnets! Further, he intimates in a private document, the sonnets—and more than thirty of them have been produced in the villa at Pallanza—have come as freely as free verse . . . and more sharply. "It

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has always had my veneration," writes Kreymborg, speaking of the sonnet-form, "perhaps too much of it; perhaps, had it not been for that, I should have come to it sooner. Or possibly I wasn't ripe enough for the adventure." More than that, Kreymborg's new poems in the orthodox stanza-structures have gained in strength and lost none of that whimsical difference which made this poet's manner so strikingly his own. Witness this first quatrain from the lyrical "Bloom":

> When flowers thrust their heads above the ground
> in showers pale as raindrops, and as round,
> who would suspect that such, before they're gone,
> could hold the sun?

To amplify the speculations that introduced these paragraphs, Is the return of the prodigal *vers libretine* due to a spontaneous revulsion of feeling? Or does it owe its impetus to the compulsion through which every artist is struggling—inconsistently enough—for both novelty and stability? Is it not true that after the natural early period of imitation the impulse to experiment is uppermost? And, having passed through the phase of experimenting with subject, pattern, and the preoccupation with form, does not the seeker inevitably labor to perfect his idiom in some lasting shape? . . . So we see one creator after another turn to a *resisting* form, to a medium that does not submit too easily. Even the boy likes to cut into wood rather than wax; the sculptor chooses stone instead of putty. The poet, in the end, learns to enjoy the edged limitations of his verse as keenly as the painter appreciates the sharp confines of his canvas. Learning to respect his material, does not the artist prefer to feel the victory of his will over a definite and sometimes defiant form? Furthermore, does he not relish his triumphs in an almost direct proportion to the difficulties he has overcome in imposing his desire as well as his personality upon the stubborn, slowly-consenting mold? These questions, several of which have a gratuitously rhetorical ring, may prompt a variety of conclusions. To one, at least, they call for certain replies in the affirmative.

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IS THERE A REACTION?[1]

AMY LOWELL

Well, in the first place, looking at the matter from one point of view, I think there is; looking at it from another point of view, there is merely a procedure. I suppose I need scarcely explain that I am speaking of poetry, and in particular of two papers which have recently appeared: one, by Louis Untermeyer, in the *Nation*; the other, by the anonymous author of *The Reviewer's Notebook*, in the *Freeman*. Mr. Untermeyer deals specifically with this same mooted reaction; the "Reviewer" deals more generally with the whole subject of so-called "free verse." And that leads me directly upon the chief horn of the dilemma, for "free verse" is a most unfortunate translation of the French *vers libre*, which should be rendered "free line," to be exact. Since verse is verse just because it has more pattern than prose, "free verse" is a misnomer; verse never can be free. The best name for the form in English is "cadenced verse"; but "free verse" is easier to remember, hence it, with its bundle of misunderstandings tied to its back, seems to have come to stay.

Mr. Untermeyer's paper is concerned with what he calls the "return" of the *vers libristes* to meter and rhyme. Since it is true that all the chief *vers libristes* started by writing in the metrical forms, Mr. Untermeyer's use of the word "return" is not entirely amiss; but I think he loses the true shade of that return by too great an insistence upon it. None of these chief *vers libristes* has, so far as I know, ever entirely abandoned metrical verse, and, in spite of somewhat turgid pronouncements delivered from time to time by a few of the youngest of them, I believe their portfolios would prove that they have followed a double practice all the time. For myself, I know that this is so, and although a legend has sprung up to the effect that I greatly prefer the freer forms, it is, like most legends, perfectly untrue.

[1] From the *Literary Review*, New York, August 12, 1922, by permission.

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I believe that a line-by-line count of my books would show an almost equal balance between metrical and cadenced verse.

I imagine that no reasonable person would deny that there has been a change in the matter and manner of poetry during the last decade. Granted that, therefore, and granted that this change was itself a reaction, has the pendulum swung backwards? Superficially, it looks as though it had; studied more carefully, we see that we are the victims of an optical delusion. For the apparent return, if we examine it, proves to be merely an advance in experimentation.

People are made in two species. They are either of the kind which clings passionately to the type, and finds itself safe and at peace only when conforming to it, or they are of the kind which chiefly desires to break with the type and create something aside from it. But as nature loves shades and touches, these two kinds merge in varying proportions in every individual; sometimes one predominates, sometimes another, and in our rough and ready way we pigeonhole them according to their dominating characteristics. Let us give a new name to these two sorts of creative artists—since our English brethren persist in regarding the terms "conservative" and "radical" in a political significance only—and call them "normal" and "original."

Those poets responsible for the present renaissance were, obviously, of the "original" type. It is not necessary to name them; we all know who they are, and two of them, certainly, have never published a line of free verse.

Now there are nine and ninety ways of writing tribal lays (I misquote from memory), and it is just this matter of tribal lays that has been the stuff out of which the recent renaissance has been made. The dear, blind people have persisted in considering it a change of form; on the contrary, it has been a change of point of view. For almost the first time in her history, America has written out of herself. Individuals (and precious few of them) have done this before; a group, never. It makes not the slightest difference whether the subject matter was

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American; the attitude was. I have often seen Mr. Frost ranked among the practitioners of free verse simply because the confused laity, feeling him thoroughly American and blurring form with matter, decided that he must therefore be following the prevailing mode.

There is no country at the present moment so hospitable to poetry as this; and there is no country so ignorant of the technique of the art. Is there, then, a reaction from the fundamentals of the recent renaissance? Are the chief figures of it returning to the discarded type or are they merely widening their scope of presentation? I think a little careful observation will prove the latter point of view.

Suppose a man has written a sonnet sequence, must he then confine himself to sonnets for the rest of his life? Absurd, you say. Quite so, and yet when a poet who has written much cadenced verse begins experimenting in rhyme and meter the cry of "reaction" goes up in a burst of applause from the "normals," who see in this a feather to flaunt in their own caps.

Not long ago, in this same paper, I begged editors and public to regard this matter of cadenced verse with common sense—not to take it as a creed, but as a form, of neither more nor less importance than other forms. What we must learn is just this, that *vers libre* is not a thing to be either rooted for or discriminated against. Let it drop into its place, as it will do in time, as it did do before the unfortunate exploitation of it brought it into the limelight.

I suppose only poets in practice as well as in feeling know that a poem cannot be written in two ways. Change the form of a poem and you change the poem. A poem comes into one's mind clothed in its appropriate form; you may write another poem, but you cannot alter the form of that one. You may tinker bits here and there (and the greatest poets are everlasting tinkerers, as anyone who has examined the first drafts of famous poems knows well), but you are powerless when it comes to touching its basic rhythm or its innate leaning towards rhyme or the lack of it.

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It is not, I imagine, generally realized that the whole attitude of approach to a metrical poem and a cadenced poem is different. Some "normal" will undoubtedly accuse me of not knowing that metrical verse has also cadence. Of course, it has; but where metrical verse has cadence plus meter and rhyme, *vers libre* has only cadence plus the exact word. And has not metrical verse the exact word, too? I shall be asked. Yes, in a measure, but in a measure far more limited than in cadenced verse.

Cadenced verse gets its effects through subtle shades of changing rhythms, through the juxtaposed sounds of vowels and consonants, and through the delight of ever so delicate values of meaning in the words; metrical verse seeks its effects chiefly through the more definite lilt of meter, and the magic and satisfaction of chime. It is a fond practice among the "normals" to take a metrical poem and turn it into free verse and then point out that all its charm has gone. Why not? Its charm was inextricably bound up with its lilt and rhyme scheme; these banished, only statement is left. But I counsel my readers to try the experiment backwards. Take "H. D.'s" "Orchard," for example, or Sandburg's "Cool Tombs," and put them into meter, and then see what happens. The peculiar delicacy and unexpectedness of them will have melted away, that is all.

When hidebound metrists, used to getting their effects in a certain way, try their hands at *vers libre*, the result is often disaster and the announcement on the part of the poet that the form is "no good." It is only those poets elastic enough to conceive of different methods of approach who can write easily in both forms. It is a good deal like pulling out different stops in an organ; the effect changes with each stop.

There has been a reason why *vers libre* took such a hold on this country, of course, and the reason is not primarily because it is easy to write, for it is not. Bad *vers libre*, which is really not *vers libre* at all, is easy to write; good *vers libre* is most difficult. Much of the *vers libre* with which we have been flooded during the last few years has been very bad, an appreciable amount of it has been astonishingly good. It has

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developed a style of its own, quite apart from its form proper, and we are becoming a little weary of that style; but, for the moment, let us leave this side of the subject alone and try to find out what is the reason for the grip it has had on young writers.

First, then, is it not a fact that America does not seem to be in a particularly lyrical stage just now? A lyric used to mean a song, or, at any rate, a poem with a gesture of song about it; it has gradually come to mean merely a short poem which cannot be classed in any of the other short poem groups, such as the sonnet, etc. Taking it in its earlier meaning, both primitive and sophisticated man excel in the writing of lyrics, but the in-between man, the man who has long passed the primitive stage yet has in no wise reached the sophisticated, is, as a rule, too self-conscious to be able to sing. He expresses himself indirectly through narrative or directly through epigram, image or satire when he speaks with his own voice; but before he has found his own voice—since lyrical moods are natural to man even in his middle era—when he would sing, his self-consciousness throws him back on atavism, and he borrows his form, albeit unconsciously.

What the present renaissance did to the poetical youth of America was to free them from a stereotyped expression. The form of *vers libre* had no recollection attached to it, either as regards subject or presentation. Working in cadence, which came upon them (erroneously, but they did not know that) as something new, they suddenly found themselves saying things that were their own. This was delightful, as all self-expression is delightful, and they seized upon it with avidity. Hitherto, when the desire to express a lyrical mood came they were constrained to set it in one of the several forms known to them, and these included not only manner but matter. To illustrate: Some years ago I was asked to go to a meeting of a club of young poets. The boys (it was a college club) read their own poems and discussed them. One of them read an impassioned farewell to a lark, and some evil genius prompted me to ask, at the conclusion of the reading, whether the author had ever seen a lark.

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The answer was, as I expected, a firm negative. "Then why," said I, "did you not choose some bird you knew?" But the poet objected that he did not know one bird from another, nor any flower, nor anything at all which could be made to fit his mood. This sounds like nonsense, but it is not. The mood was authentic enough, but he had not learned to free it from convention. The mood was nostalgic, but nostalgic of an atmosphere, not of a person; he must bid good-by to something, and the something presented itself under the time-honored image of a lark. This young man was quintessentially normal, no doubt, but to find what is in oneself is not so easy, after all. What free verse did to many of these young people was to hypnotize them into an awareness of what they felt which was peculiar to themselves.

Once having found oneself, one may, without too much difficulty, keep the knowledge. That is unless something sets the atavistic string vibrating too violently again. Even today, although the second stage of a crystallized *vers libre* has long been reached, the younger writers do, as a rule, write far better in free verse than they do in metrical. And this is true of all but a handful of our chief poets. I had occasion recently to read through some three hundred and sixty poems in connection with a prize. In general, the contrast between the *vers libre* poems and the metrical poems was in very marked favor of the former. The editor of one of our prominent monthlies said: "Why, I could have told you that. It is equally marked in the poems which come to my office."

I have said that free verse is approaching standardization. That is most unfortunate, but it was bound to come. There will always be innumerable versifiers of the "*n*th" degree, who can write quite acceptably if only they are given a pattern to copy. They are the "normals" who must follow a type, be it metrical or cadenced. Forever copying something or other, they take the bloom off everything they touch. Their arrival is synchronous with the departure of the "originals" to fresh pastures. Not that these same "originals" forsake a field because it has

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become too common, but that, with their hunger for experimentation, they cannot continue forever in any given place, and the urge to move comes on them at about the time that their pleasance is being invaded by the mass.

The passionate pioneers of the *vers libre* movement have found out the limitations of the form; they know, beyond peradventure of a doubt, what it can and cannot do. It has no surprises for them; they are its adepts. They know how excellent it is for certain effects, but, being growing souls, they want to try new effects. Loosened from the tyranny of an old metrical practice, they are anxious to try a new metrical practice. In short, they want to experiment some more. What cadenced verse has taught them appears quite evidently in their metrical sketches. Assonance instead of rhyme, metrical lines of wildly uneven numbers of feet, strict patterns broken by blank lines, a new diction engrafted on an old lilt, internal rhymes woven in and out with something of the effect of shot silk, false rhymes carefully chosen to chime just off the key—these are some of the divergencies from the old practice which they indulge in. And where did they learn these innovations, think you? Precisely from their long study of free verse. Art does not really walk backwards; it returns to the old merely to transform it in some way or other.

It will be seen that I am not denying the fact that the chief practitioners of cadenced verse are, many of them, appearing in metrical guise. In noting this fact Mr. Untermeyer only stated what is patent to everyone who looks. It is the why of their action which baffles him. But it would not have astonished him had he kept in mind that it was their understudies and not they who declared that metrical verse was done. They were preoccupied with cadenced verse for the moment; that was all. But in spite of Mr. Untermeyer's rejoicing there is a very real danger, which his article may do much harm by augmenting. This danger is that editors, always on tiptoe to catch a change of fashion, may *volte face* in a hurry and declare, in the round-handed fashion of their kind, that free verse in its turn has

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departed for good, and so shut the doors of their magazines upon it as in the old days before it had gained public favor, thereby silencing young poets worthy of encouragement.

The possibility of such a right-about-face is a danger, although the proper reply to it is "Tush!" Cadenced verse has come to stay; in fact, it has stayed for three hundred years already. It will stay because through its medium certain things can be expressed that can find expression in no other way. I can think of just two poets of the first rank in this country today who write better meter than they do cadence, and only one of them is entirely innocent of echo. I can think of several poets who never write in the freer forms, but, with two or three notable exceptions, I should hesitate to put them in the first rank; I can think of a host of poets who never write meter, and, with one exception, I should not say that they rank at all. If we take the poetical output of this country by and large, I think we shall be struck by a strange thing—that those of the younger poets who are addicted to meter are deliberately aiming to be minor poets. The difference between minor and major poetry is not goodness or badness, but divergence of aim. One marked characteristic of the pioneers of the present poetic movement was that, whatever their achievement, their aims were major. Running over the list of the younger metrists in my mind, one alone stands out as not content with a minor utterance, and a minor utterance of a well-tested kind. This is the bitterest indictment I know of any movement, that it seeks the small instead of striving for the great. If we would look for reaction, it is not among the strenuous middle-aged that we shall find it, but in a certain group of *les jeunes*. And can anyone maintain that the composite voice of this group is as autochthonous as that of their predecessors? I think not. In their work we find grace, refinement, neatness, ingenuity, but we search in vain for over-tones, for the booming surge of life which lies under all high endeavor. This country is not a pretty-pretty place and pretty-pretty poetry cannot be its native speech. Which is neither here nor there as far as meter is concerned, except for

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the vibrating of the memory string; but it is very much here when we speak of reaction. If the gush of imaginative vigor which brought about the recent renaissance is to give way before *fade* imitations of the '90s, it is as well to put the blame where it belongs. We confuse ourselves by comparing this "return" with the oblique advance of the pioneers. This is an eddy, a backwater; the main stream goes on unheeding.

Purely American poetry is a very young and struggling thing. We must not hamper her by suggestions or prejudices. She is having a hard time to keep herself to herself, with all the world's literatures knocking at her door. *Vers libre* has been the chief tool which has hacked her free from Old World fetters. Her lyrical moods are no longer bound by quatrains on larks and such like extraneosities. Image, satire, epigram—the lyricism of America has fastened on these with the rapture of discovery and we must not quench the smoking flax. It is better to overdo your own conscious way than to creep ahead like a somnambulist following a remembered track.

But here I observe a pitfall before me. Some pleasant, inattentive reader is sure to announce that I have said that cadenced verse is the proper tool for babes and sucklings. Not so, dear sir. I have said that cadenced verse has been an active agent in loosing us from the tyranny of the past, but I have also said that it is an admirable form for the presentation of certain effects, and it so happens that these very effects are the nearest approach to a specifically American utterance which we have yet had. That they will be our only indigenous utterance for all time it would be folly to suppose. Of course they won't. They will occur and recur for all time, let us hope; but together with them will come new effects and it is precisely the "originals" who will find them.

In answering Mr. Untermeyer's contention, I have, at the same time, answered the "Reviewer's." He believes that free verse will be chiefly valuable in teaching us to employ a more rhythmical prose. What I believe, I have already said; what I do not believe is that prose will become more rhythmical until

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the writers of it love it for its own sake as well as for what it expresses. Here, in America, we use prose chiefly as a vehicle for ideas, and we are little concerned as to how it runs so long as we get its content over. We have yet to learn that books live because of their style long after the ideas in them are outworn. We state this truism constantly, but we do not, as New Englanders say, "sense" it; and granting that style is personality, and the aim of all our educational institutions is to turn men out in standardized shaped bundles, it will be only the rare individuals who achieve it. Poets starve, and starve in exact ratio to their originality, while prose writers have bank accounts, for which reason there seems very little incentive for the fat to learn from the lean. It is a curious fact, however, that modern poetry has taught the prose writers other things than rhythm. Dorothy Richardson is the most notable example, but it is everywhere. Scarcely a modern novelist who does not owe something to his poet confrères, indignant as it might make him to be obliged to admit it.

Where are the younger generation in all this? Where indeed? I am waiting for them. For the two or three I seem to discern, I will not name them; since they have the wit to write and not talk, it would be scant kindness to drag them into a premature publicity. We all have our two or three, I suppose, and we all watch them, and sometimes, in our middle-aged privacy, do a little betting. It passes our elderly time quite agreeably.

THE SUBJECT MATTER OF POETRY[1]

Aldous Huxley

It should theoretically be possible to make poetry out of anything whatsoever of which the spirit of man can take cognizance. We find, however, as a matter of historical fact, that most of the world's best poetry has been content with a curiously narrow range of subject matter. The poets have claimed as their

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domain only a small province of our universe. One of them now and then, more daring or better equipped than the rest, sets out to extend the boundaries of the kingdom. But for the most part the poets do not concern themselves with fresh conquests; they prefer to consolidate their power at home, enjoying quietly their hereditary possessions. All the world is potentially theirs, but they do not take it. What is the reason for this and why is it that poetical practice does not conform to critical theory? The problem has a peculiar relevance and importance in these days when young poetry claims absolute liberty to speak how it likes of whatsoever it pleases.

Wordsworth, whose literary criticism, dry and forbidding though its aspect may be, is always illumined by a penetrating intelligence, touched upon this problem in his preface to *Lyrical Ballads*—touched on it, and, as usual, had something of value to say about it. He is speaking here of the most important and most interesting of the subjects which may theoretically be made into poetry but which have, as a matter of fact, rarely or never undergone the transmutation; he is speaking of the relations between poetry and that vast world of abstractions and ideas—science and philosophy—into which so few poets have ever penetrated.

> The remotest discoveries of the chemist, the botanist, or mineralogist will be as proper objects of the poet's art as any upon which he is now employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings.

It is a formidable sentence; but read it well, read the rest of the passage from which it is taken and you will find it to be full of critical truth.

The gist of Wordsworth's argument is this: All subjects—"the remotest discoveries of the chemist" are but one example of an unlikely poetic theme—can serve the poet with material for his art on one condition: that he, and to a lesser degree his audience, shall be able to apprehend the subject with a certain

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emotion. The subject must somehow be involved in the poet's intimate being before he can turn it into poetry. It is not enough, for example, that he should apprehend it merely through his senses. (The poetry of pure sensation, of sounds and bright colors, is common enough nowadays; but amusing as we may find it for the moment, it cannot hold the interest for long.) It is not enough, at the other end of the scale, if he apprehends his subject in a purely intellectual manner. An abstract idea must be felt with a kind of passion, it must mean something emotionally significant, it must be as immediate and important to the poet as a personal relationship before he can make poetry of it. Poetry, in a word, must be written by "enjoying and suffering beings," not by beings exclusively dowered with sensations or, as exclusively, with intellect.

Wordsworth's criticism helps us to understand why so few subjects have ever been made into poetry when everything under the sun and beyond it is theoretically suitable for transmutation into a work of art. Death, love, religion, nature, the primary emotions, and the ultimate personal mysteries—these form the subject matter of most of the greatest poetry. And for obvious reasons. These things are "manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings." But to most men, including the generality of poets, abstractions and ideas are not immediately and passionately moving. They are not enjoying or suffering when they apprehend these things—only thinking.

The men who do feel passionately about abstractions, the men to whom ideas are as persons—moving and disquietingly alive—are very seldom poets. They are men of science and philosophers, preoccupied with the search for truth and not, like the poet, with the expression and creation of beauty. It is very rarely that we find a poet who combines the power and the desire to express himself with the passionate apprehension of ideas and the passionate curiosity about strange, remote facts of the man of science or the philosopher. If he possessed the requisite sense of language and the impelling desire to express

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himself in terms of beauty, Einstein could write the most intoxicating lyrics about relativity and the pleasure of pure mathematics. And if, say, Mr. Yeats understood the Einstein theory—which, in company with most other living poets, he presumably does not, any more than the rest of us—if he apprehended it exultingly as something bold and profound, something vitally important and marvelously true, he, too, could give us, out of the Celtic twilight, his lyrics of relativity. It is those distressing little "ifs" that stand in the way of this happy consummation. The conditions upon which any but the most immediately and obviously moving subjects can be made into poetry are so rarely fulfilled, the combination of poet and man of science, poet and philosopher, is so uncommon that the theoretical universality of the art has only very occasionally been realized in practice.

It is time now, in the light of these generalizations, to consider the history of poetry and the work of individuals. Contemporary poetry in the whole of the western world is insisting, loudly and emphatically through the mouths of its propagandists, on an absolute liberty to speak of what it likes how it likes. Nothing could be better; all that we can now ask is that the poets should put the theory into practice and that they should make use of the liberty which they claim by enlarging the bounds of poetry.

The propagandists would have us believe that the subject matter of contemporary poetry is new and startling, that modern poets are doing something which has not been done before. "Most of the poets represented in these pages," writes Mr. Louis Untermeyer in his *Anthology of Modern American Poetry*, "have found a fresh and vigorous material in a world of honest and often harsh reality. They respond to the spirit of their times; not only have their views changed, their vision has been widened to include things unknown to the poets of yesterday. They have learned to distinguish real beauty from mere prettiness, to wring loveliness out of squalor, to find wonder in neglected places, to search for hidden truths even in the dark caves of the unconscious."

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Translated into practice, this means that contemporary poets can now write, in the words of Mr. Sandburg, of the "harr and boom of the blast fires," of "wops and bohunks," and other common objects of the wayside. It means, in fact, that they are at liberty to do what Homer did—to write freely about the immediately moving facts of everyday life. Where Homer wrote of horses and the tamers of horses our contemporaries write of trains, automobiles, and the various species of wops and bohunks who control the horse power. That is all. Much too much stress has been laid on the newness of the new poetry; its newness is simply a return from the jeweled exquisiteness of the eighteen nineties to the facts and feelings of ordinary life. There is nothing intrinsically novel or surprising in the introduction into poetry of machinery and industrialism, of labor unrest and modern psychology; these things belong to us; they affect us daily as enjoying and suffering beings; they are a part of our lives, just as the kings, the warriors, the horses and chariots, the picturesque mythology were part of Homer's life. The subject matter of the new poetry remains the same as that of the old. The old boundaries have not been extended. There would be real novelty in the new poetry if it had, for example, taken to itself any of the new ideas and astonishing facts with which the new science has endowed the modern world. There would be real novelty in it if it had worked out a satisfactory artistic method for dealing with abstractions. It has not. Which simply means that that rare phenomenon, the poet in whose mind ideas are a passion and a personal moving force, does not happen to have appeared.

And how rarely in all the long past he has appeared! There was Lucretius, the greatest of all the philosophic and scientific poets. In him the passionate apprehension of ideas and the desire and ability to give them expression combined to produce that strange and beautiful epic of thought which is without parallel in the whole history of literature. There was Dante, in whose soul the mediæval Christian philosophy was a force that shaped and directed every feeling, thought, and action. There

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was Goethe, who focussed into beautiful expression an enormous diffusion of knowledge and ideas. And there the list of the great poets of thought comes to an end. In their task of extending the boundaries of poetry into the remote and abstract world of ideas they have had a few lesser assistants—Donne, for example, a poet only just less than the greatest; Fulke Greville, that strange, dark spirited Elizabethan; John Davidson, who made a kind of poetry out of Darwinism, and, most interesting poetical interpreter of nineteenth century science, Jules Laforgue.

Which of our contemporaries can claim to have extended the bounds of poetry to any material extent? It is not enough to have written about locomotives and telephones, "wops and bohunks," and all the rest of it. That is not extending the range of poetry; it is merely reasserting its right to deal with the immediate facts of contemporary life, as Homer and as Chaucer did. The critics who would have us believe that there is something essentially unpoetical about a bohunk (whatever a bohunk may be) and something essentially poetical about Sir Lancelot of the Lake are, of course, simply negligible; they may be dismissed as contemptuously as we have dismissed the pseudo-classical critics who opposed the freedoms of the Romantic Revival. And the critics who think it very new and splendid to bring bohunks into poetry are equally negligible and, at bottom, equally old-fashioned in their ideas.

It will not be unprofitable to compare the literary situation of this early twentieth century of ours with the literary situation of the early seventeenth century. In both epochs we see a reaction against a rich and somewhat formalized poetical tradition expressing itself in a determination to extend the range of subject matter, to get back to real life and to use more natural forms of expression. The difference between the two epochs lies in the fact that the twentieth century revolution has been the product of a number of minor poets, none of them quite powerful enough to achieve what he theoretically meant to do, while the

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seventeenth century revolution was the work of a single poet of greatness, John Donne. Donne substituted for the rich formalism of non-dramatic Elizabethan poetry a completely realized new style, the style of the so-called metaphysical poetry of the seventeenth century. He was a poet-philosopher-man-of-action whose passionate curiosity about facts enabled him to make poetry out of the most unlikely aspects of material life and whose passionate apprehension of ideas enabled him to extend the bounds of poetry beyond the frontiers of common life and its emotions into the void of intellectual abstraction. He put the whole life and the whole mind of his age into poetry. His followers, the metaphysicals, followed, more or less sincerely, more or less successfully, in his footsteps.

We today are metaphysicals without our Donne. Theoretically we are free to make poetry of everything in the universe; in practice we are kept within the old limits, for the simple reason that no great man has appeared to show us how we can make use of our freedom. A certain amount of the life of the twentieth century is to be found in our poetry, but precious little of its mind. We have no poet today like that strange old dean of St. Paul's three hundred years ago—no poet who can skip from the heights of scholastic philosophy to the heights of carnal passion, from the contemplation of Divinity to the contemplation of a flea, from the rapt examination of self to an enumeration of the most remote external facts of science, and make all, by his strangely passionate apprehension, into an intensely lyrical poetry.

The few poets who do try to make of contemporary ideas the substance of their poetry do it in a manner which brings little conviction or satisfaction to the reader. One thinks of Mr. Harold Monro's lucubrations on gravity and heredity:

> Fit for perpetual worship is the power
> That holds our bodies safely to the earth.

Fit it may be, but Mr. Monro's poems are decidedly not. And then there is Mr. J. C. Squire; he dabbles, in his *Birds*, with

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geological time, in his *Rivers* with geography, in his *Lily of Malud* with anthropology, but always in the polite spirit of the drawing-room philosopher whose aim is to amuse the ladies rather than to express any intense conviction or to relieve any agonized doubt in his own soul. There is Mr. Noyes, who is writing four volumes of verse about the "human side" of science —in his case, alas! all too human. Then there is Mr. Conrad Aiken. He perhaps is the most successful exponent in poetry of contemporary ideas. In his case it is clear "the remotest discoveries of the chemist" are apprehended with a certain passion; all his emotions are tinged by his ideas. The trouble with Mr. Aiken is that his emotions are apt to degenerate into a kind of intellectual sentimentality which expresses itself only too easily in his prodigiously fluent, highly colored verse.

One could lengthen the list of more or less interesting poets who have tried in recent times to extend the boundaries of their importance, not one great or outstanding personality. The twentieth century still awaits its Lucretius, awaits its own philosophical Dante, its new Goethe, its Donne, even its up-to-date Laforgue. Will they appear? Or are we to go on producing a poetry in which there is no more than the dimmest reflection of that busy and incessant intellectual life which is the characteristic and distinguishing mark of this age?

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

ARNOLD, MATTHEW (1822–1888), son of the great teacher Thomas Arnold of Rugby, was born in the little town of Laleham, about twenty miles west of London. He was a poet, educator, and literary critic. His poetry, written chiefly before he was forty, is characterized by doubt, hesitation, and even despair. See if you can find these qualities in the two poems cited. In 1851 Arnold was appointed government inspector of schools and devoted thirty-five years of his life to the task of improving schools and school methods in England. His prose writings began in 1861 with his *Translating Homer*. In these he exalted the beauty and harmony of the ancient Greek life, took as his models Goethe, Wordsworth, and Sainte-Beuve, and preached consistently the doctrine of fixed standards in criticism. Through his *Letters* there runs a note of self-conscious superiority that has not helped Arnold's appeal. To see littleness in others was with him to feel greatness in himself. Sir Walter Raleigh, in *Some Authors* (1923), says:

> Arnold had too little affection for England; there is no evidence that he ever understood the English character. . . . He was adorably insolent, priding himself on his courtesy and humanity, walking delicately among the little people of the earth, like a kind of Olympian schoolmaster-dandy.

"Sweet reasonableness," "the *not ourselves* which makes for righteousness," conduct as "three-fourths of life," "sweetness and light," culture as "a study of perfection," criticism as the art of "seeing the object as in itself it really is" or as "a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world," are some of the expressions of which Arnold made current coin in the marts of modern thought.

BRADFORD, GAMALIEL (1863–   ), a native of Boston and a resident of Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, has since 1912 devoted himself almost exclusively to biography and biographical methods. *Lee, the American* (1912) is not only the best portrait of the great general ever drawn, but is one of the permanent contributions to biographical technique. Other sketches illustrating what Bradford calls "the art of psychography" are *Confederate Portraits* (1914), *Union Portraits* (1916), *Por-*

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traits of Women (1916), *A Naturalist of Souls* (1917), *Portraits of American Women* (1919), *American Portraits* (1921), and *Damaged Souls* (1923). These works are contributions both to history and to literature.

Browning, Robert (1812–1889), the greatest ethical and inspirational force in the history of English literature, was born in London, died in Venice, and is buried in Westminster Abbey. His pivotal year was 1846, when he married Elizabeth Barrett and turned from the drama, in which he was unsuccessful, to the dramatic monologue, in which he achieved his greatest triumphs. Immediately after his marriage he made his home in Florence, Italy, where he remained until the death of Mrs. Browning in 1861. Returning to London with his only child, Barrett, he continued to write, and in 1869 published *The Ring and the Book*. In structure this great work resembles the four gospels, Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*, Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker*, and the recent *Call of the Road*, by Edouard Estaunié (translated from the French by Hiram Janus). That is, the same story is told by different characters, the result being to show different facets of personality, different elements of truth, different reactions to fact. The poem marked the peak of Browning's interpretation of character through the dramatic monologue. After this his work became over-subtle, emotion giving place to intellect. He had waited long and without capitulation for his audience; but recognition (chiefly of his earlier work) came increasingly during the last twenty years of his life, and today, when it is cheaply popular to decry the great writers of the Victorian age, especially Tennyson, Browning remains not only unscathed but unassailed. It is greatly to the credit of the United States that we were the first to recognize Browning's real greatness. In a letter written in 1860 Mrs. Browning says: "Nobody there [in England], except a small knot of Pre-Raphaelite men, pretends to do him justice. . . . While in America he is a power, a writer, a poet—he is read—he lives in the heart of the people." Roosevelt said, not long before his death, "There are few whose lines come so naturally to us in certain great crises of the soul which are also crises of the intellect." Are there not lines of this sort in the poems quoted?

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor (1772–1834), the high priest of Romanticism, which, together with Scott and Byron, he taught to Europe, was the most original, fertile, and profound mind of his age. Had it not been for the opium habit, which fastened itself upon him when he was about thirty years of age, one can hardly estimate the amount or the variety of achievement that might have been his. As it is, however, his work

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remains fragmentary, though the fragments are rich in beauty and suggestiveness. To the year 1797–1798 belong "The Nightingale," "The Ancient Mariner," the first part of "Christabel," and the unfinished "Kubla Khan." The last, says Coleridge, was composed in a dream-trance and contained more than two hundred lines. But when he awoke and had written down only fifty-four lines a visitor called him out, and he could never recapture the vanished images. Another fruitful year was 1816–1817, when he placed himself under the care of Mr. Gillman of Highgate, in the northern part of London. The poetic impulse stirred again now, and he wrote not only new poems but his literary autobiography, *Biographia Literaria*. This volume stamped Coleridge as the most philosophic of all English critics. But for the rest of his life he only talked. Groups of young men would gather to hear the oracle, and after his death much that he had said was gathered up in a volume called *Coleridge's Table Talk*. As late as 1895 his grandson collected enough of his unpublished sayings, his marginalia, his scattered notes and notebooks, to make a rich volume which he called *Anima Poetæ*.

Crothers, Samuel McChord (1857–   ), preacher and essayist, was born in Illinois and resides in Cambridge, Massachusetts. After graduating from Princeton University and Union Theological Seminary, New York, he studied for a year in the Harvard Divinity School. In 1877 he entered the Presbyterian ministry, changing to the Unitarian ministry in 1882. Since 1894 he has occupied the pulpit of the First Church of Cambridge. Among his best-known works are *The Gentle Reader*, *The Pardoner's Wallet*, *Among Friends*, *Humanly Speaking*, and *Emerson: How to Know Him*. There is an interesting appraisal of him as a preacher in Dr. Joseph Fort Newton's *Some Living Masters of the Pulpit* (1923). As an essayist he is a blend of Addison and Holmes.

Curtis, George William (1824–1892), editor for thirty-five years of the Easy Chair department of *Harper's Monthly* and from 1863 to 1892 the political editor of *Harper's Weekly*, was born in Providence, Rhode Island, and died at West New Brighton, Staten Island. He began as a *littérateur*, but ended as a publicist. He may be said to have almost created the Civil Service Reform. It was my privilege to hear him speak in Baltimore in 1891. His style was finished, molded, classic; but he lashed Republican and Democrat unsparingly and impartially wherever either had swerved a hairbreadth from the straight path of adherence to pledged reform in political appointments. His change from pure literature to civic reform came in 1853 just after he had published *The Potiphar Papers*.

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DUNN, WALDO HILARY (1882–   ), head of the department of English in Wooster College, Wooster, Ohio, received his B.A. and M.A. from Yale and his Litt.D. from the University of Glasgow. He is an author, lecturer, and contributor to literary periodicals. His *English Biography* (1916), from which our selection is taken, is an elaborate and well-documented piece of work, being in fact the only full volume of its kind yet published. A briefer treatment, consisting of three lectures delivered at the University of Virginia, is the late William Roscoe Thayer's *The Art of Biography* (1920). The two authors pursue different routes, but neither has blazed a new trail as successfully as has Gamaliel Bradford. Dr. Dunn's latest volume, *The Life of Donald G. Mitchell* (1922), better known as Ik Marvel, is an interesting appraisal of an unduly neglected American author.

EMERSON, RALPH WALDO (1803–1882), the "Psyche of Puritanism," as Santayana calls him, was born in Boston, but lived after 1834 in Concord. During his lifetime he was best known as a lecturer, but his reputation rests now securely on his poems and essays. These do not represent different themes or different ranges of thought, his central ideas being reproduced about equally in both prose and verse. "I believe you know my theory," wrote Swinburne to Stedman, "that nothing which can possibly be as well said in prose ought ever to be said in verse. . . . Whatever may be Mr. Emerson's merits, to talk of his poetry seems to me like talking of the scholarship of a child who has not learned its letters." This is too harsh a judgment, but Emerson undoubtedly is better in prose than in verse. His essays are incomparable in their way—formless to a degree, but original, revealing, energizing, beyond any other essays in English or American literature. That on "Self-Reliance" is a sort of summary of his main teaching. Is there not a suggestion of this essay in the brave thought embodied in "Terminus"?

HAWTHORNE, NATHANIEL (1804–1864), the "ghost of New England," the "historian of conscience," the "forerunner of the psychologists in fiction and the prophet of the symbolists," was born in Salem, Massachusetts, and died in Plymouth, New Hampshire, where he had gone for his health. Recognition came in 1850, when, after writing many short stories, he published *The Scarlet Letter*. This novel, Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans* (1826), and Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* (1884) constitute our greatest fictive trio. Three characteristics mark Hawthorne's work, whether in the short story or in the novel. (1) His chief concern was the reaction of conscience to sin. Poe, on the contrary, laid siege to the nerves. Since most of us are more nervous than

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conscientious, Poe makes the wider appeal. In "William Wilson," however, Poe encroaches on Hawthorne's preserves and does it with masterly effect. (2) Hawthorne cared little for the technique of plot. The question with him was not How may I construct an interesting story? but How may I get out of an interesting situation all there is in it? He is the artist of the situation, as Poe is of the plot. (3) Hawthorne preferred, as Poe did not, to weave his imaginings around some physical image, some concrete symbol or emblem. In his *Twice-Told Tales* the word "symbol" occurs twenty-five times, the word "emblem" twenty times. Among his favorite symbols are a shroud, a black veil, a carbuncle, a snake, a butterfly, a cross, a masked figure, and a scarlet letter. Do you find any of these characteristics in "Howe's Masquerade"?

HAYNE, PAUL HAMILTON (1830–1886), a native of Charleston, South Carolina, belongs to both the Old South and the New. He studied law; but the love of literature was strong within him, and in his first poem he announces his complete dedication to poetry:

> Yet would I rather in the outward state
> Of Song's immortal temple lay me down,
> A beggar basking by that radiant gate,
> Than bend beneath the haughtiest empire's crown!

The young votary's vow was soon to be tested. Charleston was bombarded by the Federal gunboats, Hayne's ancestral home and library were burned, and the poet lived in poverty the rest of his life. Moving at once with his wife and little son (now a distinguished man of letters) to a rude shanty at Copse Hill, about eighteen miles from Augusta, Georgia, Hayne carved a name for himself not only as a poet whose vision adversity could not dim, but as a patriot whose memory of the past did not darken his faith in the future. Here he was visited by Timrod, Simms, Maurice Thompson, and others; here he maintained a correspondence with the greatest English and American poets; and from his desk here, which had been a carpenter's bench, his poems fared forth to find a place in all the leading magazines of the country. R. D. Blackmore, author of *Lorna Doone*, dedicated his novel *Springhaven* (1887) to the memory of Hayne, and Maurice Thompson wrote of him as "the last of the literary cavaliers." His poems were published in one volume in 1882, with a biographical sketch by Margaret J. Preston. He has been called "the poet-laureate of the pine," but he wrote almost as often of the mockingbird.

HENRY, O. (1867–1910), whose real name was William Sydney Porter, was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, and died in New York City. He lived in Greensboro till 1882, then moved to Texas, where, with the

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exception of about six months, he remained till 1898. Convicted of embezzlement on an utterly false charge, he spent from April 25, 1898, to July 24, 1901, in prison in Columbus, Ohio. Here he began to write short stories under the now famous pen-name, which was the real name of two French pharmacists, father and son. This name Porter found on many pages of the *United States Dispensatory*, which was his constant companion as a drug clerk in Greensboro, Austin, and Columbus. After a short stay in Pittsburgh he moved to New York in 1902 and quickly became the greatest short-story writer of his generation. Humor, pathos, sympathy with suffering, freedom from vulgarity, insight into unexplored tracts of human nature, together with a scintillant style and a technique as varied in appeal as it is economical in means, are his outstanding characteristics.

Huxley, Aldous Leonard (1894–), poet and critic, son of Leonard Huxley and grandson of the famous scientist Thomas Henry Huxley, was born in England and educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford. He has been on the editorial staff of *The Athenæum* and dramatic critic for the *Westminster Gazette*. In *Vanity Fair* for August, 1922, Mr. Huxley writes:

> We live today in a world that is socially and morally wrecked. Between them, the war and the new psychology have smashed most of the institutions, traditions, creeds, and spiritual values that supported us in the past. It was time to pick up the bits and make something new. The only question was what? . . . What is the new artistic synthesis going to be?

His answer is, "It will surely be a comic synthesis." The London *Times* thinks Mr. Huxley is "the least serious of a very serious group." But there is no lack of seriousness or of insight in the article that we quote.

Irving, Washington (1783–1859), humorist, story-teller, essayist, historian, ambassador, and biographer, was born in New York City and died at Sunnyside, near Tarrytown on the Hudson. He was the first American author to secure a wide hearing in England and on the Continent. His most notable work is now seen to be in neither history nor biography, but in that borderland between the eighteenth-century essay and the modern short story. The best illustrations are found in the *Sketch Book* (1819–1820). When Oxford University gave Irving a D.C.L. in 1830, the students called out, "Here comes old Knickerbocker," "How about Ichabod Crane?" "Has Rip Van Winkle waked up yet?" "Who discovered Columbus?" The two stories or tales thus acclaimed, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and "Rip Van Winkle," both from the *Sketch Book*, were the earliest successful attempts at local

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fiction in America and have retained their popularity at home and abroad better than anything else written by the author.

JAMES, HENRY (1843–1916), was born an American in New York City and died an Englishman in England. It has been said that while his brother, William, the psychologist, made psychology as fascinating as fiction, Henry made fiction as deterrent as psychology. His most widely read novels are probably *Roderick Hudson* (1875), *The American* (1877), and *Daisy Miller* (1878). His later style became increasingly complex, involuted, full of hesitations, reservations, qualifications, his central flow being so checked or dissipated that the reader, unless interested in that sort of thing, becomes passively indifferent or actively impatient. James's chief interest from first to last was the American in Paris, Venice, or London, the reaction of a newer social life to one older and more stratified. From 1889 to 1896 his main preoccupation was with the drama and the short story. But his style, lacking in directness and concision, was a barrier to conspicuous success in both types. His characters are diagnoses rather than portrayals, and the emotions to which he appeals are marginal rather than central.

JAMES, WILLIAM (1842–1910), the great psychologist, brother of Henry James the novelist, was born in New York City and died in Chocorua, New Hampshire. He was educated at home and abroad; he graduated from the Harvard Medical School in 1869. Psychology, however, soon became his dominant interest, and till 1907, when he resigned, he made the chair of psychology at Harvard a source of light and leading wherever the phenomena of mind were studied. For ease, depth, and vividness his style is a model. In a letter to his brother, written on May 4, 1907, he says:

> You know how opposed your whole "third manner" of execution is to the literary ideals which animate my crude and Orson-like breast, mine being to say a thing in one sentence as straight and explicit as it can be made, and then to drop it forever; yours being to avoid naming it straight, but by dint of breathing and sighing all round and round it, to arouse in the reader who may have had a similar perception already (Heaven help him if he hasn't) the illusion of a solid object, made (like the "ghost" at the Polytechnic) wholly out of impalpable materials, air, and the prismatic interferences of light, ingeniously focused by mirrors upon empty space. But you *do* it, that 's the queerness!

KEATS, JOHN (1795–1821), son of a livery-stable keeper, was born in London and died in Rome. His grave in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome bears the epitaph dictated by himself:

Here lies one whose name is writ in water.

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So thought Keats, but the intervening century has assured both his immortality and his supremacy. No other poet ever lived so short a time and left a name so secure for all succeeding time. He had little education; but a copy of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* lent him by a friend spoke authentically to him of his own innate genius, and, leaving the distasteful task of the apothecary, he published his first volume of poems in 1817, his second in 1818, and his last and best in 1820. The seeds of consumption began now to develop, and in a vain hope for recovery the poet set sail for Italy. Two other short-lived geniuses have paid him his truest tribute. "He is the sole British poet," said Poe, "who has never erred in his themes. Beauty is always his aim." And Shelley in his wonderful "Adonais" found in Keats the symbol of

> That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
> That Beauty in which all things work and move,
> That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
> Of birth can quench not.

One of Keats's profoundest convictions is in the lines

> A thing of beauty is a joy forever;
> Its loveliness increases; it will never
> Pass into nothingness.

Cannot this be said of the "Ode to a Nightingale"?

KEMBLE, FANNY (1809–1893), whose full name was Frances Anne Kemble, was a daughter of Charles Kemble, the English actor, and grandmother of the American novelist Owen Wister. She was a brilliant actress and public reader and was often compared with her aunt, Mrs. Siddons. In 1832 she came with her father to America, where the two scored a marked social and artistic success. Two years later she married Pierce Butler of Philadelphia and retired temporarily from the stage, living chiefly in Philadelphia and on the Butler plantations in Georgia. After her divorce from Mr. Butler she resumed her maiden name and gave public readings in the leading cities of England and America. She was a consistent opponent of slavery, basing her deductions on the observations recorded in her *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation in 1838–1839* (1863). Her first volume of poems was published in 1844, her second in 1883. She was born and died in London.

LANDOR, WALTER SAVAGE (1775–1864), a blend of anarch, classicist, and romanticist, was never a popular writer, but has always had a coterie of select and loyal admirers. Byron called him the "deep-mouthed Bœotian Savage Landor." To a bishop who had not replied to a request,

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Landor wrote: "God alone is great enough for me to ask anything of twice." When he threw his cook out of the window, he expressed keen regret for the act because the fellow had landed in a bed of his choicest flowers. Landor's life was one long quarrel, with interludes of chivalrous sentiment, love of children and dogs, exquisite courtesy to women, scraps of English and Latin poetry that showed talent, and prose compositions that showed genius. His best poetry, except a few short poems, is in his *Hellenics* (1847, 1859); his best prose in his *Imaginary Conversations* (1824–1848). Barring the first four words, these lines are a truthful autobiography:

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife;
Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life,—
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

Landor was born in Warwick and died in Florence, Italy. Dickens used him as the model for Boythorn in *Bleak House*; and two years after his death Swinburne wrote a sonorous elegy, "In Memory of Walter Savage Landor," hailing the dead poet as

In holiest age our mightiest mind,
Father and friend.

LANG, ANDREW (1844–1912), to whom all subjects and a multitude of languages seemed to come by nature, was born in Selkirk, Scotland, and died in England. In his thousand pages of poetry, edited by Mrs. Lang in 1923, there is at least one sonnet that all anthologies ought to have. It is "The Odyssey," and it will help you to appreciate our prose selection from him:

As one that for a weary space has lain
Lulled by the song of Circe and her wine,
In gardens near the pale of Proserpine,
Where that Ægean isle forgets the main,
And only the low lutes of love complain,
And only shadows of wan lovers pine;
As such an one were glad to know the brine
Salt on his lips, and the large air again—

So gladly, from the songs of modern speech
Men turn, and see the stars, and feel the free
Shrill wind beyond the close of heavy flowers;
And, through the music of the languid hours,
They hear like ocean on a Western beach
The surge and thunder of the Odyssey.

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But prose was Lang's natural element, and here his pen kept step with a range of topic and interest not numerable in our limits—cricket, golf, ghosts, fairy tales, folklore, history, politics, translations, anthropology, and what not. To all these he brought wide reading, inside knowledge, and a compassing style. Perhaps the older literatures of France and Greece may be called his specialties. He wore his scholarship lightly and hated pose and pedantry. A friend, learning that Lang was at Oxford when Matthew Arnold delivered his reverberant lectures on *Translating Homer*, said: "Mr. Lang, what a privilege it must have been for you, the future translator of the Odyssey, to listen, at this formative period, to the great high priest of Hellenic culture!" Lang's reply was: "Never heard him. Undergraduates didn't have to go." I think Lang would have enjoyed Mr. Leacock's paper.

Lanier, Sidney (1842–1881), was born in Macon, Georgia, entered the Confederate service at the age of nineteen, lost his health in a Federal prison during the last five months of the war, and, after holding death at arm's length for the rest of his life, died of tuberculosis at Lynn, in the mountains of North Carolina. If love and nature are Lanier's two central themes, music and poetry were his two propelling passions. It was not only in his *Science of English Verse* (1880) that he sought to identify music and poetry: every poem that he wrote is an attempt to embody the same great synthesis. It is this urgent quest of an impossible ideal, rendered the more urgent by the consciousness of short life, that marks Lanier's greatness and limitation. The structure of his verse and much of his prose is symphonic rather than literary. But his pen would not—no pen could—do the work of his flute. In line after line one feels that the ecstasy is too ecstatic, the intensity too intense, the propulsion too propelling. "All day," he writes, "my soul hath been cutting swiftly into the great space of the subtle, unspeakable deep, driven by wind after wind of heavenly melody." "The fury of creation is on me today." "Lying in the music-waters, I floated and flowed, my soul utterly bent and prostrate." Wordsworth defines poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquillity." But Lanier had neither the time nor the temperament to wait for tranquillity. He wrote some imperishable poetry, and it will always be a question whether ten years more of perfect health would not have made him the greatest American poet.

Leacock, Stephen Butler (1869–), head of the department of political economy in McGill University, Montreal, Canada, was born in England and educated chiefly at the universities of Toronto and Chicago.

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His recreations are cricket, carpentering, and gardening, but he has afforded more varied recreations to others by his *Nonsense Novels* (1911), *Moonbeams from the Larger Lunacy* (1915), *Frenzied Fiction* (1917), *Over the Footlights* (1923), and numberless special articles and sketches. A critic calls one of his recent books "as delicious a bit of intelligent nonsense and foolish thoughtfulness as has yet delighted those who love to laugh"; and the appraisal fits accurately his more humorous ventures. But Mr. Leacock is more than a humorist. His *Unsolved Riddle of Social Justice* (1920), while not a solution, is a vigorous, fearless, and humane presentation. He was one of the first to recognize and to make others recognize the real greatness of O. Henry's work.

LINCOLN, ABRAHAM (1809–1865), sixteenth president of the United States, was born near Hodgenville, Kentucky, and died in Washington, D.C. Recent investigation seems to show that the Lincolns from whom Abraham came had for generations been men of higher repute than his father, the latter's drop in social status being an accident of orphaned boyhood. Lincoln's mastery of English is seen not only in his Debates with Douglas (1858), his Cooper Institute Address (February 27, 1860), his First Inaugural (March 4, 1861), his Gettysburg Address (November 19, 1863), his Letter to Mrs. Bixby (November 21, 1864), and his Second Inaugural (March 4, 1865) but in the uniform texture of his speech and writing. His style has two marked characteristics—clearness and beauty. The clearness is owing not only to the words and illustrations used but more to the structure of the whole, whether it be a letter, an address, or a state paper. The two strategic points in every piece of writing, the beginning and the end, are always handled effectively by Lincoln. He seems to have known before he began how he was going to end; and the beginning, by foreglimpsing the ending, gave ordered clearness and structural coherence to all that came between. The beauty of his style cannot be explained any more than we can explain the poetry of Burns or Keats or Poe. The mystery becomes clearer, however, when we recall that Lincoln not only read and re-read the Bible, certain plays of Shakespeare, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and Robert Burns but memorized the passages that appealed to him. There is no surer method than this of making amends for early lack of training in English or of supplementing one's native feeling for beauty as well as for clearness.

LONGFELLOW, HENRY WADSWORTH (1807–1882), was born at Portland, Maine, and died in his home at Cambridge, Massachusetts. The literary radicals of the day make Longfellow their elect butt. They call

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him "the high priest of the commonplace" and say they have outgrown him. Suppose they have. They once read him. So has everyone else. That is high enough praise—praise that you can give to no other American poet. If Longfellow has preëmpted one stage of life, though it be an early stage; if he is the vestibule through which we pass with quickened appreciation into the wider interior, surely our debt is real and lasting. We have outgrown *Robinson Crusoe*, though the urge of it, fused and unrecognizable, remains with us. But if you will read the poems of Longfellow that you have never read before, I think you will find that you have outgrown only a part of him. A closer study will convince you that no other American poet covered quite so wide a field. He revolutionized the teaching of the modern languages in the United States; he colonized with eager readers vast areas of European culture; he was the best sonneteer we have ever had; he was the first to make appealing poetry out of our colonial and revolutionary history; he was the first to store the national memory with patriotic legends and traditions; he was the first in our literature to tell a long story interestingly in verse, to put the Indian into the song and story of the world, and to make but one name come instinctively to mind when we think of an American poet laureate.

LOWELL, AMY (1874–1925), whom Louis Untermeyer calls "a female Roosevelt among the Parnassians," was born and lived in Brookline, Massachusetts. She was the granddaughter on her mother's side of Abbott Lawrence, a former minister to the court of St. James, and sister of President A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard University and of the late Professor Percival Lowell, the astronomer. James Russell Lowell was a cousin of Miss Lowell's grandfather on her father's side. She owed her education to her mother, to private schools, and to frequent journeyings abroad. It was not till 1902 that she decided definitely on the vocation of poet, and not till 1912 that her first volume, *A Dome of Many-Coloured Glass*, appeared. The work has little originality and made little impression. But her succeeding volumes, from *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed* (1914) to *Legends* (1921), show not only originality and versatility but a prolonged experimentation with verse forms. As critic and poet she was the leader of those who employed "cadenced verse" and the only one who continued in a noteworthy way the tradition of "polyphonic prose." The latter is an elastic form containing the old metrical rhythms (iambic, trochaic, etc.), cadenced verse, rimes unexpectedly placed, and sometimes recurrent key-rhythms. It has been called the "most natural form yet evolved." But it is not. Real emotion does not splatter its effects in these multiform ways. It is only when emotion is

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overintellectualized, when art yields to artifice, that these complexities appear. Witness all the concededly great poetry yet written and the failure of the radical school to lodge one poem, stanza, or line in the popular consciousness. In "Dried Marjoram" there is neither cadenced verse nor polyphonic prose. But there is Imagism, or the multiplicity of images, for which Miss Lowell also stands. Note also her rich color sense, her unique vocabulary, her competence in the gruesome, and her ability to narrate in verse. In her *Critical Fable* (1922) she spoke of herself as

> Hung all over with mouse-traps of meters, and cages
> Of bright-plumaged rimes, with pages and pages
> Of colors slit up into streaming confetti
> Which give the appearance of something sunsetty,
> And gorgeous, and flowing—a curious sight
> She makes in her progress, a modern White Knight.

Lowell, James Russell (1819–1891), poet, wit, critic, essayist, professor, orator, and diplomat, was born and died in the Lowell homestead, Elmwood, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He did so many things well that he did nothing with supreme excellence. Charles Eliot Norton says, "His talents hampered his genius." But there are few writers whom we could less easily spare from our national annals than Lowell. He was above all a great American citizen, and his best writing usually has about it this note of high citizenship, of civic reform, of pressing forward to unscaled heights. His vision swept the past, the present, and the future, but his ultimate goal was a higher type of Americanism. This spirited quest explains the sense of "perpetual contemporaneousness" that we feel in Lowell. He seems always near. If we are progressive, he is at our side; if we stop, he calls to us from in front. The poems usually cited as his best are "The Biglow Papers" (1846–1848, 1861–1865), "The Vision of Sir Launfal" (1848), the "Commemoration Ode" (1865), and the "Three Memorial Poems" (1875–1876). But I should place "The Present Crisis" (1845) above them all. It is a dynamic autobiography, civic and literary, and has a universal appeal. The man who wrote

> Here's to the city of Boston,
> The home of the bean and the cod,
> Where the Lowells speak only to Cabots
> And the Cabots speak only to God,

underrated the speech range of one of the Lowells. He speaks not only to the Cabots but to all who are either pressing forward or are capable of pressing forward to a nobler type of citizenship.

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MacKaye, Percy (1875–   ), was born in New York City and lives in Cornish, New Hampshire. He has been called the busiest poet in the United States, and his list of major publications—twenty plays, nine masques or pageants, and four operas—would seem to bear out the characterization. He is best known by his civic masques or pageants, through which he has sought to democratize poetry by socializing and dramatizing the life of local communities. For his latest play, *This Fine-Pretty World* (1923), he has studied at first hand the Kentucky mountaineer, in whose speech, ballads, and superstitions he finds "the loam of an authentic subsoil for the growth of a native Theater of Poetry." His greatest work was *Caliban, A Community Masque*, first given from May 25 to June 2, 1916, in New York City as a part of the Shakespeare Tercentenary Celebration, and later in the Harvard Stadium, Mr. MacKaye being a Harvard graduate. The main theme is the regeneration of Shakespeare's Caliban, "that passionate, child-curious part of us all, groveling close to his origin, yet groping up toward that serener plane of pity and love, reason and disciplined will, on which Miranda and Prospero commune with Ariel and his spirits." Mr. MacKaye believes that "the masque is the drama of democracy, and the chief value of the Shakespearean masque is as a step forward in the progress of the coöperative dramatic and poetic expression of the people."

Maupassant, Guy de (1850–1893), godson and disciple of Gustave Flaubert, was born in the Seine-Inférieure, not far from Dieppe, and died in Paris. He had a sane childhood in Normandy and, being big and burly, loved long jaunts out of doors and all forms of practical joking. Recognition came to him in 1880 through a story called "Tallow Ball," and during the next ten years he wrote about two hundred short stories and four novels. But a nervous malady, induced and aggravated by sensual indulgence, had already begun to develop in 1878, and during the last two years of his life Maupassant was insane. He owed much of his art to Flaubert, whom he called "the master" and who lived just long enough to acclaim his disciple's first triumph. Flaubert used to tell him:

When you pass before a grocer seated at his door, before a janitor who smokes his pipe, before a stand of coaches, show me this grocer and this janitor, their pose, their whole physical appearance, including also—indicated by the ingenuity of the picture—their whole moral nature, in such fashion that I cannot confuse them with any other grocer, or any other janitor; and make me see, *by a single word*, in what respect one coach horse differs in appearance from fifty others that follow him or precede him.

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Wrought in this mold, Maupassant's style is a model of purity, accuracy, and lucidity. But he is completely detached from his characters, showing neither pity, sympathy, liking, nor disliking. And his ability to differentiate them sharply, as Flaubert urged, is marred by an indiscriminate grossness in which most of his characters lose their distinctive outlines.

MILTON, JOHN (1608–1674), the greatest nondramatic English poet, was born and died in London. He and Bunyan are usually considered the two peaks of Puritan genius. But both belong to humanity rather than to a sect or section of humanity, and to all ages rather than to a limited period. Milton's working career, like Chaucer's, falls into three stages: (1) After graduating with two degrees from Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1629, he began his poetic career with the "Hymn on the Nativity" (1629), and in the next ten years followed it with "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," "Comus," and "Lycidas," poems that would have immortalized him if he had written nothing else. (2) Returning from Italy in 1639 he plunged into the civil strife of his country and entered upon his prose period. He was the ablest defender and exponent of the Commonwealth and became Cromwell's Latin secretary. His English prose was chiefly controversial and, in spite of its empurpled broideries, lacked the structural excellence of his earlier and later poetry. (3) When Charles II returned in 1660, the poet, totally blind since 1652, went into retirement, and in "independent loneliness" completed "Paradise Lost" (1665), "Paradise Regained" (1671), and "Samson Agonistes" (1671). Of his twenty-three sonnets, that "To the Nightingale" (1630) was the first written. It shows Milton's early preference for the Petrarchan, or Italian, form rather than the Shakespearean, and suggests the possible influence of "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale," once attributed to Chaucer. It is often said that Milton's sonnets were almost the first that were not love sonnets. But this initial sonnet shows that the poet at the age of twenty-two either was in love or thought he was.

O'BRIEN, FITZ-JAMES (1828–1862), was born in County Limerick, Ireland, and died of wounds received in the Federal service in Cumberland, Virginia. He wrote short stories and short poems, but the stories have a touch of genius, whereas the poems are only clever. His short stories also fell within a decade, 1850–1860, singularly infertile in good examples of this *genre*. Poe had died in 1849, and Hawthorne after 1850 had turned to the novel. O'Brien landed in New York in 1852 and almost immediately found a place in the leading American magazines. There was little rivalry, and till his death O'Brien did more than any-

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one else to continue the tradition of Poe and Hawthorne, Poe evidently being his model. His two best stories are "The Diamond Lens" (1858) and "What Was It?" (1859). They are much alike in theme and development. Both are stories of hitherto undiscovered beings—one an infinitesimal fairy seen in a drop of water, the other a hideous monster; but each eludes capture.

PERICLES (490–429 B.C.), the greatest statesman of ancient Greece, was a patron rather than a maker of literature. He brought Athens to the height of her power and beauty; encouraged art, architecture, and literature; was a friend of Sophocles, Herodotus, and Thucydides; and tried hard to realize that ideal commonwealth which he (or Thucydides) sketches in such glowing terms in the great Funeral Oration. Pericles was, like Webster, Olympian in voice, manner, and appearance. He did not mingle intimately with men, but by his dignity of bearing and elevation of thought he won and maintained their respect and admiration. Other speeches are recorded of him, but the Funeral Oration is by common consent his greatest effort. If his outlook had been more national and less purely Athenian, he might have staved off the disastrous second Peloponnesian War (431–421 B.C.); and, when entered upon, it might have been won by Pericles if instead of remaining on the defensive he had practiced Admiral Farragut's strategy: "The best defense against the enemy's fire is a well-directed fire from your own guns." Pericles died of the plague, brought on by the huddling of the Athenians behind their own walls.

PHILLIPS, WENDELL (1811–1884), the most effective of all the abolition orators, was born and died in Boston. After graduating from Harvard University and the Harvard Law School he found himself waiting in vain for clients. Before this time Phillips had shown no disposition to be a reformer, but he was a good speaker and a close student of history, especially of the English and American revolutionary periods. "If no clients come," he now said, "I shall throw myself, heart and soul, into some good cause." Looking from his office window on October 21, 1835, he saw a "respectable mob" dragging William Lloyd Garrison, editor of *The Liberator*, through the street with a rope around his waist. Instantly his decision was made. He dedicated himself henceforth not only to the antislavery movement, but to prohibition, the labor movement, equal rights for women—to any and every cause that seemed to him both needy and noble. Of Phillips's speech in defense of Lovejoy, who was shot on November 7, 1837, by a proslavery mob in Alton, Illinois, George William Curtis said that it was one of the three incom-

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parable speeches made by Americans. Patrick Henry's speech at Williamsburg, Virginia, and Lincoln's Gettysburg Address were the other two: "There is no fourth. They transmit, unextinguished, the torch of an eloquence which has aroused nations and changed the course of history, and which Webster called 'noble, sublime, god-like action.'" Intensity, bitterness, burning conviction, with an utter disregard of consequences but the most meticulous regard for rhetorical finish, are Phillips's characteristics. He did not argue. He urged, whipped, and denounced. It was the leaders of bad causes that he excoriated, not the followers.

PIKE, ALBERT (1809–1891), the most literary of American pioneers, was born in Boston and died in the city of Washington. He was an interesting blend of the scholar, the man of action, and the man of letters. Educated at Harvard University, he started at the age of twenty-two for the Southwest. Little Rock, Arkansas, became his home, though he was essentially a rover and lived later in Memphis, Alexandria, and in the city of Washington. He was a captain in the war with Mexico and rose to the rank of brigadier general in the Confederate service. He was a man of leonine appearance, a powerful advocate, a lifelong student of languages, a fearless and observant pioneer, a disciplined journalist, a poet recognized abroad, the most eminent Mason of his time, and the author of more than twenty volumes of Masonic literature. In *American Short Stories* (1904) Charles Sears Baldwin ranks Pike among the more prominent writers who contributed to the development of our best-known type of literature, the short story. But Pike's vivid and colorful narratives of Western incident and Indian adventure are historical documents of pioneer life rather than stepping-stones to the art of Poe and Hawthorne. Pike began writing poetry in 1831. His "Hymns to the Gods" appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* in June, 1839. Nature, freedom, mythology, and American history furnished his favorite themes, his nature poems being his best. Note the unusual stanzaic form of the "Ode to the Mockingbird."

POE, EDGAR ALLAN (1809–1849), was born in Boston at 62 Carver Street or somewhere on Hollis Street, and died in Baltimore, where he is buried. At the age of three he was adopted by John Allan, of Richmond, Virginia, and sent later to school in England, to the University of Virginia, and to West Point. His English experience at the school of the Reverend John Bransby at Stoke Newington is touched upon in the story here printed. Poe spent his most malleable years in Richmond and Baltimore, but he lived and wrote also in New York and Philadelphia. If you go to Richmond do not fail to visit the Edgar Allan Poe Shrine. In

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Boston the square (really a triangle) at the intersection of Carver and Broadway was in 1913 named the Edgar Allan Poe Square, the only memorial of Poe in the city. The square soon was renamed after Matthew Emmett Ryan, a young soldier killed in the World War. But on January 19, 1924, the Ryan memorial having been transferred to another street intersection, Poe's name was restored. As critic, short-story writer, and poet, Poe's fame is probably more widespread than that of any other American writer. In his criticism he pleaded for more beauty in American poetry and less moralizing. In the short story, of which he is the founder, his influence was legislative, judicial, and executive: legislative, when he formulated the laws of the short story; judicial, when in judging the stories of others he noted their divergence from the standard; executive, when in his own stories he carried out the principles thus laid down. In poetry he evoked new effects by his wizard combinations of vowels and consonants, his weird repetitions and parallelisms, his consistent chanting of beauty evanishing or about to evanish, and his ceaseless experimentation with the fitting of verse form to poetic content.

Robinson, James Harvey (1863–), historian, elder brother of Benjamin Lincoln Robinson, botanist, was born in Bloomington, Illinois, and educated at Harvard University and the University of Freiberg. From 1892 to 1919 he taught history at Columbia University and from 1919 to 1921 he was organizer and lecturer at the New School for Social Research in New York City. Since 1921 he has devoted himself to writing. His studies have been chiefly in the field of European history, though he was for nine years an associate editor of the *American Historical Review*. Besides his *History of Western Europe* (1924) he has collaborated with James Henry Breasted, the orientalist, and Charles Austin Beard in a series of history textbooks for high schools. His latest volume, *The Humanizing of Knowledge* (1924), is an urgent appeal to the scientists to simplify and recoördinate their knowledge so that it may become more generally available to the layman. His book called *The Mind in the Making* (1921), a thought-provoking work which has appealed to a constantly widening circle of readers, is closely related in content to the essay here printed. It is an example of the "new history" which, says Mr. Robinson (p. 328), "will avail itself of all those discoveries that are being made about mankind by anthropologists, economists, psychologists, and sociologists—discoveries which during the past fifty years have served to revolutionize our ideas of the origin, progress, and prospects of our race." Theodore Roosevelt said that he was qualified to pass an examination on the volume from which our essay is taken, so careful had been his study of Mr. Robinson's work.

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ROOSEVELT, THEODORE (1858–1919), president of the United States from September 14, 1901, to March 4, 1909, was born in New York City and died in his home at Sagamore Hill on Long Island. As a combination of the man of action and the man of letters he has had no equal in history. His thirty-three books, beginning with *The Naval War of 1812* (1882) and ending with *Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to his Children* (1919), edited by Joseph Bucklin Bishop, include such varied titles as *Hunting Trips of a Ranchman* (1885), *The Winning of the West* (1889–1896), *Oliver Cromwell* (1901), *African Game Trails* (1910), *An Autobiography* (1913), *Through the Brazilian Wilderness* (1914), *A Booklover's Holidays in the Open* (1916), and *The Great Adventure* (1917). Though not a professional *littérateur* Roosevelt was, says John Morley, essentially a man of letters "temporarily assigned to other duty." Though not a professional scientist he was, says John Burroughs, "a naturalist on the broadest grounds, uniting much technical knowledge with knowledge of the daily lives and habits of all forms of wild life." Much of his writing and speaking was "occasional" and is marred by a strident emphasis on the commonplace; but there sounds through it all the note of a vivid personality, and the emphasis is always on such essentials as courage, decency, the square deal, service, and Americanism. The quiet self-restraint, the autumnal wisdom, of the great essayist, Mr. Roosevelt did not have; but he observed closely, described picturesquely, and narrated interestingly. At times, too, as in the concluding part of our selection, near the end also of the Foreword to *A Booklover's Holidays*, and the beginning of *The Great Adventure*, the style attains a beauty beyond the reach of mere rhetoric. But its ordinary characteristics are clearness and forthrightness, the phrases being more arrestive than the sentences or paragraphs.

ROSSETTI, DANTE GABRIEL (1828–1882), painter-poet, was born in London and died in the little English town of Birchington. Ruskin called him "the chief intellectual force in the establishment of the Modern Romantic School." This school succeeded the earlier romantic movement led by Coleridge, Keats, and Shelley. Rossetti's favorite poet after Dante was Keats, but the influence of Malory, Coleridge, Shelley, Poe, and Blake is easily detected. Rossetti was primarily a painter; and in 1848 he, with Holman Hunt and Sir John Everett Millais, formed a Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the purpose being to give back to painting the simplicity, the naturalness, the awe and wonder, the mystical piety, the naïve and pellucid impressionism, that it had before the time of Raphael. It is well to note that Browning saw a sterner lesson than this in the art that preceded Raphael; he found an ethical

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mandate rather than an æsthetic creed: see his "Old Pictures in Florence." Poetry was soon included in the Pre-Raphaelite reform, the leaders being Rossetti, his sister Christina, William Morris, and Swinburne. Rossetti's ballad-romances, like "Rose Mary" and "Troy Town" and "Sister Helen," as well as his sonnet sequence, "The House of Life," all have the medieval qualities of the Pre-Raphaelite art at its best and are suffused with an elfin music and dreamy magnificence surpassed at times only by Shakespeare and Keats. "The Blessed Damozel" is the key to all that is distinctive in Pre-Raphaelite poetry and painting.

TENNYSON, ALFRED (1809–1892), the most representative of modern English poets, was born in his father's rectory at Somersby in Lincolnshire and died in his summer home at Aldworth in Surrey. His pivotal year was 1850, when he married Emily Sellwood, published "In Memoriam," and was made poet laureate. He had been the real though unofficial poet laureate since 1842, when he published two volumes containing such poems as "Morte d'Arthur," "Ulysses," "The Lotos-Eaters," "St. Agnes' Eve," "Sir Galahad," and "Locksley Hall." "The Princess" (1847) did not add to his reputation except in its scattered lyrics; but "Maud" (1885), Tennyson's own choice for reading aloud, showed a melodic range unequaled in any other English poem of similar length. The first "Idylls of the King" (1859) and "Enoch Arden" (1864) exhibiting, respectively, Tennyson's aristocratic and democratic sympathies, as "Ulysses" and "The Lotos-Eaters" had exhibited his subtle ability in contrasting divine discontent and vacuous easefulness, strengthened still further his hold on his readers. The English historical dramas, beginning in 1875, demonstrated Tennyson's incompetence in Shakespeare's realm; but the swan song, "Crossing the Bar," which Tennyson asked to be placed last in all editions of his poems, displayed a retained lyric mastery which age might limit but could not impair. No English poet has surpassed Tennyson in the uniform excellence of his lyric and narrative verse; none has so shaped or satisfied contemporary taste; none has shown a longer or more unreserved consecration to his art; none has succeeded better in fusing moral earnestness with variety of technique; none has better combined accuracy and vividness in interpreting nature; and none has fronted more fearlessly or reproduced more adequately the varied clashes of sense and soul that marked the latter half of the nineteenth century.

UNTERMEYER, LOUIS (1885–), poet and critic, was born in New York City, where he has lived ever since except for visits in Maine, New Jersey, and Europe. Writing of himself in 1919 he says:

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His education was sketchy; his continued failure to comprehend algebra and geometry kept him from entering college. His one ambition was to become a composer. At sixteen he appeared as a pianist in semi-professional circles; at seventeen he entered his father's jewelry manufacturing establishment, of which he became designer and factory manager. . . . It was with *Challenge* (1914), now in its fourth edition, that the author first spoke in his own idiom. Although the ghost of Henley still haunts some of these pages, poems like "Summons," "Landscapes," and "Caliban in the Coal Mines" show [quoting from the *Boston Transcript*] "a fresh and lyrical sympathy with the modern world. . . . His vision is a social vision, his spirit a passionately energized command of the forces of justice."

Mr. Untermeyer is a socialist, and the "forces of social justice" are his chief concern in his later volumes of verse, *These Times* (1917) and *The New Adam* (1920). He has written clever parodies in verse and has translated *Poems of Heinrich Heine* (1917). His ablest criticism in book form is in *The New Era in American Poetry* (1919) which, with Miss Lowell's *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry* (1917) and Marguerite Wilkinson's *New Voices* (1922), contains the amplest armory of the *vers libristes*. Mr. Untermeyer is at his best in discussing American poetry written since 1912. In his ridicule of Lowell, Emerson, Whittier, and Longfellow—all except Poe and Whitman—he illustrates the parochialism against which he inveighs.

Wells, Herbert George (1866–), scientific clairvoyant and creator of social Utopias, was born in Bromley, Kent, England. Graduating with honors in zoölogy from the Royal College of Science, he began his career as an author with *The Time Machine* (1895) and since then has added about sixty volumes to his literary output. Anatole France calls him "the greatest intellectual force in the English-speaking world." "A bungling compliment," replies the editor of *The Catholic Review*, "to one whose *bête noire* is nationalism; whose immediate goal is internationalism; whose ultimate or, at least, penultimate ambition is interplanetarianism." It is not so much the intellect that Mr. Wells fertilizes as the constructive imagination. *Plato's Republic* seems to have been his initial inspiration. He says:

> I read it when I was a boy of sixteen on the Downs above Harting in Sussex. It was one of the great events of my life. It is the first of Utopias. It is the most liberating book in the world. It asserts the completest release of human thought from traditionalism; it questions every institution; it is saturated with the faith that man can make his life and future what he will.

Mr. Wells calls his *Outline of History* (1920) "an attempt to reform history-teaching by replacing narrow nationalist history by a general

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survey of the human record." The book is destined, I think, to prove more influential as historiography than as history, and there is no better introduction to it than is found in "History is One."

WILDE, RICHARD HENRY (1789–1847), was born in Dublin, Ireland, and died of yellow fever in New Orleans. His parents moved to Baltimore when he was eight years old, and five years later his widowed mother moved to Augusta, Georgia. Here Wilde studied law, became attorney general of Georgia, and was Georgia's representative in Congress from 1827 to 1835. During a stay in Europe, chiefly in Italy, from 1835 to 1840 he made important researches in the life of Tasso and was instrumental in the discovery of the portrait of Dante by Giotto. In 1843 he moved to New Orleans and became the first professor of constitutional law in the University of Louisiana. Wilde is best known by the lyric beginning

My life is like the summer rose.

Its melancholy is a reflex of Wilde's settled mood, as is shown in his autobiographical long poem "Hesperia." The eight-lined stanza of "Hesperia" is that of his favorite poet, Byron, in "Don Juan" and the "Epistle to Augusta," but the rime-sequence of our sonnet "To the Mockingbird" seems original with Wilde.

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